



Enhancing Career Maturity in Students Through Career Services at Laboratory Senior Highschool UM

Kirana Ardisya Nasywa¹, Thesalonica Bona Putri², Muslihati Muslihati^{3*}, Agustina Saptaningsasi⁴, Husni Hanafi⁵

^{1,2,3,5}State University of Malang, Jl. Semarang No. 5 Malang, East Java, Indonesia

⁴Laboratory Senior High School UM, Jl. Bromo No. 16 Malang, East Java, Indonesia

*Author of correspondence, Email: muslihati.fip@um.ac.id

Abstract

Career maturity had been explored as one of essential variable in career planing, career path, and especially career decision-making. Highschool students had various issues that hinder their career maturity. This research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of career services at Laboratory Senior Highschol UM in enhancing students' career maturity. A quasi-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design was employed. The sample were 32 students purposively selected class XI, assessed using a student career maturity questionnaire. The findings revealed that 27 students demonstrated significant improvement in career maturity following the career services intervention. These results highlight the overall success of the career services in fostering student career maturity. However, some students may require individualized support to further develop their career maturity. There are various issues that could help develop career maturity in specific, like career self-efficacy, career aspiration, and career palnning skills, etc. The study recommends designing alternative strategies to complement career services, offering personalized assistance to students in their career development.

Keywords: carreer maturity; career service; guidance and counseling, highschool career;

1. Introduction

Career development is essential for everyone as it serves as a cornerstone for navigating life. A career encompasses all developments and advancements in life, including jobs, positions, and life goals. Individuals begin to plan their careers during adolescence. Havighurst asserts that one of the developmental tasks for adolescents is to seek and find a job that aligns with their talents and abilities (Katoro & Pratisti, 2022). Additionally, adolescents are expected to secure a path toward economic independence. Therefore, it is crucial for high school students to formulate career plans during their teenage years. High school students need to attain a high level of career maturity, as low career maturity can lead to poor career decision-making, resulting in wasted time, resources, and difficulty in maintaining focus due to a lack of motivation (Fadila & Rosiana, 2023).

Career maturity refers to a condition in which an individual has mastered career development tasks, including both knowledge and attitudes (Malik et al., 2023). Career planning for high school students can serve as a guide for their career paths after graduation. Farida et al. (2020) found that high school students are expected to achieve economic independence. This independence can be realized when they can make informed choices, such as deciding whether to pursue higher education or enter the workforce, and selecting appropriate college majors (Kurniawan et al., 2024). With a career plan, students can be more organized in achieving their life goals. They will better understand themselves, their talents, and interests, which will help maximize their potential. Additionally, this fulfills the developmental task of making career-related decisions.

However, the current situation among high school students reveals a discrepancy. Many students struggle with career decision-making. Research indicates that 75.51% of students face difficulties during the career decision-making process (Arjanggal & Suprihatin, 2023). Another study reported that 23 out of 50 students at SMA Negeri Bajawa were confused about their career choices (Ayu et al., 2022). Additionally, research focusing on class XI IPS 4 found that over 61.50% of students lacked career planning and were unable to make career decisions (Astuti & Kurniawan, 2022). Furthermore, 75% of students felt dependent on their friends and were unable to decide on their major or further studies (Lisani et al., 2020). These studies show that many students lack career maturity and struggle with making career decisions after graduating from high school. Low career maturity among adolescents, especially high school students, can lead to four types of career decision-making errors, including choosing the wrong educational major (Hoffman, n.d.).

According to data from teachers at the UM Laboratory High School, many students still exhibit low levels of career maturity. They are often unaware of the importance of career preparation. Research data shows that 100 out of 183 students have not sought career information because they perceive it as being too distant. Teachers have also reported that many students struggle to choose appropriate college majors during the decision-making period. This is supported by research data indicating that 99 out of 183 students find it challenging to identify their talents and interests. Given that UM Laboratory High School students generally have low career maturity, there is a need for guidance, particularly career counseling. Career counseling can help students recognize and understand themselves, comprehend the world of work, plan for the future, and make decisions that best suit their personal circumstances (Dewi, 2021). Career counseling can assist students in working effectively, joyfully, and diligently in positions that align with their potential and characteristics (Indriyani, 2023). Furthermore, career counseling can provide students with opportunities to recognize their potential and understand the job market, allowing them to start planning their careers (Ridni Eliza et al., 2023).

School guidance and counseling services can help students obtain information relevant to their needs (Hastin et al., 2022). Guidance and counseling can assist students in recognizing their potential, talents, interests, and the realities of their desired careers. The issue of low career maturity among students is a significant problem in the education sector. Many students remain uncertain and struggle to make future decisions that align with their true selves (Mustika et al., 2022). Therefore, career guidance services are crucial and should be provided from an early stage.

The goal of enhancing career guidance services for students at UM Laboratory High School is to achieve high levels of career maturity. High career maturity will significantly impact students' futures. Efforts to improve students' career maturity are implemented through career guidance services to assess the extent of change before and after these services. This research aims to examine the enhancement of students' career maturity through the provision of career guidance services at UM Laboratory High School, ensuring students achieve high career maturity and realize their personal goals. The hypothesis tested in this study is: "There is significant evidence of increased career maturity among students as a result of the provided career services."

2. Method

The method applied in this research is a quantitative quasi-experimental approach using a one-group pretest-posttest design. This method was employed with a single group, namely the

experimental class, which received the intervention. The purpose of this design is to compare conditions before and after the intervention. In the One-Group Pretest-Posttest design, the research subjects are given a pretest to measure the initial state (O1), followed by the intervention (X), and then a posttest to measure the state after the intervention (O2).

Data sampling for this study was conducted using the Student Career Maturity Questionnaire. This questionnaire utilized a Likert scale to measure the level of career maturity among students and was administered online. Data analysis was performed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test and the Wilcoxon test to determine the significance of the increase in career maturity among the XI grade students of UM Laboratory High School following the career services intervention.

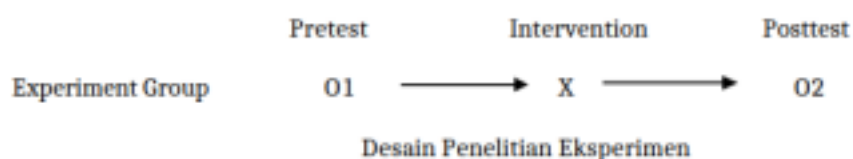


Figure 1. Research Design

This study aimed to measure the impact of career services on enhancing the career maturity of XI grade students at UM Laboratory High School. The population of this research included all XI grade students at UM Laboratory High School. A purposive sampling method was used to select 32 students with criteria indicating low to moderate career maturity. The study spanned four sessions, with each session lasting 1 x 40 minutes. The characteristics of this research design include: (1) subjects were purposively selected based on the class taught by the supervising teacher, (2) pretests and posttests were administered to assess changes before and after the treatment, and (3) the treatment process itself.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Result

Measurements using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test indicated that the pretest and posttest results did not achieve normality. Based on Table 1, the significance value for the pretest was 0.005, while the posttest significance value was 0.008. Both values are below 0.05, indicating that the data are not normally distributed. Since the data were not normally distributed, calculations were performed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test.

Table 1. Normality test results

Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest	0.188	32	0.931	32	0.041
Posttest	0.183	32	0.873	32	0.001

Based on the statistical test results in Table 2 using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, the Z value for the pre-post career maturity variable was -4.255 with an Asymp. sig. (2-tailed) p-value of 0.000 < 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that "H_a is accepted," meaning there is a significant difference between the career maturity questionnaire results before and after career counseling. Among the 32 respondents in this study, 27 students showed an increase in career maturity after receiving career counseling, both during and outside of career guidance classes.

Table 2. Wilcoxon significance test

Posttest - Pretest	
Z	-4.255*
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0

*Based on negative ranks.

The negative ranks from the Wilcoxon test results in Table 3 show that 5 students did not experience an increase in career maturity. These students became confused about their career direction after the intervention. Another issue faced by these 5 students was the discrepancy between their parents' desired career choices and their own, which hindered their career maturity. Further treatment is needed to find solutions to these students' problems. However, due to time constraints, the assistance provided was not optimal.

Table 3. Descriptive rank results

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Posttest - Pretest	Negative Ranks	5 ^a	7.3	36.5
	Positive Ranks	27 ^b	18.2	491.5
	Ties	0 ^c		
	Total	32		

The positive ranks from the Wilcoxon test results indicate that 27 students experienced an increase in career maturity. These students have a clearer career direction and understand their career goals, such as wanting to pursue higher education or work. Some students have already targeted specific majors for their studies. Occasionally, students face challenges due to differences in college major choices between themselves and their parents. However, these students were able to resolve these issues effectively. Consequently, 27 students in class XI MIPA 4 experienced an increase in career maturity.

3.2 Discussion

In providing career services, the researchers emphasized the importance of being realistic in making career decisions. The main focus in career maturity should be aligning personal goals with realistically available opportunities (Ahrama et al., 2021). Additionally, students were encouraged to consider backup plans or worst-case scenarios to prevent unwanted situations. This preparation helps students achieve their career goals effectively.

The career selection process involves various internal and external factors for students. Parental involvement plays a significant role in students' career directions and choices. On one hand, parents can offer guidance and supportive perspectives on their children's careers (Saputra et al., 2023). On the other hand, parents may have unrealistic expectations regarding their children's careers. Differences in career choices between parents and students can hinder career growth, leading to postponing career decisions, career indecision, and even affecting the interpersonal relationship between students and parents. Such situations indicate students' career immaturity. In these cases, counselors need to act as mediators, helping students and parents reach the best perspective. The goal of career services is to enable students to make mature and appropriate career decisions that align with their own aspirations and parental support.

4. Conclusion

Based on the processed data, there is a significant difference in the career maturity levels of students before and after the intervention. The data show that 27 students experienced an

increase in career maturity, while 5 students did not show any improvement. Several factors contribute to whether or not a student's career maturity level increases, including differences in career choices between students and their parents, the students' ability to communicate with their parents, and their problem-solving skills.

The results of the study indicate that the hypothesis is accepted, showing that career services significantly impact the career maturity levels of UM Laboratory High School students. The urgency of career services for students is crucial in aiding their career maturity and addressing the supportive and hindering factors affecting their career direction. Providing career services can enhance students' awareness of career planning, aspirations, expectations, and decision-making. This awareness can give students a more mature career perspective and help anticipate obstacles, disruptions, and potential setbacks in achieving their career goals. The practical implications of the research recommend offering individual career counseling as an alternative follow-up strategy to better meet the career maturity needs of students.

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