ESTUDIOS

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER GUIDANCE AND FINANCIAL GUIDANCE

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RESUMEN
En este artículo se explora la relación entre los campos de la orientación para la carrera y el asesoramiento financiero. Para los autores, existen grandes semejanzas que incluyen similitudes conceptuales, curriculares, organizativas y éticas. Además, al exigirsele a los individuos que se responsabilicen cada vez más por su aprendizaje a lo largo de toda la vida y por la gestión de su dinero, también se producen solapamientos entre ambos campos.

Palabras clave: Carrera (término general), finanzas, inversión financiera, orientación.

ABSTRACT
There are strong similarities between the fields of career guidance and financial guidance. These include conceptual, curricular, organisational and ethical similarities. Moreover, with individuals increasingly being expected to manage the financing of their lifelong learning, there is growing overlap between the two fields. Some possibilities for collaboration and linked delivery are explored.

Key words: Career, finance, investment, guidance.

Introduction
A central feature of the «risk society», according to Beck (1992), is the destandardisation of labour and the growth of more flexible, plural and risky forms of work. This offers greater freedom and sovereignty to individuals in being able to arrange their

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own lives; it also means the loss of many of the former assurances and protective functions which work structures and occupational roles have provided during the industrial era.

The result is that individuals are now being required to take more responsibility for managing both their work and their finances. Security, it is argued, lies not in employment but in employability: developing skills that can be invested in new opportunities as they arise (Kanter, 1989). Individuals are accordingly being encouraged, whether self-employed or not, to regard themselves as being self-employed, taking responsibility for their lifelong learning and career development (Bridges, 1995; Hakim, 1994). At the same time, they are being urged to take much greater responsibility for their financial security, including investment in insurance and in pensions as well as in learning. In the UK these trends are strongly evident in current government policies relating both to lifelong learning and to welfare reform – particularly in the form of Individual Learning Accounts, Individual Savings Accounts and Stakeholder Pensions.

If individuals are to exercise these responsibilities, many will need access to expert help. This is particularly the case for those with little or no «cultural capital» (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) to draw upon: such individuals are at particular risk of exclusion both from basic financial services (Kempson & Whyley, 1999) and from the labour market, each of which reinforce their risks of long-term social exclusion. But arguably all individuals need access to such help.

At present the help on offer is available from two separate occupational sectors: the career guidance sector, focused on guidance for learning and work; and the financial guidance sector. Each has developed independently of one another, with little communication or linkage between them. Yet there are strong similarities and common ground between the two fields. Moreover, as individuals are increasingly expected to manage the financing of their lifelong learning, there could be growing overlap between them, with potential for collaboration and linked delivery.

This paper accordingly aims to explore the relationship between the fields of career and financial guidance, the similarities and differences, the areas of overlap, and possibilities for future joint development. It is based on a small exploratory project carried out by NICEC and FEaS, funded by the Lifelong Learning Foundation and the NatWest Charitable Trust. The project has included a mapping exercise, an exploratory meeting with some experts from the two fields, and a 24-hour consultation (held at Madingley Hall, Cambridge, in April 1999) involving 29 participants from government departments, national bodies, financial organisations and career guidance organisations. A summary report of the policy consultation has been published separately (Watts & Stevens, 1999). The present article offers a more detailed analysis of the issues, based on the project as a whole.

Financial guidance services

Financial guidance services currently comprise two main groups. The first are around 28,000 registered independent financial advisers (IFAs), working for nearly 4,000 firms – ranging from sole traders to some 14 or 15 networks which cover the UK – plus some 62,000 tied representatives who sell the products of one provider only (figures provided by
the Association of IFAs). All these «designated» individuals have categories of permitted activities, which are dependent on the qualifications they hold. The minimum qualification is levels 1, 2 and 3 of the Financial Planning Certificate; advanced-level qualifications are required for certain categories of business. There are certain areas of financial advice which currently stand outside the regulatory arrangements, e.g. advice on mortgages. The IFAs receive their income through commission (mainly on pensions, life-assurance and savings products) and/or through fees.

The second group are services providing money advice to those in need. Their main focus is not on financial investment but on financial survival. They include student welfare services in further and higher education, and various services in local-authority departments (especially housing) and in the voluntary sector (e.g. Citizens’ Advice Bureaux, independent advice agencies, national charities) (see Kempson, 1995; Schagen & Lines, 1996); the last few years have also seen the emergence of companies offering fee-charging debt advice (Pearson, 1998/99). These varied services particularly offer advice to those who are facing serious debt problems; they may also include information about alternatives to mainstream financial services such as credit unions and Local Exchange and Trading Systems (LETS) (Ewels et al., 1998). Their emphasis is on short-term problem-solving, though the hope is that the advice they give will reduce the likelihood of further debt problems in the longer term. Citizens’ Advice Bureaux also give advice on general personal finance issues, though by law they are not allowed to give advice about particular products: for example, someone interested in buying a house could find out from a CAB adviser about the different types of mortgage, and what the terms mean, but could not receive a recommendation on which type or which company’s product would be most suitable.

In addition, there are a variety of educational activities designed to develop financial literacy. In schools, an example is the NatWest «Face 2 Face with Finance» programme, comprising practical, active-learning experiences to help schools teach personal money – management and enterprise skills within the curriculum. Other elements of personal finance education may appear in different parts of the curriculum – mathematics, personal and social education, business studies, etc. (Ewels et al., n.d.). A Learning Framework for Financial Literacy is being field-tested in a number of schools in England (Personal Finance Education Group, 1998a; 1998b); a parallel framework for financial capability has been developed in Scotland (SCCC, 1999). In England, the need to strengthen this area is currently receiving attention as part of the review of the National Curriculum.

There is also increasing recognition of the need for more provision in adult education designed to develop the financial literacy of adults (Bond, 1998). Current provision tends to be limited (Schagen & Lines, 1996). Some of it is run by independent financial advisers, who may view it as a way of marketing their services (Ewels et al., 1998); some is run by money advice workers from Citizens’ Advice Bureaux, who are increasingly recognising the importance of preventive educational work. Some of the stronger examples are in the field of pre-retirement courses, where issues related to money management are incorporated into wider aspects of life-style planning. Bond (in press) has suggested that what is needed is a national programme of radical adult education, designed to help adults individually and collectively to understand and question the way in which financial institutions, the state and personal decision-making connect to shape numerous aspects of their daily lives.
Similarities

Conceptual

There are a number of respects in which the fields of career guidance and financial guidance bear strong conceptual similarities to one another. Both focus on personal decision-making. Both attempt to relate opportunities to personal resources and personal values and interests. Both involve emotion as well as reason, and incorporate risk elements. In both cases, decisions are often influenced by, and may have implications for, other family members. Career guidance has deeper links with individuals’ self-concepts and identity formation: hence its psychological base and its relationship to the counselling profession tend to be stronger. Financial guidance is a more technical area, concerned with decisions relating to systems which are largely obscure for most lay people: there are thus stronger pressures for it to be directive in nature (see e.g. Consumers Association, 1999). Nonetheless, the similarities are substantial.

The tasks involved in managing one’s career and managing one’s finances are also strongly similar. Both involve:

- life-style choices;
- making changes;
- coping with crises;
- managing key life-events;
- risk assessment;
- long-term planning.

Many of the skills involved are similar too:

- self-assessment skills;
- research skills;
- networking skills;
- negotiation skills;
- enterprise skills;
- self-reliance skills;
- decision-making skills;
- skills for accessing and using guidance.

The main differences are in the areas of knowledge and understanding.

Curricular

The development of such skills, knowledge and understanding is a key task for the school curriculum. If individuals are to take more responsibility for managing their own career and their own finances, it is in schools that the foundations for such self-management need to be laid. The case for career education therefore has strong parallels with the case for personal finance education. Both face similar issues in identifying where they should be
located within the curriculum: the extent to which they taught separately, as part of a more broadly-based personal and social education programme, or incorporated into academic subjects. Both share the difficulty of struggling against the «tyranny of subjects» (see Goodson, 1983; Whitty et al., 1994) and the dominance within schools and accountability in terms of «standards» (attainment targets, examination passes) rather than «relevance» (see Law, 1996). In both cases, teachers tend to feel ill-equipped in terms of personal expertise; both areas are also at risk of being regarded by pupils as «boring» – remote from their current preoccupations. This means that there are common challenges for teacher training, and for making available external resources on which teachers can draw.

In England and Wales, careers education now has a statutory base – under the Education Act 1997, schools are required to provide it to all pupils in years 9-11 (ages 13-16); also, career education is able to benefit from the support offered by the Careers Service. No similar provision exists in relation to personal finance education. But broadly parallel attention is given to both areas in the current proposals for citizenship and for personal, social and health education within the revised National Curriculum (QCA, 1999).

There are also strong parallel arguments for continued career education and personal finance education post-school. Many adults have not had access to such programmes when in school. Moreover, schools can only lay the foundations: the skills and competences need further development, and such development is often best fostered when it can be related to immediate circumstances. In both cases, however, current adult education provision is very limited.

Organisational

In addition to educational provision, individuals need access both to personal career guidance and to personal financial guidance related to their own situations. The need for such guidance tends to be strong at an earlier age in the case of career guidance. In relation to adults, however, the two fields share a number of common issues related to their organisational structure. Both are under-developed, with inadequate provision of services in relation to potential demand. In both cases, much provision is crisis-oriented rather than developmental in nature. In both cases, there are concerns about how the diversity of provision necessary to respond to a wide range of individual needs can be reconciled with coherent quality standards, including standards relating to the accredited competence of guidance practitioners.

Both fields also confront questions about who should pay – the extent to which provision should be financed by the state, by the individual, or by third-party beneficiaries. In each case, much public and voluntary provision tends to be targeted at the unemployed, while private-sector provision tends to be targeted at the relatively wealthy. Low- and middle-income groups tend to fall between the two. A key policy issue is whether publicly-funded provision should be extended to cover the low- and middle-income groups, or whether their needs should be met through the market.

A number of models have been suggested. One is for a publicly-funded personal guidance service, open to clients from all levels of income. This has been a long-standing aspiration in the career guidance field; a similar case has been mounted in the financial guidance field (Ewels et al., 1998). With growing pressures on all governments to restrict
levels of public expenditure, however, there seems little prospect of such a model being implemented in the foreseeable future.

A second model is for the services to be paid for through direct charges to individual beneficiaries. In both fields, it seems that at present some middle-income individuals are prepared to pay for guidance, but only at subsidised rates. This may be a transitional phenomenon, while individuals get used to paying for a service they have not paid for in the past – either because it has not been available, or because it has been free of charge. It may be, however, that there are intrinsic problems about commodifying guidance in the way that would be required if a market is to develop which will expand provision. In the career guidance field, for example, a recent market-research project (Wilson & Jackson, 1998) has indicated that marketing guidance is problematic, for a number of reasons: guidance is a process not a product, a means not an end; at its heart is not meeting people’s immediate wants, but helping them to clarify their longer-terms needs. In this case, ways of supplementing what individuals are prepared to pay need to be found – possibly by mixing the market model with one of the other models.

In the third model, the services are funded, in part or whole, through some kind of levy. It has been suggested, for example, that the government should apply a statutory levy to the credit industry to fund money advice services for those in debt (NCC, 1992). This bears some resemblance to the proposal that an entitlement for guidance on learning might be funded through a percentage charge on all transactions flowing through the Individual Learning Account system (Smith & Spurling, 1999).

The fourth model is for the services to be paid for, again in part or whole, through direct commission fees from third-party beneficiaries: in the case of career guidance, for placement into learning or work opportunities; in the case of financial guidance, for investment-product sales. This is closely related, however, to a final set of similarities: ethical issues relating to impartiality.

Ethical

The issue of impartiality is a critical one both in career guidance and in financial guidance, and merits extended discussion here. In the case of career guidance, it arises particularly in relation to guidance providers which are «embedded» within learning and employment providers. In further education, for example, the pressure of financial incentives on colleges to recruit students has meant that some colleges regard guidance provision on entry as a form of marketing; similarly, some schools encourage students aged 16 to stay on rather than seek courses elsewhere. In such cases, an important distinction needs to be drawn between two forms of impartiality:

- **Reactive** impartiality, which is passive and minimalist – e.g. schools making available information on colleges only to those who seek it, or colleges providing information on courses in other institutions only in fields they do not cover themselves.
- **Proactive** impartiality, which involves making positive efforts to provide information and advice about the full range of opportunities, outside as well as inside the host institution – e.g. schools including an active programme of visits to
colleges, or colleges offering information and advice about the pros and cons of all local courses in fields of interest to the individual.

There is also an important further distinction between comprehensive impartiality relating to the full range of options open to an individual, and intra-institutional impartiality which is confined to covering the full range of options within the institution itself (Watts & Young, 1997). In these terms, a possible three-level structure of provision with colleges might involve:

- The Careers Service offering comprehensive impartiality, particularly on entry and on exit.
- Central guidance services within the institution offering at least intra-institutional impartiality, both on entry and when a student wishes to transfer between courses (though some such services might seek to offer comprehensive impartiality, particularly where this is based on a concordat with other local institutions).
- Teachers/lecturers and tutors making no claim to impartiality but offering guidance and support within courses.

The issue of impartiality arises even more strongly in the relationship between career guidance and placement. Traditionally, career guidance services have either not offered a placement service, or have not charged opportunity providers for it, on the grounds that this could distort the service that they provide to individuals: it would tend to limit the guidance to the placements they have on offer, influenced by the commercial pressure to fill these placements regardless of whether the individual’s interest might be best met by looking elsewhere. This has however recently come under attack from Open Agenda (1998) as representing ‘theoretical distinctions’ which represent ‘significant barriers to progress’. It is argued that guidance should become part of a ‘unified guidance and recruitment service, able to compete with private employment agencies and recruitment agencies for the substantial employer funding that is available in this area’. Moreover, it is contended that this principle should be extended to learning providers: ‘in just the same way as travel agents receive much of their income from tour operators, on the basis of how many bookings they pass on to them, so should guidance providers receive a ‘pay-back’ from learning providers on the basis of successful referrals (pp. 9, 10 and 24).

The parallel situation in the financial guidance sector is of considerable interest in these respects. Under the Financial Services Act 1986, employees of financial service companies offering financial products are restrained in relation to the types of product advice they can give to the public. Under the ‘polarisation’ regulation, sellers of investment products are required to be either company representatives or tied agents, who can sell the products of one provider only, or independent financial advisers (IFAs), who can make recommendations from the full range of products that are available (OFT, 1999). The choice has to be formally adopted and publicly announced by the company concerned.

IFAs, however, often earn some of their income from commission on sales, and this may be perceived to influence the advice they give. The £11 billion pensions mis-selling scandal is commonly blamed on the widespread use of commission, which encouraged advisers to recommend unsuitable personal pension policies (Gascoigne, 1999). A report by the Consumers Association (1999) reported that, of 48 financial advisers it had visited (including solicitors, chartered accountants and tied agents as well as IFAs), one in five gave bad advice and recommended products that were unnecessary or had high
charges» (p.44). The report identified commission as the common feature of bad advice: «bad recommendations were nearly all for products that would earn the adviser or their employer more money upfront...» (p. 45).

A way to avoid commission is to charge full-cost fees for the financial advice itself. As in the case of career guidance, however, there seems to be consumer resistance to paying such fees. The compromise solution being adopted by some financial advisers is to mix fee-based advice and related commission: the cost of developing a financial plan for the individual is built on a fee basis; if however the individual decides to buy one or more financial products as part of implementing this plan, the commission acquired by the adviser is deducted from the fee (Gascoigne, 1999).

It is worth noting that the notion of a free publicly-funded service does not necessarily resolve the issue of impartiality. Bond (1999) has pointed out that the advice offered by guidance agencies such as the Employment Service and the Benefits Agency is often biased by the policy pressures to get individuals off benefit. Thus «within New Deal programmes, lone parents and others looking for work are increasingly being offered ‘better off’ calculations by Employment Service “personal advisers”, whose use of computer equipment gives an illusion of accuracy». But Employment Service staff «have a vested interest in moving unemployed people from welfare to work». Thus «there are real risks that, as with the pensions mis-selling scandal, their limitations and specifically their partisan nature will go unrecognised by all who are not financially literate».

The relationship of impartiality to remuneration is recognised within the financial guidance sector as a key issue that needs to be resolved. The Director-General of the IFA Association has recently written: «The IFA sector will never achieve the highest standards of professional respectability that we have always sought until this contentious issue is laid to rest. It appears that a regime of super-transparency is now necessary: one which will leave the client in no doubt whatsoever as to how the IFA is remunerated and which offers a real choice in the way independent advice is funded» (Heath, 1999, p. 50).

The same point, arguably, is true in relation to the field of career guidance. The service standards being developed by the National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance (1999) should be helpful in this respect: one of their features is transparency in relation to the issue of impartiality. From 2001, these standards are to be mandatory for all adult guidance services in receipt of public funds (DfEE, 1999a). Their status in relation to other guidance provision – including that offered by further and higher education institutions – is however as yet unclear. There would seem to be scope for more sharing of experience between the career guidance and financial guidance fields concerning how transparency regarding impartiality is to be achieved, and its implications for the development of the two sectors.

**Overlaps**

Not only do the career guidance and financial guidance sectors bear strong similarities to one another: there are also increasing overlaps between them. This is evident, for example, in the school curriculum. The Learning Framework for Personal Finance includes reference to exploring «different employment and career structures, looking at the
implications of the frequency of job change, job security, and employment versus self-employment in the context of financial decision making» (PFEG, 1998a, p.12). Again, *The Real Game* – a career simulation developed in Canada which is currently being piloted for UK use – devotes considerable attention to demonstrating the relationships between jobs, disposable income and lifestyles, and includes attention to money-management issues (Edwards & Watts, 1998).

There is also growing overlap as a result of the pressures towards lifelong learning. Individuals’ decisions about investment in learning increasingly have financial implications. Conversely, one of individuals’ key financial investment decisions is how much to invest in learning as opposed to other forms of investment. For some, motivation for learning will be significantly influenced by risk assessment related to what its financial outcomes are likely to be in terms of career progression.

The advent of Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) could increase significantly the extent of such overlap. ILAs are based on two key principles: that individuals are best placed to choose what and how they want to learn; and that the responsibility for investment in learning should be shared (in varying combinations) between individuals, employers and the state. The Government’s present commitment is to launch a million ILAs, with a private contribution of £150; and to develop a national framework (see DfEE, 1999b). In the longer term, most or all public funding for post-compulsory education and training could be routed via ILAs (Smith & Spurling, 1999).

Access to high-quality guidance is particularly critical if employers and the state are to be prepared to invest in accounts which individuals control. Such guidance needs to include elements both of career guidance, to clarify the individual’s career goals and the career benefits of choosing particular learning options, and of financial guidance, to clarify the returns from investment in learning as opposed to savings. These could be provided either separately, or jointly. If separately, career guidance services will need to confront issues relating to how they respond to questions about yields from investment in ILAs. If, for example, they offer informed opinion, could this come within the terms of the Financial Services Act, and lead to the need for a complaints system to protect the consumer? If, on the other hand, they offer referrals, to whom do they refer? Are IFAs likely to promote ILAs as against other financial products if they receive no commission on them?

The attitude of financial advisers to ILAs could be critical to their success. Current government policy favours investment in Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs) and Stakeholder Pensions (SPs). Lifelong learning is however viewed as the route to sustained/higher earnings throughout life. Financial advisers could therefore be encouraged to view ILAs today as increasing the value of ISAs and SPs tomorrow.

It is also possible that, in the longer term, payments for both career and financial guidance could themselves be channelled through ILAs, including contributions from individuals and/or employers and/or the state. This might provide a means of making such guidance more widely available to all, including middle-income groups – who thereby would pay a fee, but at a subsidised rate. It could offer a further alternative model for funding the development of guidance services.
Future links

In principle, there would seem to be a growing case for exploring possibilities to bring career guidance and financial guidance provision closer together. Such linked provision might include access to information and generic advice through Internet websites: this might cover basic information, diagnosis of need, and signposting to relevant guidance services where these needs might be met. It might also include one-stop shops offering information and generic advice: these might be based in high-street locations, with satellites and other outreach activities in local communities. Beyond this, it might include a wide range of guidance services, to which referral could be made from the websites and the one-stop shops.

Within such a range, career guidance and financial provision might be parallel, with appropriate links. Alternatively, it might be overlapping, with career guidance services offering some limited financial guidance, and financial guidance services offering some limited career guidance. Or it might be integrated, with fully merged services. Some pilot projects exploring the latter models would be fruitful, particularly if they were carefully evaluated to assess their potential for widespread implementation. Whatever the model, there could be a case for some joint or reciprocal training and accreditation. It might also be helpful if the National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance could discuss with relevant financial guidance bodies whether there should be a closer relationship between the two fields in terms of quality standards and kitemarking procedures. Attention should be paid within these discussions to occupational standards in the two fields. In addition, there is a need for a thorough review to be conducted of available research evidence on the economic value of investment in learning as opposed to other forms of personal investment, and also of different learning opportunities, with the results being pulled together in a form which enables them to be readily used by both careers advisers and financial advisers.

These recommendations, together with a number of others, emerged from the consultation event which formed the final stage of the project reported here (Watts & Stevens, 1999). We do not want to suggest that these links should be explored at the expense of links with other related fields. But we consider that both career guidance and financial guidance could benefit from closer relationships with one another. We are interested in working with relevant organisations to follow up these recommendations.

SÍNTESIS EN CASTELLANO

La relación entre la Orientación para la Carrera y el Asesoramiento Financiero

En este artículo se explora la relación entre los campos de la orientación para la carrera y el asesoramiento financiero (en inglés se utiliza el mismo término para ambos – guidance – con adjetivos distintos) y las posibilidades de colaboración y vinculación entre ambos en la práctica de la orientación. Para los autores, existen grandes semejanzas que incluyen similitudes conceptuales, curriculares, organizativas y éticas. Además, al exigirle a los individuos que se responsabilicen cada vez más por su aprendizaje a lo largo de toda la vida y por la gestión de su dinero, también se producen solapamientos entre ambos campos.

En la introducción se argumenta que la estructura flexible y cambiante del mercado laboral hace que las personas tengan más posibilidades y soberanía para gestionar su propia vida, pero también
conlleva mayores riesgos y la pérdida de la seguridad que proporcionaban las estructuras laborales y roles ocupacionales de la era industrial. El resultado es que ahora los individuos deben gestionar tanto su trabajo como sus finanzas, teniendo que invertir tanto en formación y desarrollo profesional como en seguros, pensiones, etc. La seguridad ya no radica en el empleo sino en la empleabilidad. En el Reino Unido son manifiestas estas tendencias en las políticas del gobierno, referidas tanto al aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida como a la reforma social.

La ayuda que se presta en este sentido corresponde a dos sectores independientes: el sector de la orientación para la carrera que se encarga de orientar para la formación y para el trabajo; y el sector del asesoramiento financiero. Se han desarrollado por separado y entre ambos ha existido poca comunicación, sin embargo hay diversas semejanzas y aspectos comunes entre ellos.

Se describen someramente los servicios de asesoramiento financiero, clasificándolos en dos grupos principales: el primero que comprende todas aquellas empresas que proporcionan asesoramiento para la inversión financiera que supone obtener ganancias, y el segundo que se dirige a aquellas personas con pocos recursos, para su «supervivencia» financiera. Estos últimos incluyen los servicios a estudiantes de educación superior, así como diversos servicios locales de la comunidad (especial para el alojamiento), y otras de carácter voluntario. Además también existen diversas acciones educativas dirigidas a la alfabetización financiera en los colegios para enseñar a los estudiantes gestión económica y habilidades empresariales.

Las semejanzas entre estos dos campos pueden ser de tipo conceptual: ambos se centran en la toma de decisiones, intentan relacionar las oportunidades con los recursos personales y los intereses y valores personales, implican sentimientos y razón e incorporan elementos de riesgo. En ambos casos las decisiones están influidas por miembros de la familia y a su vez pueden tener implicaciones para los mismos. Por supuesto también hay muchas diferencias: la orientación para la carrera se relaciona más con el auto-concepto y la formación de la identidad, existiendo una base más psicológica; mientras que el asesoramiento financiero es más técnico y las decisiones se refieren a sistemas normalmente desconocidos para la mayoría de las personas y por tanto tiende a ser más directivo. Las semejanzas suelen darse más en las tareas o habilidades necesarias para gestionar el propio desarrollo profesional (o la carrera) o las propias finanzas, mientras que las diferencias se dan básicamente en los conocimientos y en el nivel de comprensión.

Las semejanzas de tipo curricular se refieren a su inclusión en el currículum escolar: si los individuos tienen que responsabilizarse más por su propia carrera y por sus finanzas, es en la escuela donde deben sentarse las bases para esta auto-gestión. En ambos casos existe la misma cuestión sobre cómo debe llevarse a cabo esta inclusión y el tiempo que debe dedicársele. Sin embargo, se ha debatido más la educación y orientación para la carrera, que la «orientación financiera». En ambos casos los profesores no tienen la formación necesaria. En Inglaterra y Gales, la educación y carrera para los alumnos de 13-16 años, pero no hay tal base legal para la educación financiera. Sería necesario además continuar esta educación en la edad adulta: puesto que en la edad escolar sólo pueden sentarse las bases – las habilidades y competencias – necesitarán mayor profundización y ésta sólo puede adquirirse en relación con las circunstancias inmediatas.

Las semejanzas organizativas tienen que ver con la institucionalización de los servicios y su financiación – si son públicos, subvencionados por el Estado, o privados, y en este último caso quién paga: el usuario, empresas benefactoras, una combinación entre ambos, si se hacen contratos, etc., o cualquier otro sistema de subvenciones. Las semejanzas éticas se refieren a la necesidad de imparcialidad por parte de los servicios que prestan la orientación o el asesoramiento – por ejemplo si el número de alumnos en una institución educativa es un criterio para obtener financiación externa, los servicios de orientación deben tener cuidado para no ocultar información sobre otros centros y/o estudios o influir a los alumnos de forma sesgada. Existen toda una serie de normas éticas que deben aplicarse en ambos campos.

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Se discuten los solapamientos entre ambos – como el que se puede dar en el currículum escolar, o el que se da por las presiones y necesidad de la formación continua y el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida. Las decisiones sobre la inversión en acciones formativas tienen implicaciones económicas. Asimismo, una de las decisiones claves en la inversión financiera es cuánto invertir en formación. En el Reino Unido ha surgido una iniciativa denominada Individual Learning Account – Cuenta Individual de Aprendizaje – mediante la cual se proporcionan préstamos y/o ayudas para la formación de los individuos. Así si los empresarios y el Estado están dispuestos a invertir en estas cuentas, la orientación debe incluir elementos de orientación para la carrera, para ayudar a los individuos a clarificar sus metas y los beneficios de elegir opciones formativas determinadas, y elementos de asesoramiento financiero para clarificar las ganancias de las inversiones en aprendizaje en contraposición a los ahorros. Esta orientación puede darse conjuntamente mediante servicios integrados, o de forma separada.

Por último, se concluye con unas reflexiones sobre los posibles vínculos futuros entre ambos campos, argumentando que en principio existen razones que justifican el acercamiento entre la orientación para la carrera y el asesoramiento financiero. Las posibilidades son variadas desde el mero acceso a información relevante hasta una ayuda más personalizada. Pueden darse varios modelos: uno paralelo con conexiones apropiadas; otro solapado en el que los servicios de orientación proporcionen asesoramiento financiero limitado, y los servicios de asesoramiento proporcionen algo de orientación profesional; o uno integrado en el que se han fusionado ambos servicios. Las recomendaciones que hacen los autores de este artículo están basadas en una encuesta que formó parte de un proyecto más amplio de consulta sobre este tema. No pretenden excluir otros vínculos o conexiones de los servicios de orientación, pero consideran que tanto los servicios de orientación para la carrera, como los servicios de asesoramiento financiero pueden beneficiarse de una relación y colaboración más estrecha entre ambos.

**References**


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