

VOCATIONAL INTERESTS AMONG STUDENTS IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the vocational interest of grades 9 and 12 students in the United Arab Emirates, using the Emirates Scale for Vocational Interest (ESVI), which is an Arabic version of the Kuder Occupational Interest Survey (KOIS). After confirming the reliability of the ESVI, it was administered to a total sample consisted of 796 students, 428 of whom were from the ninth grade and 368 from the twelfth grade. The ninth grade sample consisted of 166 males and 262 females, whereas the twelfth grade sample consisted of 187 males and 262 females. The age of the participants ranged from 13 to 19 years of age. The results showed that, the participants had diverse vocational interests with greater preference for activities that see them in jobs typical of helping others, understanding nature and solving problems, being creative and productive, working with electronics, participating in outdoor work activities and promoting security and public order. The respondents least prefer doing activities that are characteristic of clerical, literary and persuasive jobs. There were significant differences in the preferred activities of the participants, according to grade level and sex relative to some subscales, which reflects a wider influence of potential factors in the environment in a society that is at the intersection of tradition and modernity. This paper contributes vital inputs to the very much needed knowledge base, required for career exploration and vocational guidance in the school setting.

KEYWORDS: Vocational Guidance, Vocational Guidance, Vocational Interest Scale, Vocational Preference