



Advancing Student Self-Understanding through Classical Career Guidance at Laboratory Senior Highschool UM

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Abstract

Initial observations indicate that many students in Laboratory Senior Highschool UM struggle with their self-awareness, hindering their career planning. They face challenges in identifying their hobbies, talents, interests, potential, and abilities, which are crucial for career decision-making. This study aims to enhance self-awareness among students through career guidance services at Laboratory Senior Highschool UM. This research using a quantitative quasi-experimental approach with a One Group Pretest-Posttest design. This research involved 31 students, which were purposively selected as the sample. Initial findings revealed that 9 students had low self-awareness scores on the pretest, while the others had moderate levels. Post-intervention results showed an improvement from low-moderate to moderate-high self-awareness, with an average posttest score of 42. This study demonstrates that career guidance services effectively enhance self-awareness in high school students, aiding their career planning and decision-making. It is recommended to develop and update career guidance services to be more effective and tailored to students' career needs.

Keywords career decision making; career plan; career service; highschool students; self-understanding

1. Introduction

Every student has developmental tasks that must be achieved at each educational level they pursue. This is outlined in the Minister of National Education Regulation No. 23/2006 concerning the formulation of the Independent Learning Competency Standards (SKKPD). One of the developmental aspects that high school students must achieve is career awareness and readiness (Sugiyatno, 2014). High school education aims to prepare students for further education and the workforce (Rahmadani, 2021). Students need intensive guidance in determining their future (Fatimah et al., 2024). Therefore, it is crucial for guidance and counseling teachers to assist students in school. The success of students in determining their future careers represents the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in schools.

Initial observations have revealed that many students are unaware of their talents, interests, potential, and abilities. Additionally, students are confused about how to identify their abilities and potential to determine their aspirations and desired fields of study. Students are hesitant in choosing career paths that align with their potential. Many high school students do not understand themselves well enough to achieve career awareness. Career awareness is a state where students are ready with their future career plans (Qibtia, 2023). Brown (in Lidyasari, 2019) defines career awareness as insight into the overall career field, focusing on career roles and identities. Students who have achieved career awareness will be more directed in their career planning (Radyanto et al., 2024).

The implementation of guidance and counseling in schools is essential. Each student will face various problems, whether personal, social, academic, or career-related. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 111 of 2014, guidance and counseling aim to help students plan their future careers, jobs, and further education based on their interests, talents, abilities, potential, skills, and personalities (Permendikbud, 2014). Career guidance functions to help students recognize and understand their potential so that it can be developed through academic and non-academic activities (Mahardhika et al., 2022). Students face various choices for further education and careers that match their competencies. The risk of inappropriate career choices and decisions remains a problem for students today (Kurniawan et al., 2024). Through career guidance services, students can identify their abilities and potential, consider career opportunities, set career goals, and plan careers that align with their interests. A career is closely related to success, so choosing the right career path is a significant decision for students.

Previous research by Hasanah et al. (2018) indicated that career guidance services at SMA Negeri Pasirian faced issues due to the lack of student interest in career planning. Rahmatullah (2022) found that students at SMA Al-Azhar 3 Bandar Lampung were confused about planning their future careers, leading to a lack of interest in further education. Another study by Safitri et al. (2022) showed that 62% of students at Madrasah Aliyah Laboratorium UIN Sumatera Utara Medan were still confused about determining their future careers. Fakhriyani & Sa'idah (2023) demonstrated the effectiveness of career guidance services in improving career planning at Pondok Pesantren Al-Kautsar Pamekasan Madura. Similarly, Lubis et al. (2024) showed the influence of career guidance services on increasing student confidence in career planning at SMK 1 Bandung.

These studies indicate that career guidance services often encounter challenges. Many students do not understand themselves well enough to identify their talents, abilities, and potential to support their future careers. Other challenges include limited access to information services about career planning and the workforce, inadequate coordination between guidance counselors and relevant parties, and monotonous service methods that fail to engage students. This highlights the importance of the role of counselors or guidance teachers in helping students discover and develop their self-understanding to achieve their future goals. This study aims to determine the impact of career guidance services on high school students' self-understanding. It will discuss the importance of student awareness in career planning. The hypothesis of this study is that career guidance services can enhance the self-understanding of UM Laboratory High School students.

2. Method

This study employs a quantitative quasi-experimental approach with a One Group Pretest-Posttest design. The research procedure follows three main stages: pretest, treatment, and posttest. A pretest is conducted before the treatment to ensure more accurate results by comparing pretest and posttest outcomes (Sugiyono, 2015). The population of this study comprises students from UM Laboratory High School, East Java, during the period from February to June 2024. The sample selection uses purposive sampling, including 31 students from UM Laboratory High School who have low levels of self-understanding. The pretest-posttest questionnaire is adapted from Tohirin's (2019) theory of career guidance aspects in high school, further developed by Sulasmi (2023).

The first step involves administering a pretest to measure the students' level of self-understanding. The second step is providing the treatment, which consists of four sessions, each

lasting 4x40 minutes. The third step involves administering a posttest to evaluate the effectiveness of the service. This study utilizes parametric statistical analysis to identify changes in students' self-understanding in the career domain after receiving classical career guidance services. Since the normality test indicated that the data is normally distributed, the T-test analysis technique is applied to test the hypothesis proposed by the researcher. The pretest-posttest results will be evaluated based on the average scores, considering the research hypothesis.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Result

Based on the research findings, there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the 31 students. The treatment group showed a significant increase in self-understanding, with an average score increase of 8 points. Initially, the self-understanding level of each individual in the sample did not exceed 42 (pretest). However, after receiving career guidance services, the self-understanding levels of the students in the sample increased to a range of 33-49, with an average posttest score of 42. The highest score increase was 49, achieved by students AM and AR, while the lowest increase was 0, achieved by students NS and EU. The next step was to analyze the data to test the research hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested using the sign-test statistical formula to evaluate the effectiveness of career guidance services in improving students' self-understanding.

Table 1 shows that the average posttest score is higher than the pretest score, specifically $42 \geq 32$. This result indicates an increase in students' self-understanding scores after they received career guidance services. The average score increase for students was 9 points.

Table 1. Descriptive Results

No	Name	Self-Understanding Score		Score Difference
		Pretest	Posttest	
1	AM	42	49	7
2	NB	27	33	6
3	RF	33	45	12
4	IN	31	48	17
5	MB	37	39	2
6	MA	35	42	7
7	MZ	36	46	10
8	AR	32	49	17
9	DA	25	40	15
10	AR	28	47	19
11	PA	31	34	3
12	RP	29	47	18
13	CC	32	39	7
14	NS	34	34	0
15	KD	31	47	16
16	AK	25	41	16
17	FD	39	43	4
18	AM	33	46	13
19	SA	37	47	10
20	AL	34	39	5
21	EA	36	40	4
22	NK	35	37	2
23	KA	34	42	8
24	MF	35	43	8
25	AM	27	44	17
26	DR	33	40	7
27	DP	21	39	18
28	VA	32	39	7
29	EU	36	36	0
30	MR	33	39	6
31	SN	33	39	6
Average		32	42	9

Since the number of respondents is more than 30, data normality was assessed using the Sig. Kolmogorov-Smirnov values. The Sig. value for the pretest data was $0.095 > 0.05$, and the Sig. value for the posttest data was $0.196 > 0.05$, indicating that both data sets are normally distributed.

Table 2. Normality test results

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
PRETEST	0.145	31	0.095	0.965	31	0.384
POSTTEST	0.13	31	0.196	0.948	31	0.137

Table 3. Paired-t test results

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Dev	S. E. Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	Pretest - Posttest	-9.258	5.842	1.049	-11.401	-7.115	-8.823	30	.000

According to Table 3, the Sig. (2 Tailed) value is $0.00 < 0.05$, indicating a significant difference between the pretest and posttest data. Therefore, it can be concluded that "H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted." In other words, classical career guidance services are effective in improving the self-understanding of students at Laboratory Senior Highschool UM.

3.2 Discussion

Guidance and counseling provide the service to foster student independence, implemented in school programs according to applicable rules or norms. The implementation of guidance and counseling in the school environment is tailored to the needs of the students, which include achieving maturity and independence in life, and being able to complete developmental tasks in personal, social, academic, and career aspects (Azwardinsyah et al., 2023). The success of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program is measured by its ability to create a supportive environment for student development, achieved through collaboration among counselors, schools, parents, and educators (Larbona & Herdi, 2023). The goal of guidance and counseling is to support students in recognizing and developing their potential optimally.

To enhance students' self-understanding, effective methods are necessary. Career guidance services are considered relevant to address this issue in the field because they help students understand their potential, enabling them to develop a future career vision. One of the career guidance services used is career information services. The understanding gained by students can serve as a foundation for increasing motivation, engaging in both academic and non-academic activities, achieving success, planning well-thought-out career paths, and making informed decisions (Rasyadi et al., 2022). In terms of students' developmental tasks, particularly career awareness and readiness, career guidance services help students identify their interests, talents, abilities, and potential. These services assist students in overcoming career obstacles, achieving career goals, and developing their potential for career success. Through collaboration between school guidance counselors and students in the implementation of career guidance, students will gain self-understanding to plan their future careers.

The data analysis revealed that 9 out of 31 students had low self-understanding levels, while the others had moderate levels. Before receiving career guidance services, students demonstrated a lack of understanding of their interests, talents, abilities, and potential. Most students were not adequately prepared to plan their future careers, both academically and non-academically, and tended to choose career goals without proper planning. This was evident from the pretest results before the career guidance services were provided.

In the initial session, the researcher conducted a pretest and asked students about their hobbies, interests, talents, abilities, and potential that could support their future career plans. Most students had limited self-understanding and tended to lack career planning. Many students did not know which career paths suited them. Many students followed their parents' directives rather than understanding themselves to achieve their career goals. The first career guidance service provided was to explore students' self-understanding in determining their hobbies, talents, interests, abilities, and potential. The guidance service used educational cinema as a method, where the content included definitions of hobbies, talents, interests, abilities, and potential. After a 5-minute break following the definitions, the guidance counselor evaluated whether the students understood the differences among these five types. The content then continued with information on how to understand and determine hobbies, talents, interests, and abilities. After viewing the content, many students actively participated in the Q&A session. Students became curious about themselves, with most only able to answer questions about their hobbies and areas of interest.

In the second session, the career guidance service provided was educational cinema with a different video. The content included several types of multiple intelligences from Howard Gardner's theory. Gardner (in Syarifah, 2019) posits that humans inherently have various types of intelligence that can be maximized with a supportive environment. By presenting an engaging and concise video, students were interested in the material provided. This was evidenced by most students requesting the video to be replayed twice. The guidance counselor also displayed a summary of multiple intelligences in a visual format, allowing students to continually reference the types of intelligence without waiting for the video to play. During this session, students were able to answer questions about which types of intelligence aligned with their abilities and which they wished to develop. Students also gave more thoughtful responses about their areas of interest.

In the third session, the career guidance service provided was Project-Based Learning (PjBL). Students were tasked with creating a career roadmap adapted from Für & GmbH (2014). The career roadmap content included aspects of career guidance, such as the students' ability to plan and choose careers, hobbies, interests, talents, abilities, aspirations, parents' expectations, future career hopes, and potential career development opportunities and obstacles. These questions were designed to be enjoyable to encourage students to recount past experiences, helping them remember, understand, and develop their potential. During this session, students did not complete the project, so it continued in the next session.

In the fourth session, students completed their projects. Some students still required guidance in completing the project. The project collection was combined with distributing the posttest for career guidance services. The pretest-posttest questionnaire items were the same, but there were differences between before and after the treatment (career guidance services). After receiving career guidance services, students showed a significant improvement in self-understanding. Students were able to identify their interests, talents, abilities, and potential. They were also able to choose and plan their future careers, as evidenced by the posttest results.

For the few students who did not find their potential after the treatment, group career counseling using the Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) approach will be conducted. SFBT is a goal-oriented, future-focused short-term counseling approach (Corey, 2015). With its brief nature, this approach is practical and time-efficient for school implementation. In SFBT group counseling, the guidance counselor will provide (1) information services on various career-focused majors, (2) job descriptions, and (3) employment opportunities. During the pre-therapy change technique, students will be asked, "What steps have you taken to achieve your career goals?" Most students answered that they had just gathered information about various majors at universities. Some students faced obstacles with their career aspirations due to lack of parental approval. In this case, the guidance counselor used the miracle question technique, guiding students to imagine, "If you woke up and your parents asked for your strongest reason to pursue that major, what would you say to convince them?" The guidance counselor then followed up with, "If a miracle happened and your parents agreed with your decision to take that major, what would happen? How would you feel?" Other techniques used in this SFBT group counseling include scaling questions and the formula first session task. Over four meetings, students frequently consulted outside of guidance and counseling sessions to explore their potential further. By understanding themselves, students can prepare for career planning and face the significant obstacles that may arise in achieving their career plans. This career guidance service has proven effective in developing students' self-understanding to support their future career planning.

The implementation of career guidance and counseling services cannot be fully carried out as a single or separate service. A systematic integration of information services and counseling services represents the implementation of a Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling program (Atmoko et al., 2022). Integrating services provides a gradual and continuous perspective on students' self-development. This process can offer a broader perspective on students' self-development in career variables (Saputra et al., 2023), as a continuation of the sub-variable topic of career self-understanding. Thus, assessment services become key to formulating appropriate services and topics (Hidayah et al., 2022), as an integrative and systematic formulation of a Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling program, particularly in the career field.

4. Conclusion

Based on the data presented above, it can be concluded that the students of SMA Laboratorium UM have a self-understanding level ranging from low to moderate. To improve and develop students' self-understanding, effective career guidance services are necessary. This study demonstrates that career guidance services can enhance students' self-understanding. There is an improvement in self-understanding that supports students' career planning after receiving career guidance services.

The following recommendations are suggested for consideration: (1) Guidance counselors need to pay attention to the process of providing career services, especially methods that can attract students' attention. (2) Career planning should be enhanced through career guidance services, particularly in understanding students' potential. (3) For future researchers, the results of this study can serve as a reference on career guidance, allowing subsequent research on career guidance to be more comprehensive. Further research on students' self-understanding is important to continue developing and updating to optimize students' career planning.

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