

Empowering Career Pathways for *Asnaf Faqir* (Poor People)

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Abstract

Every individual harbours a desire for a successful profession that aligns with their unique characteristics. Due to the diverse nature of human personalities, each person requires a distinct professional trajectory to discover a vocation that resonates with their individuality. The study focuses on identifying career pathways tailored for *Asnaf Faqir* individuals, who transition from being zakat receivers to zakat payers. Utilizing qualitative methods like the Delphi Technique through in-depth interviews, it explores factors facilitating successful professional transitions aligned with their unique characteristics. Thematic and Fuzzy Delphi analyses, along with input from career, spiritual, and local experts, validate seven career pathway indicators: career planning, information, decision-making, adaptability, support, spiritual alignment, and compromise. Twelve informants who successfully transitioned contributed to consensus-

building through Focused Group Discussions. These indicators aim to empower *Asnaf Faqir* individuals towards socio-economic self-sufficiency, offering specialized paths to transform their roles in society. Future enhancements could leverage digital tools for online career counselling, virtual training, and mentoring, thereby broadening access to career resources crucial for their continued development and empowerment.

Keywords: Career; *Zakat*; *Asnaf Faqir*; Career Empowerment; Career Planning

Introduction

In the realm of career development, tailoring career paths to the distinct attributes of individuals is crucial for significantly influencing their future careers. Each learner should receive personalized instruction based on his individual traits. This principle is supported by Super et al. (1996), who assert that the

career planning and development of everyone are unique and personalized. Individuals reliant on productive zakat seek self-reliance, aiming to break free from dependency on zakat (Zahri et al., 2023). Consequently, irrespective of whether they possess an opportunist, aggressive, or conventional profile, every *Asnaf Faqir* deserves personalized career development counseling.

Malaysia has experienced poverty ever since colonization. Becoming impoverished is directly related to not being able to afford necessities like food. In Islam, providing for one's fundamental needs—such as food, shelter, healthcare, and education—is a social duty (Jumbri, et al., 2023). Unable to provide for these needs might result in major issues like ill health, restricted access to school, and elevated psychological stress. Because it pertains to fundamental human needs, it's a severe issue.

Individuals who have carefully considered their professional paths demonstrate readiness for the world of work post-graduation and the ability to make informed career choices. A well-structured career path has been shown to enhance career maturity for decision-making. Even career counseling experts emphasize the importance of guided career development, as opposed to allowing it to evolve independently (Super et al., 1996; Holland, 1973; Creed & Hughes, 2012). *Asnaf Faqir* individuals require planned career paths aligned with their personalities, considering the diversity of their personalities and personal profiles (Rasul et al., 2016).

For *Asnaf Faqir* individuals, the challenges of securing suitable employment represent a formidable trial. They face numerous obstacles and challenges compared to individuals from affluent families with strong educational backgrounds (Ramli et

al., 2019). Many *Asnaf Faqir* lack specific ambitions and only focus on day-to-day survival, with limited resources to support their lives. Therefore, the objective of this study is to develop a career path for *Asnaf Faqir* individuals based on their individual career development profiles.

Al-Ghazali (1990) identified that the minimum daily requirement for food and drink should be one mud of basic food, such as grain, even if it is barley. Regarding additional food items usually consumed alongside basic food, it cannot be provided on a regular basis; it may only be given under specific circumstances with permission (Mohd Zaid et al., 2020). Scholars of the *Shafi'iyah* school defined 'Faqir' as someone who lacks sufficient property and employment to meet both their own needs and those of their dependents.

Asnaf Faqir would undoubtedly require sustenance prior to financing in order to expand his business from a philosophical perspective. Muhammad Naveed Aslam et al., (2022) assert that sustenance is required, while financing for business development is required. Consequently, the objective of such financing will not be achieved if they are financed for business development prior to receiving sustenance. A multifaceted approach that addresses both immediate requirements and long-term sustainable solutions is necessary to assist *Asnaf Faqir* in escaping poverty. Offering immediate relief by providing financial aid and resources can guarantee that fundamental necessities, including food, shelter, and education, are met. Furthermore, providing *Asnaf Faqir* with access to vocational training and skill development programmes can improve their employability, thereby creating new opportunities for economic self-sufficiency. In order for *Asnaf Faqir* to flourish, it is imperative to establish a supportive environment through community support

and collaboration with local organizations (Azim Akbar et al., 2024). By integrating long-term empowerment strategies with short-term relief, we can help break the cycle of poverty and establish a path to a more secure and brighter future for Asnaf Faqir.

Methodology

Research Design

A structured approach research design was employed to gather data with the aim of achieving the study's objectives (Figure 1). Serving as a comprehensive guide, this methodology provides researchers with a systematic framework to follow, ensuring the successful completion of the study's goals and effective response to the research questions. Qualitative research is fundamental to this study, focusing on

investigations into (1) how individuals interpret their experiences, (2) how they construct their realities, and (3) the significance of their life experiences (Merriam, 2009). Utilizing a qualitative study design, specifically a case study, implies an investigation within a comparable but distinct framework, commonly referred to as being bound. In the context of this study, exploring the career development routes of *Asnaf Faqir* aligns with the characteristics of a qualitative case study, encompassing multiple instances. The adoption of a qualitative case study methodology allows for an in-depth exploration and understanding of the unique career development experiences of *Asnaf Faqir* individuals within a specific context. This approach ensures a complete analysis of their journey, contributing valuable insights to the broader field of career development.

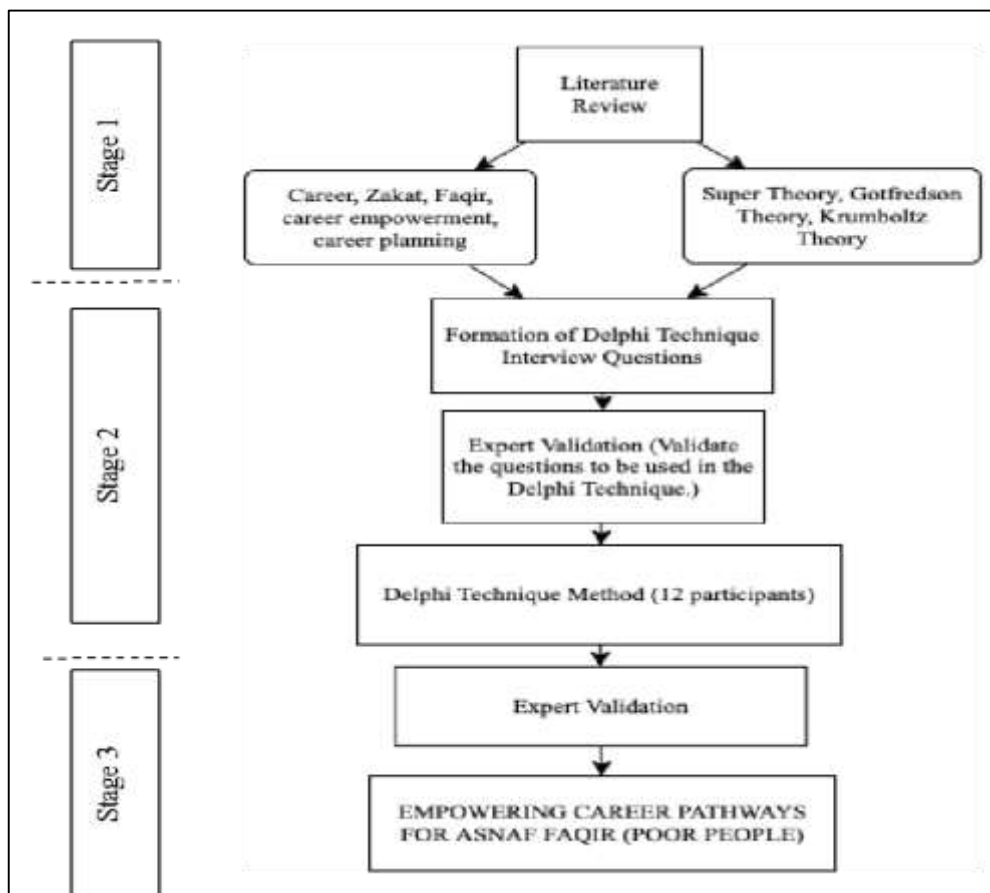


Figure 1: Research design (adapted from Ahmad Rosli, 2016)

The initial stage involved a literature review to establish the conceptual framework for the study. High-income communities, public colleges, careers, *zakat*, *faqir*, and theories related to career development, such as the Super Theory, Gottfredson Theory, and Krumboltz Theory, were the focal points of this literature study. The outcome of this literature review shaped the study's conceptual framework, which, in turn, guided the formulation of interview protocol questions for the first round of the Delphi technique study. These questions were developed with careful consideration of the study's goals and conceptual framework. Subsequently, four individuals refined the components of the interview instrument.

The first round of the Delphi technique commenced with semi-structured interviews conducted with all 12 selected informants. The findings from this initial round were instrumental in creating a questionnaire for the second round of the Delphi technique. Fuzzy Delphi analysis in the second round facilitated a quicker and more accurate consensus among study participants, enabling the researcher to

conclude the Delphi technique after obtaining consensus. The third stage of the study involved constructing a framework for career development paths. The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) approach was employed to validate the developed career development path for *Asnaf Faqir* individuals. This collaborative problem-solving method was chosen as the most effective approach to collectively address the issue at hand (Liamputtong, 2012).

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was employed to select informants for this study, with a total of 12 participants chosen based on specific criteria: (1) Former *zakat* receiver; (2) *Zakat* payer; and (3) Individuals with a stable job in the form of business, private, or public sector employment. Each selected informant received detailed information about the study's objectives, and they willingly filled out a consent form, ensuring their voluntary participation. Furthermore, participants were assured of their freedom to withdraw from the study at any point without any obligation. Table 1 shows the profile of the informants participate in this study.

Table 1: Informants' Profile

No.	PK	Occupations	Education	Income (RM)	Age
1.	PK 1	Craftsman	Year 6	2000	62
2.	PK 2	Retailer	Year 6	4000	47
3.	PK 3	Restaurant Owner	SPM	6000	55
4.	PK 4	Tailor	SPM	5000	30
5.	PK 5	Restaurant Owner	Bachelor	6000	43
6.	PK 6	Tailor	SPM	6000	41
7.	PK 7	Restaurant Owner	SPM	2000	49
8.	PK 8	Restaurant Owner	SPM	2500	45
9.	PK 9	Batik Maker	SPM	8000	47
10.	PK 10	Tailor	SPM	3500	26
11.	PK 11	Businessman	SPM	2500	48
12.	PK 12	Businessman	Bachelor	2000	45

Data Collection Method

Delphi Technique Interview

The Delphi Technique interview was

utilized in two phases to achieve the main objective of obtaining profiles and critical success factors of graduates. The Fuzzy Delphi method was employed to analyze

the gathered data, which serves as crucial elements for constructing a career path plan for *Asnaf Faqir*. The Delphi Technique is recognized as a method to obtain expert consensus on a specific issue (Turoff & Linstone, 2002). This method was chosen for its effectiveness in capturing and refining the views and opinions of a group of experts. It facilitates structured data collection based on the expertise of individuals, contributing to the creation of a uniform and well-informed output (Mustapha & Darussalam, 2018). There are two rounds of the Delphi Techniques. In the initial phase of the Delphi approach, the researcher conducted interviews with informants based on the predetermined protocol questions. These questions aimed to gather insights into the profile, success factors of graduates, and career path plans. The interviewees included graduates who had achieved success in entrepreneurship or were highly skilled professionals. As highlighted by Mustapha and Darussalam (2018), the first round of the Delphi approach serves as a robust means to explore and comprehend the phenomenon under study. This phase enables the researcher to explore the implicit expressions of the respondents, whether conveyed audibly or in writing. The data collected during this round was instrumental in the creation of a questionnaire instrument for further use in the study.

The subsequent phase involved the distribution of a list of statements (items) to each participant, who then manually selected and prioritized them. Participants were given a two-week timeframe to research and vote on the priority of items. During this phase, respondents participating in the Delphi approach were asked to identify their top five item selections. The Delphi Fuzzy Technique, employing Fuzzy Triangular Numbering and the Defuzzification Process, was

utilized to assess the agreement among study participants on all questionnaire items. Fuzzy Triangle Numbering gauged the level of agreement among the assigned panels, while the Defuzzification Process determined the position of each construct and sub-construct. This rigorous second round facilitated a detailed understanding of the participants' perspectives and prioritization, enhancing the depth and precision of the study's findings.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

FGDs serve as a validation method for confirming the career development path of *Asnaf Faqir*. This approach utilizes the Triangulation Method, assessing the consistency of information obtained at different times and through various qualitative methods. In this study, the findings from the Delphi Technique were scrutinized using FGD to evaluate their relevance to the career development of *Asnaf Faqir* individuals. FGD is a qualitative research approach designed for small groups, named "Focus" due to the format of questions posed during discussions (Liamputtong, 2012). Incorporating focus group discussions in both quantitative and qualitative research, including integrating interviews within FGDs, enhances the precision and quality of research outcomes (Barbour, 2007). Triangulation, through the combination of multiple research methods, provides a more comprehensive and robust understanding of the subject matter, reinforcing the credibility and reliability of the study findings.

Data Analysis

The analysis of data in this study involved four stages, each corresponding to a different aspect of the research: individual career development profiles (thematic analysis), career development indicators

(thematic analysis), critical career development factors (fuzzy Delphi), and career development framework (FGD analysis). These distinct stages were employed to align with the diverse data sources and analysis methods necessary to generate meaningful insights.

Following the conclusion of the interviews, the recorded material underwent transcription in preparation for thematic analysis. The thematic analysis was systematically conducted through a six-step procedure, adhering to the established guidelines outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006) and Lochmiller (2021). This method involved the following steps: 1) Familiarizing with the Data, 2) Generating Initial Codes, 3) Finding Themes, 4) Reviewing the Themes, 5) Defining and Naming Themes, 6) Producing Reports, and 7) Summarizing and Documenting the Outcomes of the Thematic Analysis. By adhering to this systematic and structured six-step process, the thematic analysis ensured a rigorous and reliable examination of the interview material, facilitating the extraction of meaningful insights and patterns relevant to the study's objectives.

The researchers employed Nvivo 8.0 software for open coding to gather a comprehensive set of codes during the open coding process. A total of 156 codes were identified. Following open coding, the selectively coded procedure was used to connect informant codes to specific subjects and sub-themes. The researchers utilized this selective coding approach to amalgamate fundamental categories from individual career development profiles, identified through open coding, to construct the desired career development profile. Given that this research is grounded in established theories, a selective coding approach was adopted. Validated codes from theoretical perspectives were directly

categorized under theme and sub-themes on the tree node within the Nvivo program.

Five themes were derived based on the concepts of Career Decision Making by Super (1997) and the Theory of Career Aspiration by Gottfredson (1981). Thematic analysis was individually performed on all 12 informants for the first aspect of the study, focusing on the profile of individual career growth. Thematic analysis, as a method of detecting, interpreting, and reporting patterns (themes) in qualitative data, was employed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher chose a deductive or theoretical approach aligned with the study's theoretical framework. This study utilized a theoretical or deductive thematic analysis as the coding was based on existing theories and previous studies such as the CDI model (Super et al., 1996), Super career development theory (1977), and Gottfredson career aspiration theory (1977). The findings uncovered, for career empowerment from 12 individuals' profiles, seventy-six (76) indicators, and one hundred and thirty (130) critical success factors for *Asnaf Faqir* in their career empowerment.

The Fuzzy Delphi method was employed to analyze the outcomes of the second round, encompassing two primary components: Fuzzy Triangle Numbering and the defuzzification phase. Fuzzy Triangles, also known as Triangular Fuzzy Numbers, were utilized in this method, characterized by three values (a_1 , a_2 , a_3), with a_1 representing the smallest amount, a_2 the most reasonable value, and a_3 the largest value. The numbering of Fuzzy Triangles involves the use of the average value of these fuzzy numbers as illustrated in Figure 2. It depicts the graph of the mean triangle versus the triangular value for the three values in Triangular Fuzzy Numbers.

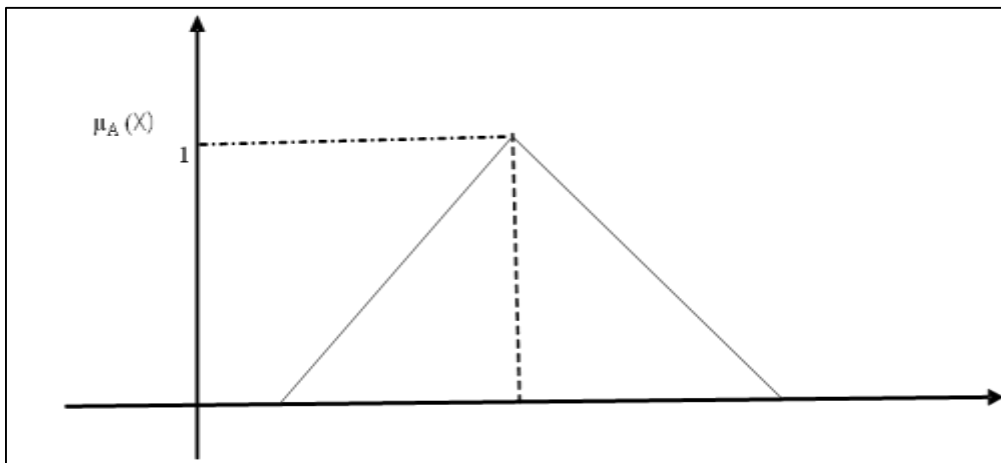


Figure 2: Graph of the Triangles Mean Against the Triangles

The incorporation of three values in the Fuzzy Delphi method serves to illustrate that each scale agreed upon in a fuzzy scale is not fixed, as observed in the traditional Likert Scale (ranging from scales 1 to 5). In the translation of data to the Fuzzy scale, when an expert or respondent selects a value on the Likert scale in the questionnaire, the translation for the chosen scale is delineated into three values: the minimum value (a_1), the most reasonable value (a_2), and the maximum value (a_3). This approach highlights that data translation in the fuzzy scale does not yield a single value. This fundamental distinction distinguishes the usage of fuzzy scales from conventional Likert Scales, offering a more detailed representation of the respondents' perspectives by acknowledging the uncertainty and variability inherent in their assessments.

The defuzzification method plays a crucial role in determining the ranking for each variable and sub-variable, assisting the researcher in evaluating the level of necessity, importance, and relevance of specific variables and sub-variables. This ranking procedure is essential for producing data based on the consensus of experts serving as study responders. The symbol A_{max} is utilized in the defuzzification process, with the formula $A_{max} = 1/3 * (a_1 + a_2 + a_3)$ employed to

calculate the ranking.

Two stages in this process are utilized to determine the ranking and score of items in each variable: Fuzzy Evaluation and Average of Fuzzy Numbers (Average Response). Researchers applied three conditions to determine whether each item agreed upon by the experts should be accepted or eliminated, based on the study's findings. Conditions 1 and 2 are interconnected, operating within the Triangular Fuzzy Numbers area. This section serves as a method for examining expert agreement on a specific construct and item exclusively (Cheng & Lin, 2002). Condition 3, located in the Defuzzification Process section, is utilized to ascertain the position or priority (ranking) of a construct or item by assessing the score value. Condition 3 is also instrumental in determining whether a construct or item should be approved or rejected based on expert agreement. This is achieved by comparing the score value of Average of Fuzzy Number @ Average Response with the value of - cut. In the explanation of condition 3, the value of - cut will be thoroughly detailed. This comprehensive process ensures a robust evaluation and prioritization of constructs and items based on expert consensus and calculated scores.

Condition 1: Using the value of Threshold,

d.

The threshold value (d) is generated using the following formula:

$$d(m, n) = \sqrt[3]{(m_1 - n_1)^2 + (m_2 - n_2)^2 + (m_3 - n_3)^2}$$

The interpretation of data is based on the threshold value (d). If (d) is less than or equal to 0.2, the item is accepted. If (d > 0.2), the item is rejected, or a second round is conducted specifically against the unanimous expert.

Condition 2: Based on Traditional Delphi Method

Following the principles of the Traditional Delphi Technique, if the consensus among the expert group is above 75%, each item is

accepted for inclusion in the study. If the consensus is below 75%, the item is rejected, or a second round is conducted to address disagreements among specialists.

Condition 3: Based on α - cut as the Threshold value

The α -cut value, representing the median value between fuzzy numbers (0-1), is designated as 0.5. This α -cut value is employed in the defuzzification process. If the Average Fuzzy Number @ Average Response score exceeds 0.5, it indicates the acceptance of the construct or item based on expert agreement. Table 2 illustrates the position of the α -cut value in the fuzzy numbering.

Table 2 Position α - cut value in Fuzzy numbering

0.0	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.0
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Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) approach was utilized to formulate a career path framework for *Asnaf Faqir*. This approach was chosen due to its effectiveness in obtaining expert approval for phenomena, practices, or issues (Liamputtong, 2012). While there is some debate regarding the method of analyzing FGD data, with some proposing a similarity to other qualitative methodologies employing thematic analysis, there is a prevailing view that FGD data analysis is distinct.

Many scholars assert that the analysis of FGD data should prioritize the dynamic characteristics of group interaction among participants. This emphasis on group dynamics distinguishes FGD from other methods in qualitative research, providing a unique perspective on the collective insights and interactions within the group setting (Barbour, 2007). The essence of FGD lies in capturing the richness of discussions and the synergistic exchange of

ideas among participants, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

As a result, in this study, the researchers explored the interactions and social dynamics within groups, complementing thematic analysis based on themes from previous rounds and incorporating emergent themes from the FGD. Following the insights of Macnaghten & Myers (2004), it becomes imperative to scrutinize patterns that illustrate participants' comprehension of spoken content, dynamics between moderators and participants, and interactions among participants regarding the discussed topics. The analysis also considered elements like repetition, pauses for reflection before continuing sentences, and other conversational techniques that create a conducive environment for participants to express their thoughts. According to Macnaghten & Myers (2004), the examination of transcripts should involve looking at the entire transcript, recalling the scenarios during the discussion, and

reviewing how participants interacted.

To enhance readability and comprehension, certain criteria were applied during the transcription process: (1) all sentences transcribed in plain language, avoiding short sentences; (2) exclusion of repeated words, incomplete or meaningless sentences; (3) clarification and reaffirmation of difficult-to-understand phrases or paragraphs; and (4) omission of unnecessary elements like paused conversations, short sentences, or high/low intonations. These criteria aimed to ensure the clarity and understandability of the transcription. It is crucial to note that the transcript process does not focus on making decisions but rather on exploring various possibilities for achieving other research objectives. Liamputtong (2012) highlighted that the primary goal of FGD is idea generation rather than seeking unanimous agreement on every issue. However, alignment within the FGD panel facilitates the researcher's examination of a subject or issue with greater ease. This collaborative approach fosters a rich exchange of ideas, contributing to a deeper understanding of the topic under investigation.

In this study, the members of the FGD unanimously endorsed all seven (7) main themes and twenty-seven (27) sub-themes, collectively establishing a comprehensive Career Empowerment Model for *Asnaf Faqir* based on the profiles of the informants. Similar to the Delphi Techniques interview, the FGD analysis employed a coding system to represent the FGD panel. The codes, along with sentence expressions from the informants, served as a reference to accept or reject critical factors forming the foundation of the career development path for *Asnaf Faqir*. The analysis was substantiated by observing the dynamics of panel interaction, including expressions of support, opposition, cynicism, or discomfort exhibited during

the discussion. This multifaceted approach to analysis, integrating both verbal expressions and non-verbal cues, ensures a robust evaluation of the critical factors identified in the study and contributes to the holistic development of the Career Empowerment Model for *Asnaf Faqir*.

Results and Discussion

Career Pathway Indicators

Like individuals in more affluent circumstances, poor people also require indicators for Career Planning, Career Information, and Career Decisions as part of their career path. These indicators align with the principles of Career Development in Super Theory (Super, 1997; Rasul et al., 2015). However, this study revealed a contrast to the needs of normal individuals, as poor people necessitate additional indicators in their career path. They have integrated Career Adaptability, Career Support, and Career Spiritual dimensions into their career growth. This distinction became evident in the investigation of individual profiles of informants. Due to the uniqueness of their profiles, they exhibit their own patterns in individual career growth, setting them apart from others and contributing positively to their professional advancement.

Career Planning

Most of the informants emphasized the significance of Career Planning as a crucial process for setting individual goals and making strategic decisions to attain a fulfilling and successful career path. They highlighted the importance of a systematic approach, involving an understanding of one's interests, strengths, skills, and values, aligning them with potential career options. A well-crafted career plan aids individual in making informed choices, maintaining focus, and adapting to changing

circumstances in their professional journey. Career planning initiates with self-assessment, involving an analysis of personal interests, passions, skills, and values. Informants stressed the need to explore various career options, industries, job roles, and organizations, considering factors that might be appealing. Gathering information about job requirements, growth opportunities, and potential challenges is crucial. Setting clear career goals, prioritizing skill development, establishing networks, and creating a detailed career action plan were identified as key components. According to Bolles (2020), a detailed plan should outline short-term and long-term milestones, anticipate potential challenges, and devise strategies to overcome them. A study conducted by Ahmad Rosli (2016) highlighted that graduates engaging in methodical career planning, regardless of modest academic performance, can achieve success in their professional endeavors. Super (1996) endorsed this systematic approach, emphasizing that career development should not be left to chance but rather necessitates systematic planning to fulfill one's aspirations.

Career Information

Career information plays a crucial role in the career planning process, providing invaluable insights into various professions, industries, job requirements, growth prospects, and the necessary skills for success in a specific field. The gathering of comprehensive and accurate career information is essential for making informed decisions about one's future career path. Key aspects of career information crucial for career study include Job Descriptions, Educational Requirements, Salary and Compensation, Job Outlook and Growth Prospects, Skills and Competencies, Advancement Opportunities, Work Environment, and

Networking through Professional Associations (Lore, 2012). According to Baruch & Lavi-Steiner (2015), the impact of information is highly influential in the future career achievements of *Asnaf Faqir*. Research conducted on a group of students revealed a correlation between academic achievement and subsequent career success. The informants in this study acknowledged the importance of career information; however, they highlighted challenges faced by poor people, particularly in rural areas, in accessing this crucial resource. Limited internet connectivity and financial constraints make it challenging for individuals in rural areas to independently access career information. Consequently, they often rely on societal networks for the dissemination of information, emphasizing the need for improved accessibility in these communities.

Career Decision

The informants highlighted the formidable challenges associated with making career decisions, attributing their difficulties to the economic and social constraints prevalent in their low-income backgrounds. Negotiating various hurdles and obstacles becomes a routine part of their decision-making process, occasionally necessitating a reconsideration of their choices due to perceived impossibilities. Importantly, it is imperative to acknowledge that career success extends beyond one's financial circumstances. With adequate guidance and support, individuals facing economic disadvantages can navigate informed decisions leading to fulfilling and rewarding careers (UNESCO, 2023). According to the informants, several considerations and strategies can aid individuals from low-income families in making effective career decisions. These include engaging in self-assessment, prioritizing education and skill

development, exploring opportunities for scholarships and financial aid, fostering mentorship and networking, participating in vocational training, seeking assistance from career centres, emphasizing the development of transferable skills, and working to build confidence. These measures aim to empower individuals, instilling belief in their abilities and potential. Confidence emerges as a crucial factor influencing the pursuit and success of a chosen career.

Career Adaptability

The concept of career adaptability, initially introduced by Savickas (2013), has undergone further development and operationalization by various scholars. Career adaptability encompasses an individual's capacity to navigate and adapt effectively to evolving circumstances and opportunities within their career. This skill is particularly crucial in today's dynamic job market, characterized by the regular emergence of new technologies and industries, coupled with rapid shifts in the demand for specific skills. Based on thematic analysis, informants identified four key dimensions of career adaptability among *Asnaf Faqir* contributing to success in their careers. These dimensions are a) Career Concern: Involves being proactive and forward-thinking about career development, actively seeking new growth opportunities, b) Career Control: Encompasses the extent to which individuals feel they have control over their career choices and can make decisions aligning with their personal values and goals, c) Career Curiosity: Relates to the level of interest and openness individuals exhibit toward learning and exploring new career options and opportunities, and d) Career Confidence: Involves the level of self-belief and resilience individuals possess, enabling them to overcome obstacles and challenges in their careers.

Understanding and developing these dimensions of career adaptability is essential for individuals, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, as it equips them with the tools to thrive in an ever-changing professional landscape.

Career Support

In this profile, most informants acknowledge relying on fate for their career trajectory, exhibiting a passive approach without proactively engaging in career planning initiatives. They tend to conceal their feelings, refrain from sharing dreams or ambitions, and lack imaginative foresight. Decision-making and planning occur primarily within the confines of perceived appropriateness rather than proactive strategizing. Despite having a slow career awareness relatively, there are a strong desire among them to secure a promising future career. Notably persistent and resilient, they demonstrate a capacity for hard work to achieve their envisioned careers. However, their path to success involves additional challenges as they may lag in comprehensive career information, requiring longer durations and paths to access high-income job opportunities. Despite these hurdles, their tenacity and diligence enable them to realize their dream careers. Study by Ahmad Rosli (2016) emphasize that individuals from low-income backgrounds often navigate their career development passively, underscoring the importance of governmental or NGO support for effective career planning. With proper guidance encompassing financial aid, motivational encouragement, career counselling, equipment support, and ongoing career observation, these individuals demonstrate the potential for success when provided with adequate career support pathways.

Career Spiritual

In the context of discussing careers within the Muslim community, it is imperative to discover the spiritual dimensions that form the bedrock of their lives. All individuals in this study adhere to the Islamic faith and share a common perspective on the significance of seeking spiritual reliance on Allah when confronting career challenges. Islam views careers not only as a worldly necessity for human survival on earth but also as a spiritual endeavour (Sidek, 2006). A study by Ahmad Rosli et al. (2021) highlights the pivotal role of spirituality in contemporary careers, emphasizing its impact on an individual's professional journey. The findings of this study illuminate essential spiritual elements contributing to career success for Muslims, including sincere intentions, unwavering determination, perseverance, maintaining a profound relationship with God, and fostering connections with others. For Muslims, exerting utmost effort, accompanied by prayers and trust in Allah, becomes integral in navigating their careers and overcoming challenges with resilience and faith.

Validating Asnaf Faqir Career Empowerment Path Indicator

A unanimous agreement was obtained from all panels in the FGD on the six indicators identified through thematic analysis and Fuzzy Delphi Analysis from in-depth interviews with former *Asnaf Faqir* who successfully transitioned from zakat receivers to zakat givers. The panels expressed the belief that these indicators would significantly contribute to changing the lives of *Asnaf Faqir* in the future and emphasized the importance of fulfilling each of them.

Notably, the inclusion of Career Compromise in the Career Path met with unanimous approval, despite no explicit identification of career compromise as a

success factor in the informant interviews. The panels recognized compromise as a crucial indicator in the career path of *Asnaf Faqir*. Navigating compromise is a crucial aspect for individuals from low-income backgrounds, requiring decisions that strike a balance between aspirations and practical considerations linked to financial constraints. Although pursuing dream careers may pose challenges due to economic limitations, adopting strategic compromises can still pave the way for fulfilling and stable employment opportunities. Strategies for career compromise, as outlined by the FGD's panel, include:

1. *Consider Both Short-term and Long-term Goals:* Encourage individuals, especially *Asnaf Faqir*, to contemplate both short-term and long-term career goals. While achieving their dream careers may demand significant investments in education, starting with entry-level positions in related fields can provide valuable experience and income.
2. *Explore Alternative Career Pathways:* Consensus among panels emphasizes the exploration of alternative career pathways that align with the interests and skills of *Asnaf Faqir*. These pathways may not necessitate extensive education or training but can still lead to fulfilling careers.
3. *Utilize Existing Skills and Talents:* *Asnaf Faqir* should identify ways to leverage their existing skills and talents in different job roles or industries, allowing them to capitalize on their strengths.
4. *Opt for Part-time Education:* Recognizing the financial

challenges of pursuing higher education, *Asnaf Faqir* can opt for part-time education, enabling them to work while studying and managing their financial constraints.

5. *Seek Employer Support*: Individuals are encouraged to seek employers who offer skill development and training programs, leveraging these opportunities to enhance their skills and succeed in their jobs.
6. *Emphasize Networking and Mentorship*: *Asnaf Faqir* should actively build professional networks and seek mentorship from successful professionals. Networking can lead to job opportunities, and mentorship provides valuable guidance for

career growth.

7. *Pursue Side Hustles*: Engaging in side hustles or part-time gigs aligned with personal interests can generate additional income. This extra money can support educational pursuits or investment in professional development.
8. *Implement Financial Planning*: Panels advise individuals to create a realistic financial plan, considering education costs, living expenses, and potential income growth over time. Budgeting becomes a valuable tool for making informed decisions about their career journey.

Figure 3 shows a conceptual framework of the above-mentioned strategies for career compromise among *Asnaf Faqir*.

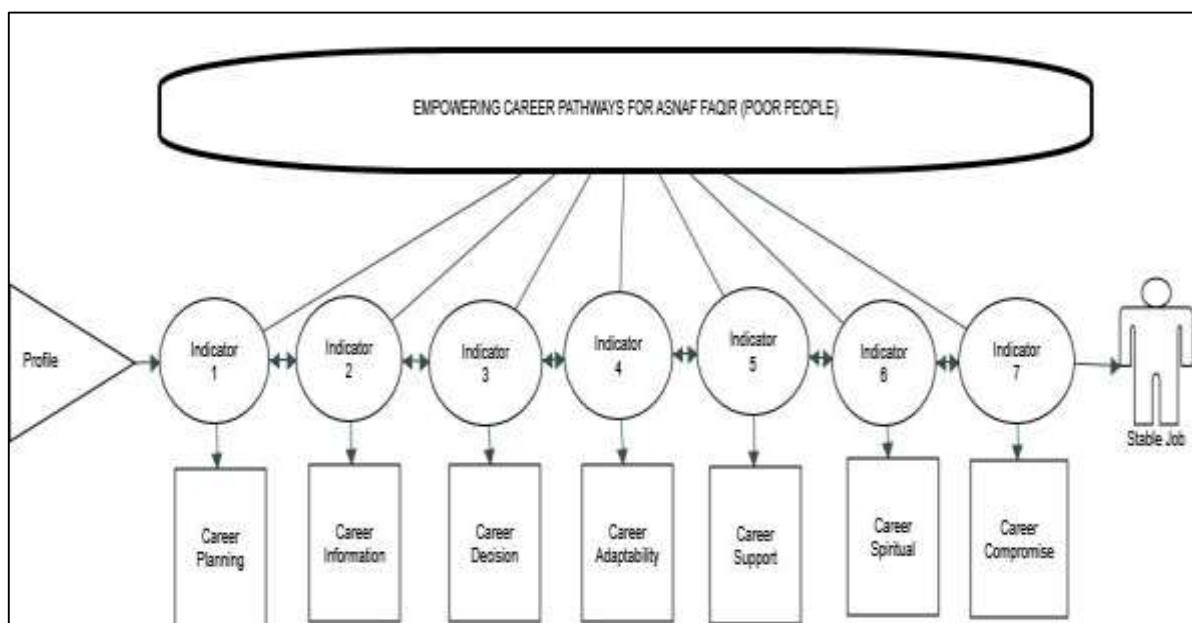


Figure 3: Conceptual Framework
 Adaptation of the Career Development Inventory (CDI) structure and Gottfredson's Career Aspiration Theory (Gottfredson, 2005).

Conclusion

The findings of this study could be the development of a dynamic, driven career development platform tailored specifically

for *Asnaf Faqir* individuals. This platform would leverage the seven established indicators which are 1) Career Planning, 2) Career Information, 3) Career Decision, 4) Career Compromise, 5) Career

Adaptability, 6) Career Support, and 7) Career Spiritual—while providing real-time, personalized guidance and resources. This study concluded that personalized career development strategies can significantly enhance the socio-economic mobility of disadvantaged groups, such as Asnaf Faqir individuals. By recognizing and leveraging the unique characteristics and strengths of everyone, targeted interventions can be designed to address specific needs and challenges. A potential further study could build on the successful identification of career pathways for Asnaf Faqir individuals by investigating the implementation and impact of these pathways in real-world settings especially in online and digital technology.

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