

SELF-DIRECTED COUNSELING: AN ALTERNATIVE SERVICE MODEL OF CAREERS CHOICE CERTAINTY

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ABSTRACT: *This study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of a self-directed career counseling model in helping counselees establish their career choice plans. The study was conducted using a research design of quasi-experiment Pretest-posttest Nonequivalent Group Designs involving 146 students (74 experimental group and 72 control group). The study found that the model was quite effective in helping counselees to ensure their career choice plans; the average user counselor career choice score improved and differed significantly with the control group score.*

Keywords: counseling, self-direction, career choice, service model.

1. INTRODUCTION

Self-directed counseling is an alternative service model in career counseling, especially to help counselees establish their career choice plans. As we know, the term career counseling implies as "the process of helping a person to develop and accept an integrated and adequate picture of himself (sic) and of his role in the word of work, to test this concept of reality, and to convert it into a reality, with satisfaction to himself and benefit to society [1]. Career counseling is not a simple job. Assistance in this service emphasizes not only on the alignment between individual characteristics with job demands or position alone, but also on the accuracy of career planning throughout the life of the counselee to achieve job satisfaction for himself and provide benefits to the surrounding community.

Career counseling has become one of the important services available in schools. The urgency of the presence of these services is felt more by the citizens of the school given the complexity of the problems they face in helping students develop themselves optimally, especially with regard to personal, social, study planning, and career planning. In other words, the presence of career counseling services at educational institutions is necessary where counselees are faced with a number of options, such as choosing a career plan, ranging from choosing a study plan to determining the plan of the group of positions or types of positions to be taken as his later career.

In the event of career counseling does the learning process on self counselee occur? Along with the counselor's direction, the career counseling process finally led to a wise decision for the counselee in accordance with the degree of maturity of his career. Therefore, the ability to make the right and steady career decision can be the index of one's career maturity [2, 3]. In other words, the accuracy of a career choice shows the ability of the counselee to match the choice with himself. The stability in the choice shows the degree of certainty of the counselee to enter, climb, and pursue career choices throughout his life later.

The right career choice decision requires self-understanding and identification of main features of occupation adequately first [4, 5, 6]. Though there is no guarantee that if a person has understood himself and recognizing the nature of the work environment he wants to choose, he will be able to make career decisions appropriately. However, such early steps can already be seen as a valuable beginning to determine the accuracy of an action, or career decision which

he wanted to choose. However, choosing a career field (occupation/ occupational classification) that is clearly known is better than choosing a career that is not yet clear. The main self-important factors to be understood and considered in career selection are self-potential and job demands (occupations) and matches between the two [7]. The more there is a match between the self and the demands of the task, position, or work performed, the closer the person's tendency will be to success and to find satisfaction in his task [8, 9, 10] or in his studies [11]. Conversely, failure may occur when there is a wide gulf between job demands with the beliefs, talents, interests, abilities, attitudes, traits, and values that exist in a person.

In reality, the inner aspects of a person are sometimes found to be contradictory, or incompatible with one another. In terms of talents and interests, for example, they are often found to be incompatible [2]. Some people have a talent for a particular activity or job, but they are not interested in the activity or work. Conversely, there are also people who are interested, and even very interested in a particular activity or job, but they are not able (less talented) to do it adequately.

In the school setting, the service to help students make career choice decisions precisely and steadily has become part of the main task of school counselors. However, so far --- especially in the Indonesia, the model of service that is fit to be used in providing assistance is still difficult to obtain, even not yet available, so that the result was not optimal. High school students, both those who are still in the final grade and those who have just graduated, in general, have not been able to answer with certainty and convincing if they are asked about a career plan that will be an option in the course of his life someday. Most of them seem to be hesitant, and, in fact, some have not been able to make any decisions about a career plan to take.

Doubt in making a career-choice decision for the individual, in fact, indicates his inability to choose or express an opinion on a particular action in generating the choice of work he will enter later. This, according to Crites [2], is due to (1) the individual who has a lot of potential and makes many choices but he cannot choose one as his goal, (2) the individual cannot make decisions, he cannot choose any of the possible alternatives for him, (3) an uninterested individual, he has chosen a job but he is undecided about his choice because it is not supported by an adequate pattern of interest.

This study examines and offers an alternative model of career counseling services through self-direction. In general,

this study was conducted with the aim of examining the effectiveness of self-referral career counseling model as an alternative service in assisting counselees to ensure their career choice plans. In detail the examination is done with the aim of knowing the followings:

1. The significance of the difference in the mean score of the plan of the counselee's choice between before and after using the self-referral career counseling model.
2. The significance of the difference in the mean score of the plan of elective group counselee choice (self-referral counseling user) and the control group counselee (not the user of self-referral career counseling).
3. The significance of differences in mean score of career choice between male and female counselee.
4. The interaction of the model with sex to the effectiveness of counseling in helping the counselees to ensure career choices.

Self-directed counseling is developed based on career choice theories, especially Holland Theory [12]. This kind of service model is interesting to offer considering the various aspects of the study. From a theoretical perspective, Holland's Career Option Theory recognizes that the decisions and career choices that people take on their adult life depend on the quality of self-interaction with their environment [6,13]. The quality of the self-environmental interaction is determined by the parenting or experience of the person in question in the family as a child [6,14]. This theory is also consistent with a view that recognizes that developments in the choice of work process include three main stages: *fantasy* (age 0-11 years), *tentative* (11-18 years), and *realistic* (18 years and over). Holland's [12] approach also has characteristics that can be "intermediate" between *Trait and Factor* (directive) and *Client-Centered* (non-directive) approaches. From a practical point of view, the use of career counseling tools and models developed under Holland's Career Option Theory has provided adequate, inexpensive, and relatively easy-to-do career information, and is relatively quick to know the results. Such conditions allow the interpretation of the potential of the counselee to be more accountable than the conditions created in the counseling model using self-confidential psychological testing data that is done in full "secrecy" and takes a relatively long time. In other words, based on the above theoretical and practical considerations it is suspected that a number of advantages are inherent in this self-directed career counseling model. These advantages are believed to be able to lead counselees to explore an alternative range of careers that are organized using personal typologies and environmental models [15]. Therefore, a model of aid services developed based on these career choice theories is considered suitable for people in Asia, especially Indonesians.

Self-referral counseling has been specifically designed with a service using the *Self Exploration Career Exploration Inventory* (SECEI). This inventory is a hallmark and a key aid tool that serves as both a medium and an intervention. This kind of service model is believed to be fun for counselees because in the course of counseling allows them to conduct self-assessment, self-tailing, self-administration, and self-interpretation of their potentials for self-direction [16, 17].

2. METHOD

Subject

The effectiveness test of the service model was carried out in senior high school involving 146 students. They are scattered in four class groups of eight existing classes. Furthermore, they are grouped into two research groups (experiment and control). An experiment group was represented by 74 students (male = 26 and female = 48) and control group was represented by 72 students (male = 28 and female = 44). Placement of subjects into each group is not done randomly. The subjects were grouped based on the division of the student's origin class with the details of each subject group (experimental group and control group) consisting of one class of students majoring in science and one class of students majoring in social studies. During the exploitation activities each subject group remains in its own class.

Instrument

The career choice stability scale has been used to measure the degree of stability of the counsel's career choice plans, both for prates and for pascates. The scale contains a statement of career choice and a range of stability values. The first section requires the counselee to declare the group of positions and the type of job he wants to choose as his/her later career. The terms of office refers to the Book of Classification of Position in Indonesia. The second part asks the counselee to state the degree of stability of the chosen position that has been made. There are six categories of counselee statements in this section, starting from the lowest point such as the statement "I have one career option, but I often ask if the career has been a good choice" to the highest "I plan to enter that career and keep pursue it throughout my life someday".

Procedure

The research activity has been started with a preliminary study to examine the concepts of career guidance and counseling models and to assess empirical conditions to obtain an overview of the conditions and needs for the implementation of career counseling services in schools. Formulation of hypothetical model and feasibility test through activities: validation of content by expert, empirical validation by practitioner, and revision of hypothetical model so that it is produced a formulation of operational model of career counseling self-referral that can be used.

Examination of effectiveness of self-directed counseling model is done by using *quasi-experimental design*, i.e. *Pretest-posttest Nonequivalent Group Designs*[18]. Based on this design there are two groups of research subjects: Experimental Group and Control Group. All subject groups were given prates to determine the initial state of their career choice level and were postulated after the research treatment was completed. Furthermore, each subject is required to undergo a career counseling service from the model counselor to establish his career choices. Subjects in the experimental group received a career counseling service using a self-directed career counseling model. Meanwhile, subjects in the control group received *placebo* treatment --- "left alone".

In implementing self-care career counseling models, each subject group was split into four career counseling groups, each consisting of 10-11 students. Thus, for the implementation of the effectiveness test model of the

counseling model there are four sub group experiments. All subjects in each subgroup receive self-referral career counseling services by first sharing the counseling worksheet: *Self Exploration Career Exploration Inventory* (SECEI).

There are four stages that the counselee must undergo in this career counseling process, which includes: Phase 1, Invention of Summary Code, Phase 2, Interpretation of Summary Code, Phase 3, Career Selection Choice, and Phase 4, Follow Up. The whole series of counseling processes are carried out in three to four meetings; One to two class meetings and two to three counseling group meetings. Classroom meetings are held to complete the first phase of the project while the group counseling meetings are held to complete the activities of Phase 2 through Phase 4. To complete the whole series of activities at the class meeting it takes about 120-135 minutes. For counseling groups each counselee can spend between 60 -75. Thus the total time required by each counselee to find career options are accurate and steady ranging from 180-210 minutes.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result of hypothesis testing to compare test result Posttest and Pretest obtained t value = 11.922 (p-value <0.01), so Ho is rejected at significant level of 0.01. This means that the coefficient score of counselor career choices after and before using alternative career counseling models is very different. Empirical evidence is found to inform that the average score of counselee choice acquisition increased significantly after they used the counseling model to establish career choices. In other words, the improvement in career choice stability score obtained by counselee through the use of alternative career counseling model is very meaningful. From the experimental results, it shows that the experimental group of both male and female score is high and with a relatively small diversity compared to the control group. It is seen from Box Plot Score (Figure 1.).

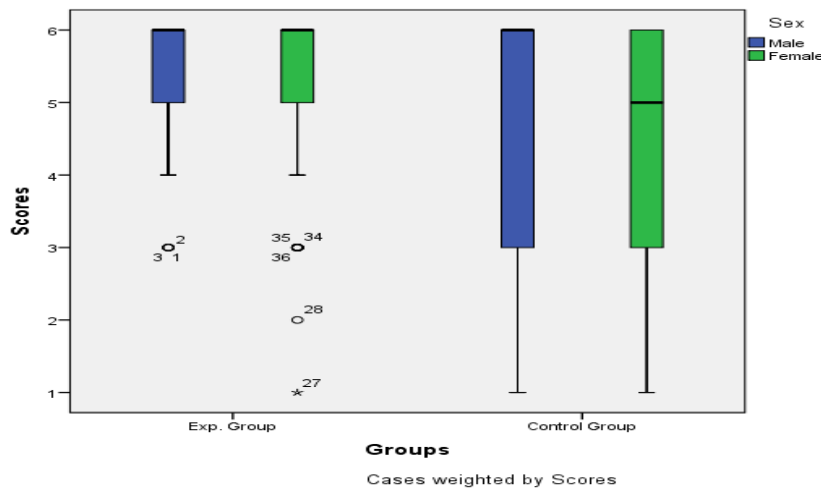


Figure 1. Box plot of the scores certainty of career choice of students from experimental group and control group

Furthermore, the result of data analysis by using variance analysis, from Table 1 it is obtained that model test F value = 5.28 (p-value = 0.0018). This result shows that the model is significant and R-square = 0.1003.

Table 1 Analysis variance for Testing the Model for comparing Experimental group and Control group.

Source	DF	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F-Value	p-value
Model	3	37.1547	12.3849	5.28	0.0018
Error	142	333.2356	2.3467		
Corrected Total	145	370.3904			

R-Square = 0.1003

Table 2 Analysis Variance for testing the difference means of Groups, Sex and interaction between groups and Sex.

Source	DF	Type III Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-Value	p-value
Groups	1	35.5676	35.5676	15.16	0.0002
Sex	1	1.3721	1.3721	0.58	0.4457
Group*Sex	1	0.2151	0.2151	0.09	0.7625

Table 3 The results of comparison between the Experimental group and Control Group.

Means with the same letter are not significantly different			
Tukey Grouping	Mean	N	Groups
A	4.9595	74	1
B	3.9722	72	2

Note: Minimum Significant Difference 0.5013

Different test of coefficient score of counselor career choice between experimental group and control group obtained $F = 15.16$ ($p\text{-value} < 0.0002$), so H_0 is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group. Table 3 shows the average score of career counselors' choice of career alternative career counseling (experimental group mean = 4.9595) is higher than the coefficient average score of counselee career choices without using the career counseling model (control group mean = 3.9722). In other words, statistically, the self-directed career counseling model has the advantage of helping counselees establish their career choices.

The result of mean score of stability score of career choice plan of male and female counselee group obtained value $F = 0.58$ ($p\text{-value} = 0.4457$); It does not reject H_0 . This means that the career choice stability scores shown by male and female counselees are not significantly different. The average score for the stability of their career choice plans is likely to be the same, which is equally increasing both for counseling counsel users and those who do not use the counseling model. From the interaction test between the use of the model and the gender of the counselee on the effectiveness of the assistance they received in establishing their career choice plan it is found that F value = 0.09 ($p\text{-value} = 0.7625$); It does not reject H_0 . Thus the effectiveness of the counseling model, whether self-directed or otherwise, in improving the coefficient scores of the counselor's career choice plan does not depend on their gender. In other words, the use of self-directed counseling models is appropriate for all sexes.

In relation to the findings of this study, the author looked at a major strength that was thought to have brought this aid model effective in helping counselees establish their career choices.

A model counselor report actively involved in the implementation of a self-directed career counseling model mentioned that in the group counseling process it was found that counselees had received much input from group members. The design model has been able to activate group work dynamically. Group dynamics in the counseling process have been able to encourage counselees to: (1) understand more deeply about the main features of himself and the work environment directed by the summary code of his exploratory results, (2) generate alternative summary codes by combining the letters of the summary code found (3) make alternative career choices relevant to the direction of the code summary, and (4) determine the most appropriate career choice. The counselor's final report also informed that almost all counselors stated that the stability of their career choices was

found after undergoing group counseling. Counselees also state that they are happy to be present in group counseling because the issues brought and the goals to be achieved in counseling are clear to them.

The process of career counseling has become a vehicle in the joint discussion between counselor and counselee which ultimately led to a wise and considerate decision for the counselee. In a counseling process the involvement of the counselee is demanded in total: his thoughts, judgments, feelings, meanings, ego, and perspectives, including his experiences, such as: his extracurricular programming aimed at career exploration, his visits to the company (factory), his interviews to workers, and also his internships. Accordingly, whenever an information-giving event, in which the student is directed to seek and study information about a job or a clump of work from a print source or from a resource person, the counselee should be encouraged to be free to express his views, feelings, and attitudes about information that he got. Included here is for the counselee to express his disagreement with the information of the resource person. After all career counseling is not just a job testing the counselees and telling them the results, but a shared discussion between counselors and counselees about career planning in all the counselee's life. Counseling is a learning process that aims for counselee to be able to plan his career and realize the career in the whole life journey of the concerned counselee.

In the process of decision making and career planning, career information is required. In this case, the provision of that information becomes an integral part of the counseling intervention taking place. In other words the provision of career information becomes part of the discussion of the problem, the discussion directed to decision making. In discussing the problem with counselee, the counselor should not give the impression of directing. The counselor also does not give too many suggestions. This is all because career decision making from career selection is a learning process for counselee.

The use of SECEI as a career counseling medium, counseling work sheets, and at the same time as interventions has provided some benefits in terms of efficiency. In addition to the various advantages in terms of its effective use, this inventory also has some advantages in terms of practical, especially in terms of economic and time efficiency. From the economic point of view, it is recognized that the costs involved in providing career counseling services using this development model are relatively inexpensive when compared to assistance services through psychological testing, especially if using the services of others. In terms of time it is known that the career counseling model that is

being developed is simple and easy to do and can be applied to many counsees at the same time, especially at the stage of career exploration. The results of self-assessment and the immediate environment can be known by the counselee. Thus the need of time that must be provided by the counselee to arrive at the intended counseling purpose is relatively short. The total time required by each student (in average) to do the tasks is recognized from the results of observation during the guidance process. In other words, in a relatively short time the counselee has gained effective help to find a solid career choice.

The design of this expanded alternative career counseling model allows to be implemented using a group and individual approach. Group services can be done through class meetings (large groups) and limited groups. The use of large groups may be more appropriate when the counselor wants in a relatively short time to provide services to many counsees. The use of large groups is specific and only possible for the implementation of activities in Phase 1: The discovery of the summary code counselee or limited to group counseling efforts. While the implementation of activities from Phase 2 to the next phase may be more effective if using group counseling (limited groups) or individual counseling. Through the dynamic discussion of group members and leaders in the group counseling process it is hoped that the counselee will help overcome his or her career choices.

In short, the model has proven that its proper use has been able to drive counsees to learn more about themselves and ways to explore careers through self-assessment and the environment on their own direction. Counselee experiences in this kind of counseling are expected to foster his independence in the act and to make decisions steadily about career choices that would be his career later.

Although this model is believed to have an edge, but some of its limitations must exist and it is worth considering. There are at least three things that may be the source of limitations in the use of self-care career counseling models, namely: the classification of personality types and work environment models contained in the main device model --- SECEI, and its instrumentality --- The Characteristics of Self-Environment, interpretation criteria of student summary codes, and counselee mental attitude. As has been described throughout the study, the model being offered is based on a combination of career theories, especially Holland Theory. In the main tools of the model, both the personality type formulation in the discovery of self-characteristics as well as the classification of the environment and the classification of occupations to know the position or vocation that would become an alternative to the career choices of counsees are classified into the vocational personality typology of [12]. The proposed typology and environmental modeling has been classified into six categories: *Realistic*, *Investigative*, *Artistic*, *Social*, *Entrepreneurial*, and *Conventional*. This classification may have "coerced" the counselee to accept it even though he might not approve it. Similarly, in reference to the interpretation of student summary codes there may be those that are not available so that it is "forced" to ask the counselee to make alternative combinations of summary code that he has found.

4. CONCLUSION

The results found in this study cannot be separated from the influence of students' mental attitude. The mental attitude of students colored by various cultural backgrounds of the environment may have determined the course of the counseling process undertaken in this study. Mental attitudes that are not *achievement oriented* view that job satisfaction is obtained not from the work itself but merely from the charity of the work in the form of prestige, position, luxurious life, and power and always waiting for the blessing of "above" or the person who is "Aged". Such mental attitudes may be an impediment to the effectiveness of this alternative career counseling model because such an attitude does not "cultivate" the development of students' independence in planning their occupational or career choices. The attitude that always depends on the *fate*, *accepting*, *surrender*, and *sincere* also seems to "weaken" the motivation of students in planning a career so that the counselee's work in the counseling process is not realized optimally.

Counselors who are interested in using this career counseling model must first undergo a brief training on their model concepts and operational techniques, such as the understanding of Holland Career Option Theory, the use of the Handbook Implementation, and the use of the Self Exploration Career Exploration Inventory (SECEI) as tools and interventions in counseling services. The counseling service of this model is preferred to help counsees who are confused, or doubtful, or hesitant in choosing their career choices, both in individual and in group counseling.

Empirical evidence that explains the interrelationships of various variables of the counselee's demographic characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, age, social status, and others with the model is not widely found in this study. Therefore, further research can be undertaken to examine the effect of various characteristics of the counselee's demographics on the effectiveness of model use. In addition, residential variables (urban-suburban), socio-economic status of the family (high, middle, and poor), achievement motivation, academic achievement, department/study program, and aspirations of students to college are also relevant to be examined in advanced research. Checking the effectiveness of the use of counseling models to assist counselors in choosing the desired department of study, such as students of grade X of senior high school, grade IX of junior high school can also be a center of study in the next research.

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