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About the Presenter:

Raza Abbas is a dual graduate in Business Administration and Communication from The University of Arizona, USA. He has acquired training from Career Services Department at The University of Arizona. Raza feels honored to possess more than a decade of global experience in Career Counseling, Career Development, Executive Coaching, Human Resource Development and Self Development etc. He has coached trainers and trained employees across a wide range of industries i.e. Fortune 500 organizations, NGO's, Government sector and students of premier universities.

Raza introduced career development in Pakistan for the Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Government of Sind, INSYPRE Program. He also introduced professional career counseling in Pakistan for the Education & Literacy Department, Government of Sind, Benazir Bhutto Shaheed Youth Development Program-BBSYDP (largest social development project in Pakistan).

Raza currently works as the Head of HR and Careers at Fatimiyah Education Network a leading learning organization in Karachi, Pakistan.

Title of Paper: **Career Counselling and Guidance Practices at a Community Education Network in Karachi, Pakistan**

Abstract:

Career Counselling and Guidance (CCG) practice of a community Education Network in Karachi, Pakistan are analyzed in this paper. It caters to 2800 students from Early Childhood Education to Graduation that belong to the middle and lower income strata of the community.

CCG services in this Education Network is available for Secondary, Higher Secondary, Graduation, community and society at large. A complete framework of CCG services for students and professionals has been developed by the Network.

CCG support that students are having in the network has many forms. Students are provided with occupational information through inspirational seminars, career counselling (individual and group), career publications, career outreach programmes, internships, universities and corporate sector visits etc. Moreover student's financial need in pursuit of higher education is being addressed through financial assistance. Benefits of CCG services to students towards their career development and challenging factors towards implementation of CCG services in the Education Network has been highlighted in the paper.

CCG services, not being part of the school, college and university systems in many of the developing countries including Pakistan is due to the cost of it. CCG services are expensive with regards to time, money and resources. Lack of human resources in the field is also a constraint. However, the Education Network is able to address cost effective challenge of CCG services by involving community philanthropist.

Findings of the paper identified some major challenges students are facing in making career decision like Education system, family/ community career stereotypes and lack of occupational information. The Education Network services found to be significant in addressing needs of the students contextually and culturally which is one of the key findings of the paper.

Qualitative case study method was employed in writing this paper. Multiple sources of data generation tools were used in the study i.e. semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis.

Management of Education Network emerged as the key factor enabling CCG services in an education system possible in a developing country like Pakistan which will ensure socio economic prosperity of the country.