

REPORTS AND INQUIRIES

The Development of Vocational Guidance in Asia

It is quite common for the employment market in the under-developed and densely populated countries to be seriously overcrowded with workers who have difficulty in fitting into modern factory life. At the same time, economic development is hampered by the shortage of skilled labour, technicians and executives. In order to deal with this paradoxical state of affairs, these countries need efficient employment services and proper vocational guidance and training facilities. It is therefore encouraging to note from the following article, which gives an account of the organisation, methods and future problems of vocational guidance in Asia, that some countries in that continent have already made substantial progress in this field.

Systematic vocational guidance work is of comparatively recent origin all over the world, dating at the earliest from the latter half of the nineteenth century. But in most countries in Asia it has made its appearance only during the last few years. Faced with rapid population growth, unemployment and underemployment, the countries of the region are coming to realise more and more clearly that vocational guidance has an important part to play in their efforts to hasten economic and social development; for, though vocational guidance cannot create jobs nor supply skilled workers directly, it can make for a more efficient use of available manpower and contribute to higher productivity, higher incomes and hence, in the long run, to a higher level of employment.

A number of activities in related fields have, of course, helped to pave the way for the introduction of guidance and are continuing to develop alongside it, and it may be of interest to mention the most important of these before examining in detail the present state of guidance in the various countries.

Great strides have been made since the Second World War in the introduction of employment services, which now exist in most Asian countries, though they differ greatly in development. Many local offices are beginning to compile information on the age, sex, occupational classification, etc., of job applicants. In some countries they also collect data on wages, hours and conditions of work, employment trends and the like. In many they are handling special categories of job seekers such as the disabled, young persons and women, and highly qualified applicants. Manpower surveys have also been carried out in a number of Asian countries in connection with economic development plans. Ceylon was among the first to survey its manpower

resources and to set up the nucleus of an employment information programme. More recently, both Pakistan and India¹ have been active in this field.

The shortage of skilled personnel at all levels is regarded as a serious obstacle to economic development in Asian countries, and programmes of training and apprenticeship are under way throughout the region. This problem has been tackled through the establishment of management training and productivity institutes, seminars and courses on modern management techniques, apprenticeship schools, and training centres for supervisors and vocational instructors. A number of countries are also overhauling their legislation on apprenticeship.

Finally, in their educational programmes most Asian countries have recognised the need for a practical bias in school work and the number of special institutions for vocational and technical education has been increasing.² In view of the importance of medical reports in vocational guidance it is of interest to note that some kind of medical service for schools exists in many Asian countries.³

The International Labour Organisation has been active in a number of fields that have a direct or indirect relationship with vocational guidance in Asia, both through the conferences and meetings it has organised and through its technical assistance activities.

Several countries, including India, Indonesia, Pakistan and Viet-Nam, have recently sought the assistance of the I.L.O. in assessing their manpower position in relation to economic development and in determining the main lines of their manpower policy. At the request of the governments of Asian countries the I.L.O. organised a regional employment information training course at New Delhi in October and November 1957, one of the subjects of which was the use of information about labour supply and demand for vocational guidance purposes.

Assistance has also been given to Asian countries on employment service organisation generally, either through individual experts sent to work at the national level or through regional projects such as the Asian Manpower Technical Conference which met at Bangkok in 1951 and the Asian Regional Institute of Employment Service Organisation held at Tokyo in 1952.

In the field of vocational training vigorous action has been taken, particularly since 1957, when the first I.L.O. Asian Regional Conference emphasised the vital importance to Asian countries of vocational and technical training.⁴

The protection of young workers in Asian countries was discussed at a technical meeting held at Kandy in 1952 and at the Third Asian Regional Conference of the I.L.O. (Tokyo, 1953). A number of technical assistance missions have also dealt with the same subject.

The Asian Advisory Committee of the I.L.O., which meets from time to time to plan and guide the Organisation's work in the Asian countries, has considered some of the problems related directly or indirectly to vocational guidance. In 1957 the subject of vocational guidance was included as a separate item on the agenda of the Eighth

¹ See B. N. DATAR : " Manpower Planning in India ", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. LXXVIII, No. 1, July 1958, p. 56.

² See *Measures for the Protection of Young Workers in Asian Countries*, Report III, Third Asian Regional Conference of the I.L.O., Tokyo, 1953 (ronéoed).

³ See U.N.E.S.C.O. : *World Survey of Education* (Paris, 1955).

⁴ For an account of the I.L.O.'s technical assistance activities in the field of vocational training see *International Labour Review*, Vol. LXXV, No. 6, June 1957, pp. 514-529.

Session of the Committee at New Delhi. The Committee considered the relation of vocational guidance to certain major problems of economic and social development in Asia, the practical approaches to vocational guidance in the region and the current development of guidance services.

However, the subject of vocational guidance received its most thorough consideration at the First Asian Regional Seminar on Vocational Guidance including Employment Counselling, which was held from 27 November to 21 December 1957 at New Delhi under the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance.¹ The seminar provided an opportunity to clarify the role and various concepts of vocational guidance, to familiarise participants with the component parts of technical guidance programmes, and to stimulate an exchange of experience on the problems of vocational guidance in Asia. It was attended by 15 fellows from eight Asian countries and an additional 14 associate fellows designated by the host country.

It may be mentioned that, in addition to the fellowships granted for this seminar, individual fellowships have also been granted under the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance in fields connected with vocational guidance, and that some Asian countries have benefited from such fellowships. In certain cases group study tours or courses have been organised for officials responsible for vocational training problems or apprenticeship administration, including instruction in vocational guidance and visits to vocational guidance services. This was the case of the Asian Vocational Training Institute (1950) and the Asian Apprenticeship Working Party (1952).

The I.L.O. has also sent an expert in the fields of occupational classification, youth employment service and vocational guidance to India, in 1955-56, and again in 1957-58. This expert worked in close co-operation with a U.N.E.S.C.O. expert sent to India in 1955-56 on the educational aspects of vocational guidance.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANISATION OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

Ceylon

In Ceylon a scheme of vocational guidance for young persons was introduced in October 1956 as part of a reform of the country's educational system. Under this system several alternative types of education are provided and this requires selection between pupils at the end of primary school and again at the end of junior secondary school. The latter selection distinguishes, in particular, between pupils who will go to vocational schools and those who will proceed to senior secondary education.

In February 1957 very comprehensive instructions were issued for the use of schools and school personnel in all phases of vocational guidance, including placement. These instructions envisaged a five-step vocational guidance programme including (1) information to pupils about vocational opportunities and about themselves; (2) helping the student to make a vocational choice; (3) preparing the school leaver for a job, which involves training; (4) the actual placement, which is to be done by youth employment services to be opened in the Ministry of Education; and (5) follow-up. The scheme is confined to government schools.

¹ See *Report to Participating Governments on the Asian Regional Seminar on Vocational Guidance, Including Employment Counselling*, I.L.O./T.A.P./A.F.E./R.3, Geneva, 1957 (reissued).

China

In China the promotion of vocational guidance was first carried out through the Chinese Vocational Education Association, founded in 1937, which helped to popularise and explain the purpose of vocational guidance activities and to encourage research and practical experiments in the field. Between 1939 and 1942 vocational guidance agencies were started in a few localities in connection with the introduction by the Association of vocational training.¹

In the Republic of China (Taiwan) vocational guidance was introduced in 1956 as one of the functions of the Taiwan Employment Service, which comprises a headquarters office at Taipei and 22 local employment offices. Policy questions are handled by a vocational guidance committee, which comprises the department heads of the Taiwan Provincial Government and a panel of selected experts and consultants.

India

In India certain universities and social service agencies initiated work related to vocational guidance some 20 years ago. In 1938 and 1945 respectively, the universities of Calcutta and Patna began research work in the field of mental tests and practical vocational guidance. In 1947 the trustees of the Parsi Panchayat Charities in Bombay opened a vocational guidance division to members of all communities. More recently, the Psychology Research Wing of the Defence Science Organisation started preparing tests and applying them extensively in the selection programmes of the armed services, and this stimulated the use of tests in vocational guidance.

As a result of the recommendation of the Mudaliar Commission on Secondary Education, 1953, and the Shiva Rao Committee on Employment and Training, 1954, full official recognition was accorded to vocational guidance and a national vocational guidance programme was set on foot. In 1954 the Union Ministry of Education established the Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance at Delhi and offered financial assistance to state governments that wished to open or extend bureaux.²

By the end of 1957 educational and vocational guidance bureaux existed in seven out of 14 states and in five centrally administered areas in addition to the central bureau at Delhi. The programmes of the state bureaux consist mainly of introducing vocational guidance in the schools, of training teachers in the work of vocational guidance, and of preparing tests and other guidance techniques. Although a good deal of spade work has been done by these bureaux, programmes have been introduced in only a minority of schools. The work of the central bureau consists mainly in co-ordinating the work of the state bureaux and in conducting pilot projects in educational and vocational guidance so as to standardise methods and procedures, to prepare informational material, and to construct tests for use throughout the country.

¹ An order issued on 4 July 1933 by the Ministry of Education had laid down the "functions and responsibilities of local education authorities, secondary schools and elementary schools regarding educational and vocational guidance". Other orders issued in 1942 and 1946 regarding administration of secondary schools also contained provisions concerning guidance.

² The States of Uttar Pradesh and Bombay had already established their own bureaux in 1947 and 1950 respectively.

In 1956 the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment launched its programme of vocational guidance and employment counselling. The Directorate-General of Resettlement and Employment has set up a unit in Delhi to train employment officers in vocational guidance and employment counselling, to standardise methods and techniques of guidance at employment exchanges, to construct tests, and generally to help introduce the programme in the states. Eight units were being established towards the end of 1957 in the employment exchanges at eight major cities and it is planned to establish 50 such units during the period of the second five-year plan, i.e. by the end of 1961. These units will provide guidance to all those who apply at the exchanges for employment and guidance and will co-ordinate their work with the guidance programmes in the schools.

An agreement has been concluded between the Labour and Education Ministries which provides that guidance for schoolchildren and other students is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, while guidance for those who have left school is the function of the Ministry of Labour, which is also responsible for providing employment information to schools.

Some 12 private agencies are also being operated by religious and social services or research organisations, some of which are subsidised by the Union Ministry of Education.

Indonesia

In Indonesia vocational guidance was formally introduced in 1950, when a special division was created by the Ministry of Labour to carry out, within the employment service department, functions which included the organisation of a three-month training course for senior employment counsellors who were called upon to assume the duties of vocational guidance officers. Vocational guidance was first dispensed by senior employment counsellors at local employment exchanges on a part-time basis, but in 1951 a three-year course was organised for training assistant psychologists for vocational guidance purposes. In 1955 vocational guidance units were established in eight employment exchanges.

Guidance is the joint responsibility of the Bureau of Psychology of the Medical Faculty of the University of Indonesia, which is placed under the authority of the Ministry of Education, and of the Vocational Guidance Division of the Ministry of Labour.

Japan

In Japan the first endeavours in the field of vocational guidance date back to the early 1920s when the first vocational counselling centres were established under the public employment service created in 1921. At about the same time the elementary schools started providing guidance services for schoolchildren. The establishment of the Nippon Vocational Guidance Association in 1927, grouping officers of the labour and education departments as well as private individuals, gave an added impetus to the development of this work.

In 1938 the law of the Government Employment Service expressly provided for the regulation of vocational guidance within the employment service organisation. In 1943 vocational courses were introduced in schools and in 1947 the Employment Security Law, the School Education Law and related regulations covering vocational guidance

in the public employment security offices, schools and colleges came into force. Thereafter the main effort was brought to bear on the development of tools and techniques of vocational guidance and the expansion of staff and offices.

The Employment Security Service, headed by the Employment Security Bureau of the Ministry of Labour, at present comprises 46 prefectural government offices and over 400 local employment security offices. In three cities there are also special vocational aptitude counselling centres. More than 500 members of the staff of the employment service are specially trained for vocational guidance work. Some 50 psychologists are employed in the service—ten in the national office and 40 in the prefectural offices. In addition, eight psychologists are working in the three vocational aptitude counselling centres.

An average class "A" employment security office includes an employment exchange section with a vocational guidance unit. The functions of the latter include vocational guidance or employment counselling interviews for juveniles, handicapped persons and other special categories of persons; placement activities in co-operation with placement units; visits to all lower and upper secondary schools for individual interviews of students before they leave school and for lectures and group discussions; and psychological testing. In 1956 the vocational guidance units held 1,846,000 interviews and in the same year 580,000 persons were given aptitude and character tests.

In lower secondary schools considerable attention is devoted to vocational guidance, and some three to four hours a week are devoted to a compulsory vocational course and the same amount to occupational courses on basic crafts, agriculture and industry, open to those who want to enter employment directly upon leaving school. The services of special teacher-counsellors with part-time duties are available to all children in almost all lower secondary schools. In upper secondary schools also, active vocational guidance programmes are carried on by teacher-counsellors.

Both upper and lower secondary schools carry out placement under the supervision of the local employment security office. The Ministry of Education has also set up an advisory committee which provides information and guidance for the development of policy and subsidises some 40 schools each year to undertake pilot projects on vocational guidance.

Philippines

In the Philippines both public and private agencies have long been active in vocational guidance at the local level and carry out programmes of assistance to schoolchildren, school-leavers, handicapped persons and others, but co-ordination of the activities of public and private institutions, the social welfare administration and the employment service has not yet been achieved.

A number of references to the subject are found in the reports of the Director of Education, the earliest (1913) indicating that a beginning had been made with the collection of information on various industries. Later reports show that vocational guidance work was being carried on in certain educational institutions, particularly relating to the placement of graduates of vocational schools. In the 1930s the Philippine Vocational Guidance Association Committee and the Rotary Club of Manila prepared papers on various professions, which were later issued in booklet form.

More recently there have been some definite plans for vocational guidance work, particularly in the Division of City Schools of Manila. In 1949 a seminar on vocational guidance was held to train teachers from the different secondary schools of the Division of City Schools, who also attended advanced courses in guidance in the University of the Philippines and the Philippine Women's University.

The Act of 1952, which established a national employment service, includes provision for an Employment Counselling and Testing Service for the purpose of giving assistance to any person requiring aid in choosing an occupation or in changing his occupation. However, owing to lack of funds, this service is available only in Manila and the surrounding areas for persons above the age of 14 years. In 1954 the Vocational Rehabilitation Act was passed providing for guidance and assistance to physically handicapped persons. In 1957 a special project was launched in Manila to assist school-leavers in the choice of a vocation. In the same year the Apprenticeship Act was passed, which had a bearing on vocational guidance, while a departmental order issued by the Education Department made vocational guidance an integral part of the secondary school system. The Vocational Information and Placement Division of the Bureau of Public Schools, under the Education Department, has the over-all responsibility for guidance in educational institutions.

Thailand

In Thailand vocational guidance was introduced as part of a programme of educational reform formulated in collaboration with a mission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (U.N.E.S.C.O.) in 1950. The mission had recommended the early establishment in the Ministry of Education of a special Research and Intelligence Bureau and listed among the subjects likely to engage the attention of such a bureau "education in relation to industry, and vocational guidance".

The Department of Vocational Guidance in Thailand is responsible at both the national and local levels for the operation of a vocational guidance service. The service is available at present only in urban districts to about 10 per cent. of students in different types of schools.

Viet-Nam

By a Ministerial Order issued in May 1955 to combat unemployment and accelerate vocational training for adults a vocational guidance service was established in Viet-Nam in the Department of Labour. For the present the service is available in the Saigon region for persons between the ages of 16 and 39 years. Psychological testing is normally done by the Office of Vocational Guidance.

Plans for extending the service to other regions exist. A consultative committee has been set up comprising representatives of employers, workers, the Department of National Education and experts and other competent persons in the industrial field. At present no guidance is available to students faced with a choice of courses within the school system, nor to young persons just after leaving school. However, it is proposed to make provision for such cases.

Other Countries

In almost all the remaining countries of the region, even though no vocational guidance services have yet been introduced, some thought

has been given to their introduction. In Burma a committee was appointed in 1954 to draw up plans for technical education in agricultural and other fields, of which a sound vocational guidance system would form an integral part. The report of the committee, published in 1956, recommended that vocational guidance work should be assigned to the education authorities. This recommendation has not yet been accepted by the Government, and one of the questions under consideration is whether guidance should be the responsibility of the labour or education authorities. In Malaya plans were under way in 1957 for the production of vocational guidance pamphlets on specified apprenticeship trades and their distribution to headmasters of schools for use in giving guidance to parents and teachers. A senior official in charge of employment exchanges has also been sent to Australia to study vocational guidance services. In Pakistan vocational guidance has been recommended in the first five-year plan as well as in the reports of missions of technical assistance experts in the field of employment service organisation, manpower surveys and vocational training.

METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

At the present stage of the development of vocational guidance services in Asia the methods and techniques of vocational guidance cannot be expected to be very highly evolved or diversified. Nevertheless, most countries of the region are deriving benefit from the experience of more advanced systems and have made commendable beginnings in this respect. Some of them have indeed acquired a good deal of experience in the adaptation of these techniques to local circumstances.

Analysis of the Individual

One of the foremost needs of vocational guidance work is the analysis of the individual. This involves action in several fields.

Individual Records and Their Use.

School records are kept, or are being prepared, in various countries, including Ceylon (where cumulative school records have been made compulsory by law), Taiwan and India. However, some difficulties are being encountered in relation not only to the form of such records but also, and primarily, to the qualifications of the teachers who have to keep them. Other kinds of records about individuals, such as reports and records of work experience, seem to be used to a smaller extent.

Psychological Tests.

Psychological—including aptitude—tests, which are used quite commonly in countries where vocational guidance has a longer history, are receiving increased attention in Asian countries. In Ceylon a committee set up in the Education Department is responsible for evolving psychological tests for use by the guidance services. By the end of 1957 four intelligence tests had been standardised in English and local languages for age groups between 11 and 16. It is intended to standardise tests for adults also. In Taiwan the use of intelligence tests has been included in the programme of vocational guidance work of the Employment Service Organisation. In India the construction and standardisa-

tion of tests of intelligence, aptitude and interests are being pursued by universities, the Educational and Vocational Guidance Bureau, the Psychological Research and Service Centres, the Vocational Guidance Unit of the Directorate General of Resettlement and Employment, and other organisations such as the Defence Science Organisation, the Indian Statistical Institute and the Indian Medical Council. Most of these are intelligence tests, both individual and group, and some of them have been developed over the last 20 years. However, standardisation of tests of ability and interests has been taken in hand only recently.

In Japan aptitude and character tests are administered both by the employment service organisation staff, which includes more than specially qualified psychologists, and by the school staffs. In addition, six psychologists in the Ministry of Labour are conducting further study and standardisation of aptitude tests; they have already prepared one intelligence test and two general aptitude test batteries, and are working on their validity. In Indonesia the restandardisation of foreign tests has been undertaken by a special division of the employment service, and each vocational guidance unit of employment offices includes one psychologist who administers tests. In the Philippines the Manila Employment Service is developing a set of aptitude tests in co-operation with the Vocational Information and Placement Division of the Bureau of Public Schools. Such tests are administered normally, while other types of psychological tests are administered in special cases only. In Thailand the results of psychological and aptitude tests are used in vocational guidance in particular cases. In Viet-Nam psychological tests are normally used by the Bureau of Vocational Guidance as part of the scheme for vocational guidance and training of adults.

Interviewing.

Interviewing is used almost universally in the region for the assessment of those seeking guidance. Normally interviews invariably follow testing. In many cases interviewing techniques have already been developed in connection with the work of the employment service organisations. However, the use of individual interviews is limited by lack of resources, especially of trained staff; and very often a combination of individual interviews and group methods is adopted.

Occupational and Employment Information

Much work has been done or initiated in connection with the collection and dissemination of employment information, occupational definitions and classifications, reference material and handbooks on training facilities and occupations, and career pamphlets and visual aids. Occupational classification systems have been adopted in India, Japan, Pakistan and the Philippines.

In Ceylon the Ministry of Education is preparing a series of vocational guidance information sheets on job opportunities based on the National Occupational Classification. In India the most significant contribution has been made by the Ministry of Labour and Employment (Directorate General of Resettlement and Employment). Career pamphlets for nearly 50 occupations have been published in English. The translations of some of these have also been prepared in Indian languages. Handbooks of training facilities containing detailed information about institutional training have been published, one volume for each state. The prepa-

tion of a national classification of occupations is in progress and a dictionary of occupations will be published shortly. Posters on careers have also been issued, and film strips on occupations, supplemented by illustrated guides, have been prepared by the Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance. A general film on the choice of careers has also been made. Pamphlets and booklets on occupations and educational courses have already been published by state bureaux of educational and vocational guidance and by private agencies such as the Y.M.C.A. and the Rotary Club.

In Indonesia the work of preparing a job inventory and a job classification has been going on since 1954 and was expected to be completed by the end of 1958.

Occupational information is particularly well developed in Japan, and some 660 trained job analysts surveyed 10,700 jobs, on the basis of which the Dictionary of Occupations was compiled in 1953. A concise edition of this Dictionary was issued in 1957 and some 165 job descriptions have been prepared for general use. The Ministry of Education publishes annually a special reference manual for teacher-counsellors. As part of its visual aid education programme the Japanese employment service has prepared special colour slides for vocational guidance purposes. The 120 slides prepared up to the end of 1957 cover 26 occupations, and many more slides are in preparation.

In the Philippines the Manila employment office, in co-operation with the Vocational Information and Placement Division of the Bureau of Public Schools, prepares pamphlets on employment information, job requirements and job possibilities and distributes them to school-leavers.

Group Methods

As has been said above, group methods for vocational guidance are often employed in order to overcome the shortage of staff. However, certain techniques of guidance lend themselves to the application of group methods and there seems to be recognition of this principle in Asian countries. Among these techniques the use of film strips and slides has already been mentioned. But other techniques of group guidance have also been adopted.

Group talks have been included in the programme of vocational guidance in Taiwan and in India, where they are given both at the employment offices and in the schools. In Japan the vocational guidance officers of the employment service conduct lectures and group discussions in the schools and provide information concerning labour market conditions and occupations. Besides, occupational subjects are included in the curricula of the lower secondary schools.

An interesting experiment has been made in India for the so-called "educated unemployed" with the object of changing their attitudes towards manual work through "work and orientation centres", three of which have been opened. In these centres young people who are already acquainted with certain trades are given vocational guidance and assisted to enter a trade or set up businesses of their own. Follow-up of some of the batches is in progress and it is hoped in this way to determine the usefulness of this type of group method.

Placement and Follow-Up

In most Asian countries placement is recognised as one of the main objectives of guidance work, and very often the two functions are linked

organisationally. In some cases placement work has been entrusted to a certain extent to the service handling guidance. In Ceylon the youth employment services being opened under the Ministry of Education will also do placement work. A pilot youth employment service has already been started in Colombo and is responsible for finding employment for young persons under a certain age who would not be handled by the ordinary employment exchanges. In Japan the vocational guidance units of the employment offices carry out some placement activity when necessary, but with the co-operation of placement units. Some schools themselves find jobs for school-leavers. In colleges and universities a "student personnel service" handles both guidance and placement.

A follow-up system is provided for in Ceylon's scheme for vocational guidance; a check is to be kept for two years or more on young persons placed in employment through questionnaires sent to them each year as well as to their employers. Follow-up has also been included in the vocational guidance programme in Taiwan. In Japan various surveys have been conducted through the employment service to ascertain the position of those placed in jobs after guidance. Systematic supervision is carried out by the employment service in order to assist the vocational adjustment of the persons placed and to perfect guidance techniques, particular attention being paid to those who have been placed in medium or small establishments. The work takes the form of individual personal visits by the employment service staff and is also carried on through correspondence.

In spite of these beginnings, however, follow-up work is inadequate in Asian countries, as in most countries of the world.

THE MAJOR PROBLEMS OF THE FUTURE

The relation of vocational guidance to certain major problems of economic and social development in Asia today has already been mentioned. This section is devoted primarily to an analysis of the problems obstructing the progress of vocational guidance services and of the direction in which this progress will have to be made. Most of these matters were discussed at the Asian Regional Seminar on Vocational Guidance, already mentioned.

Vocational Guidance and Unemployment

It has been suggested that difficulties might arise if vocational guidance is introduced in countries where unemployment is widespread, since it would be impossible in a large number of cases to satisfy the expectations aroused by vocational guidance advice. This would not only create an impression that efforts were wasted but would also lead to bitter disappointment among the public.

To guard against such damaging notions of vocational guidance the exact role of the services responsible for it must be clearly understood by all concerned. For instance, it has to be realised that vocational guidance does not create jobs—at least not directly. One way of avoiding the psychological difficulties arising from unfulfilled expectations would be to supply accurate employment market information calling attention to overcrowding in certain occupations. Proper vocational guidance would also help young people to give careful consideration to the ad-

vantages of taking advanced training in various skills and would serve to encourage such of them as would otherwise seek further education without a definite goal to take advantage of the employment opportunities afforded in many industries that lack skilled workers and technicians.

The Problem of the Educated Unemployed

Among the unemployed persons in Asia the so-called "educated unemployed" form a special and important group. While there is an acute shortage of technically trained persons—particularly in all branches of the engineering profession and in agronomy—and, at a different level, of skilled workers and technicians, there is a serious surplus of arts and law graduates and high-school leavers with a general education who seek white-collar employment. The attraction of such jobs is due partly to social and cultural patterns, prestige value and personal inclinations, and partly to the material advantages afforded by this type of employment, particularly in government services. The fact that very little is known about employment opportunities in other fields also contributes to aggravate the situation.

In general, attempts are being made to cope with the problem through the supply of accurate and realistic employment market information and the diversification of school curricula, with greater emphasis on training in technical subjects and occupational skills and greater opportunity for it. The situation also calls for determined efforts on the part of the vocational guidance authorities to bring to the attention of young people the difficulties that prevail in the clerical and administrative employment sector, and to discourage at least those whose abilities in this direction are marginal and who could find suitable, as well as gainful, employment in other directions.¹

It must be remembered, nevertheless, that however correct the diagnosis of the employment needs of individuals and of the economy established by the vocational guidance services, their direct action—i.e., the advice they can give—is limited by practical possibilities and represents in every case a more or less satisfactory compromise. Thus, the vocational guidance service has to face the problem of shortages of the type of educational and vocational training facilities needed to prepare the new workers (or job-changers) for the most suitable occupations. The creation of an informed demand for education and training facilities corresponding and proportionate to the real needs of the new generation of workers is, however, an inevitable consequence of the expansion, public acceptance and official recognition of vocational guidance.

Scope of Vocational Guidance

Alternative Lines of Development.

It is obvious that the Asian countries have limited resources for the development of vocational guidance services. To provide a comprehensive service for all who need it would require not only the training and employment of vast numbers of specialists but also the effective operation of a complete system of educational and vocational training adapted to the needs of the country, of employment and occupational information

¹ The interesting experiment undertaken in India in this connection has already been mentioned.

programmes, of fully developed placement facilities as well as institutes for research in industrial psychology, industrial medicine, etc. Needless to say, these optimum conditions do not as yet obtain in any region.

However, since the operation of vocational guidance has an important influence on advancement in these other fields there is no justification for postponing action. Two alternative solutions would be : (a) intensive vocational guidance activity in certain areas where the requisite conditions already exist, with a view to later extension to other areas ; and (b) provision of one or more particular aspects of vocational guidance to the largest possible number of people.

Concentration of vocational guidance in one area is possible when there are a satisfactory school system, a minimum of basic information on the types of employment available or developed in the area, and vocational training facilities, as well as some medical and social service. In such a situation it is possible, with competent personnel, to start a vocational guidance scheme complete in all its essential parts, even if only a very small one, e.g. restricted to young persons leaving one or two schools.

Extensive or collective vocational guidance will become possible when information has been assembled on employment and replacement needs and on the nature and requirements of different occupations.

On the other hand, an incomplete guidance system provided over a wide area sometimes tends to remain incomplete for decades. Hence it may appear preferable in most cases to introduce schemes covering all or most aspects of vocational guidance over a limited geographical area, and to extend their scope gradually as additional resources become available.

Specialisation.

While it is not desirable to branch off into the specialist fields of vocational guidance before a general programme has been put on a proper footing, the vocational guidance services have to be better and better equipped for handling special groups of applicants as they grow in experience and resources. Of course, offices need not be opened for all the different categories of applicants, but the service should be able to handle their special problems. Broadly speaking these categories comprise young persons, both in school and having left school ; adults of various types such as the long-unemployed, job-changers, older workers, women re-entering the labour force after long periods of absence or entering it for the first time, ex-military personnel, etc. ; youth in rural areas ; and physically, socially or mentally handicapped persons.

Development of Methods and Techniques

A large number of methods and techniques have been evolved in countries with long experience of vocational guidance work ; although all of them cannot and need not be introduced in the Asian countries at once, they will have to be adopted gradually as vocational guidance services grow and in so far as resources permit, and the more important of them are therefore discussed below.

Psychological Tests.

A distinction has to be drawn between the selection tests designed to determine whether an applicant possesses the required aptitude for a

particular occupation or for training in a specific skill, and guidance tests designed to yield information on the direction in which the applicant's aptitudes lie. For vocational guidance purposes it is especially the latter type of test that is important.

Asian countries experience unusual difficulties in the construction, standardisation and administration of tests. First there is the question of restandardisation of tests, constructed and generally used with good results in the more industrially developed countries. While such tests can advantageously be used in Asian countries, to be of practical value they must be fully adapted to the conditions of the country or even of the region in which they are administered. Not only must the tests be translated into the language of the country concerned but a readily understandable psychological equivalent familiar to the people of the country or its different regions must be found for every concept or object involved. This requires considerable time as well as highly trained skill, as was demonstrated in Japan, where the restandardisation of one of the most widely used American test batteries required three years of efforts by six trained psychologists and no less than 5,000 experimental testings.

Secondly, countries like Ceylon, India, Pakistan and others have to cope with a multiplicity of languages and dialects as well as variations in local customs, and this makes it impracticable to use a battery of tests in a single form throughout the country.

A third difficulty is the lack of trained personnel to administer the tests. Psychological tests should be administered and interpreted under the direction of psychologists, and the use of lay personnel for this work is not only useless but also dangerous.

Fourthly it is common knowledge that any type of psychological service is necessarily costly because of the training of the personnel required, and the necessity for basic research and equipment without which a testing programme would not be scientific.

Finally excessive reliance should not be placed on any particular test or group of tests; on the other hand the use of a wide variety of tests, the result of which would in the aggregate be more useful, may often be restricted by lack of resources.

In spite of the drawbacks and difficulties in the way of developing psychological tests for vocational guidance purposes, the desirability of using them to supplement other methods is not generally questioned and has been proved by experience in many countries.

Cumulative School Records.

There is general agreement on the usefulness of keeping up-to-date, detailed and accurate records not only of the school attendance but also of the social backgrounds, interests and ability of schoolchildren, and of the general opinion of their teachers, who have a unique opportunity to acquire an intimate knowledge of their personality. The cumulative school record is an essential tool for vocational guidance at all its stages. However, its value depends on the quality of the teachers who keep it rather than on the layout of the record itself.

Medical Examination.

The role of health in vocational guidance is considerable and a detailed medical examination appears to be an important part of the process. It would be both possible and desirable to use specialists in

vocational medicine who would combine medical training with an intimate knowledge of the specific medical requirements of occupations. This, however, would constitute a long-term objective, since there is an acute shortage of doctors in Asian countries, and the best solution seems to lie in close collaboration between vocational guidance counsellors and school doctors and general practitioners. This would be facilitated by the introduction of standardised medical examination forms on which the physician would systematically record the information required for vocational guidance purposes.

Interviews.

Interviewing techniques are of great importance, and the desirability of training personnel to create an atmosphere in which applicants come to trust their counsellor and make it possible for him to give effective guidance cannot be over-stressed.

Practical Orientation.

As part of the pre-vocational orientation programme some practical orientation can be provided to adults and young persons either in school curricula or in the shape of special visits to workplaces for several days. While a truly comprehensive programme spread over two years and including general orientation, ability orientation and development and occupational orientation would constitute a desirable objective, more modest programmes could usefully be introduced.

Follow-up.

Follow-up, which constitutes the final stage of the vocational guidance process, is generally recommendable and appears to be essential for certain groups such as young persons and the disabled. Follow-up falls into two main categories, namely extended counselling and placement services on the one hand, and surveys designed to obtain information and evaluate results on the other. Although there is a temptation to consider the process of vocational guidance as completed once successful placement has been effected, follow-up cannot be dispensed with since evaluation of the results achieved is essential to the balanced and dynamic growth of guidance.

Employment Market Information.

Employment information is indispensable as background knowledge for teachers giving vocational orientation and for vocational guidance counsellors. While it is emphasised in certain quarters that education and the choice of fields of study are to be determined primarily in the light of individual abilities and interests, assessed by school authorities, and should not be unduly influenced by considerations of employment possibilities, it cannot be denied that the choice of studies usually has some vocational implications, as it widens or narrows the field of occupational choice.

Only in a nation-wide employment service is it possible to collect, analyse and present accurate, complete and up-to-date information on the employment market and the nature of occupations; but the further development of vocational guidance should not be delayed for lack of adequate employment information where guidance activities are at the planning stage.

Occupational Information.

The compilation of occupational information involves serious difficulties in Asian countries, particularly where the employment service is still in its initial stage of development. Nevertheless, good beginnings have already been made in some countries and it appears that in order to make progress without overstraining the limited resources available, a concentration of efforts and the adoption of a well thought-out programme are essential.

Publicity.

No vocational guidance programme can be really successful unless its existence, its aims and objectives and utility are known to the clients—to the parents and to all those who have to participate in the process. A large number of measures have been adopted in industrially advanced countries for giving publicity to vocational guidance services and programmes and the Asian countries will have to do the same. Indeed, such publicity can help to break down traditional attitudes towards work as well as the attitudes of parents, which sometimes obstruct a suitable choice of career.

Research.

Research related to the goals selected by each country in the general field of vocational guidance has to be initiated everywhere. As a first step the primary needs of a country or of selected areas within it must be ascertained so that priorities can be allotted to different aspects of vocational research.

The co-operation of all agencies concerned and the fullest utilisation of existing resources are of paramount importance. In particular, judicious use of the assistance of universities, industry, private associations and devoted individuals, as well as of specialists assigned to technical assistance schemes and more generally of bodies handling labour market information and related questions, can substantially advance the development of a research programme.

Administrative Organisation and Co-ordination

The administrative organisation of vocational guidance in the various countries differs widely because of a number of factors which need not be detailed here. It is therefore difficult to suggest any common pattern of administrative organisation that might be followed by all Asian countries. However, there are a number of broad guiding principles which are regarded as generally appropriate to all the countries of the region, and with which the organisation of national and local authorities responsible for vocational guidance should, as far as practicable, be brought into line.

One of the most common problems in the growth of vocational guidance services is that arising from the respective roles of the education and labour authorities. In certain countries the education authorities have taken the lead, using the facilities offered by school programmes and school personnel, while the labour departments lack both facilities and trained personnel to carry out programmes of the same scope and depth.

In other cases, however, the roles of the labour and education authorities give rise to more fundamental doubts related to the two

different needs served by vocational guidance. On the one hand vocational guidance is used to assist a human being in his legitimate aspiration towards a certain concept of happiness; this aim is linked up with the fundamental human right to freedom of choice of work according to aptitudes, interests and needs, and with the respect of human dignity. On the other hand guidance contributes towards the most judicious possible utilisation of man within the framework of society. The notion that these two needs are somewhat contradictory can indeed be found in a number of industrially advanced countries which have had a comparatively long experience with the subject. The history of vocational guidance in western countries shows a gradual striving towards a system in which the various elements are properly balanced, are complementary instead of conflicting. This balance has by no means been fully achieved; in most countries one or other aspect of vocational guidance developed much earlier than the others, which have not yet fully caught up. Since the Vocational Guidance Recommendation was adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1949 there has been a marked acceleration of progress in this respect as a result of the intensification of exchanges of experience between countries, which have been greatly facilitated by the provision of common grounds for discussion. It should therefore be possible in Asia to avoid many of the false starts and the detours made elsewhere. It was recognised at the Asian Regional Seminar on Vocational Guidance that there was no essential contradiction between the two needs mentioned above, since an individual really suited for his job is, in fact, able to do it better and more quickly, and is a happier man.

An essential guarantee for future balanced development appears to be the formulation, at a fairly early stage, of a general vocational guidance policy in which not only labour and education authorities but also those responsible for health, apprenticeship, social welfare and planning as well as management and organised workers can concur.

It is also necessary to co-ordinate the activities of public and private organisations so as to take the fullest advantage of their experience and facilities and to encourage, if possible without interfering with the free play of initiative, the development of their activities along lines in harmony with the general programme of vocational guidance. Indeed, co-ordination is extremely desirable, even among the private organisations themselves. In this connection advisory committees and centralised research have a very useful part to play. Advisory bodies can be established both at the national and the local levels. In addition, some kind of joint consultative bodies should be established at the highest levels at a very early stage.

The administrative structure should, in short, be such as to permit the application of uniform procedures, methods and standards, and at all stages the fact that vocational guidance is a continuous process should never be lost to view.

Staff and Training

The main bottleneck in the expansion of vocational guidance work is the shortage of qualified personnel, and training and selection are therefore of the utmost importance. Problems of selection and training have to be considered in respect of a large number of groups of officials, including teacher-counsellors, employment counsellors, special officers for the handicapped, officers engaged in psychological testing and those

handling employment and occupational information. The problem of selection and training of vocational guidance personnel was the subject of a special study by the I.L.O., an account of which was recently published in the *International Labour Review*¹; it is therefore unnecessary to dwell upon it at any length in this article.

But the importance of selection and training was well summed up in that study in the following words: "... it is worth re-emphasising one point of crucial importance; no vocational guidance service can exist without personnel trained to perform the different functions which enter into the process. All planning and programming for vocational guidance must take this as the basic point of departure, and the necessary priority must therefore be given to the making of effective practical arrangements for the selection and training of vocational guidance and counselling staff".

¹ "Selection and Training of Vocational Guidance Personnel", Vol. LXXVI, Nos. 5 and 6, May and June 1958.