OPTIMIZING THE ROLE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING IN DEALING WITH CAREER CHOICE ANXIETY AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract: Schools are important role in preparing students to face their future, but students often experience anxiety when deciding about their careers. This study aims to identify career problems encountered by students and see the role of Guidance and Counseling teachers in helping students overcome this anxiety. The research method used was a quantitative approach with data collection using a questionnaire given to 78 students of grade XI high school in Bogor Regency. The results showed that most students experienced a moderate level of career problems. The most prominent aspect is career choice anxiety, where students feel fear and anxiety in making decisions about the career that will be undertaken. To overcome anxiety in career selection, this study recommends using several strategies or techniques by counseling teachers. These strategies include the application of group guidance techniques, modeling techniques, and individual counseling.

Keywords: guidance and counseling, anxiety, career, students

INTRODUCTION

Senior High School is the secondary level of education in formal education in Indonesia followed by graduating from Junior High School or its equivalent. SMA is completed within three years, starting from grade X to grade XII. Senior High School is also considered an important level of education to create quality human resources. Amid the challenges of an increasingly open global world, the

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role of high school as a link to continue education to a higher level is considered very appropriate. In essence, all the processes that take place in the world of high school education are preparations for students to be able to face the future. Schools function as a place to gain education, knowledge and experience. Each school certainly has various criteria or standards at each level. The learning load, level of difficulty and various other things that occur in the scope of high school are certainly much different, which usually causes a lot of anxiety or anxiety for the students themselves (Mariah et al., 2020).

Students are one of the human elements that are in the central position in the learning process where in this process, students as people who have aspirations, for the future will set goals that they want to create optimally. Students will be the determining factor, so they can influence everything that will affect the outcome or direction of decisions on their future careers (Savickas in Sharf, 2014). One of the developmental tasks that students must achieve in the process of growing up is career understanding and readiness, if students successfully complete this developmental task, they are considered to have reached career maturity (Prahesty & Mulyana, 2014). However, if students are unable to complete these developmental tasks, their career maturity is still at a low level. Career maturity described by Super (in Sharf, 2014) is the readiness of individuals to be able to make educational and professional choices. Students must also recognize or understand and develop themselves and think logically so that later they can determine a career that suits their respective abilities. It can be understood that a career is a choice that must be decided early before carrying it out (R. D. Putri & Sari, 2018).

Career reflects a person's entire life process and is important for his survival. Several experts expressed their views on careers. A career is a collection of attitudes and behaviors associated with work experiences and activities throughout a person's lifetime and a collection of ongoing work activities (Gibson & Mitchell, 2011). A career is more meaningful than a job, because it involves a process that lasts a lifetime, including work (Madisa et al., 2022). Careers can increase self-potential and fulfill all the needs of human life. The accuracy in choosing a career is important in the journey of human life (Zunker, 2015).

Career decision making is a skill that can be learned. Stages in the career decision-making process are passed by identifying and information processing skills (Zunker, 2015). Career planning for high school students is very

important, because one of the problems experienced by adolescents after completing their studies is related to career and job selection (Rahayu, 2022). Every individual who will have a career needs preparation to plan the desired career. One of them is students (adolescents), who are at the end of their school career, so they need to plan their future careers (Permadi, 2016).

A person will always face career choices throughout his life and the choice must be quickly realized into a decision. Decisions about career choices are especially important when a teenager wants to continue his education, namely when determining whether to go to college or work, where to study and what to work as (Ananda & Casmini, 2023). The career world demands that everyone must always be ready to compete for good opportunities in getting the expected job or experience through interests or talents (Mariah et al., 2020). Choosing the right career is one of the steps to achieving success in a career, so that in carefulness when choosing a career, a person can feel anxiety. Often when individuals are in the process of making career decisions, an obstacle that often occurs is a sense of anxiety in choosing a career. Anxiety in choosing a career is defined as emotional distress associated with career decision making (Park et al., 2018). Anxiety is felt due to the inability to respond to information and the inability to make career-related decisions.

Basically, anxiety is a natural thing that must have been experienced by every human being. Anxiety is already considered a part of everyday life. Anxiety is a general feeling, in which a person feels fear or in other words confidence that suddenly disappears and is not clear in origin or form (Nurvaeni, 2015). Anxiety is a neorithic helplessness of feeling insecure, feeling immature, and less capable when dealing with environmental demands, difficulties, and pressures of daily life (Yusuf, 2009). Anxiety is related to feelings of uncertainty and helplessness. Anxiety itself is an emotional response to something that is needed by the individual as a defense against the stress stimulus felt by the individual (Stuart, 2007). Anxiety experienced by individuals can be expressed through attitudes or actions, individuals do this as an effort to fight the anxiety being faced. The intensity of the behavior will increase the more anxiety stimulus faced by the individual (Stuart, 2007).

Students experience anxiety problems that make it difficult for them to determine the optimal career. This anxiety can also cause students stress and consequently fear of facing the future optimistically and it will be even worse if students completely lose motivation to learn, to quit school and not continue

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their education or find a job because of a lack of understanding of their abilities. Intervention and hope to be able to overcome the problem of career choice anxiety in students is the responsibility of counseling teachers (Supriatna et al., 2021). Therefore, counseling teachers really need to pay special attention because anxiety can be very detrimental to students' future if it cannot be reduced or overcome. This anxiety is a problem that requires special services from a counseling teacher, the main problem that needs to be resolved is related to the characteristics and development of students who look to their future which requires special services from counseling teachers (Putri et al., 2021). The role, duties and responsibilities of counseling teachers have a high priority in dealing with student problems at school, to find out what kind of help can be given to students who experience anxiety.

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach. The quantitative research approach is one in which the researcher defines what will be examined, poses specific questions, collects quantifiable data from participants, analyzes the data statistically, and investigates the results objectively and impartially (Musianto, 2002). The research method used in this study is descriptive quantitative, where variables are measured using a Likert scale (Budiaji et al., 2013).

In this study, data collection was carried out using a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, consisting of 38 statements. Responses to positive statements were scored as follows: 5 for strongly agree (SA), 4 for agree (A), 3 for neutral (N), 2 for disagree (D), and 1 for strongly disagree (SD). For negative statements, the scoring was reversed: 1 for strongly agree (SA), 2 for agree (A), 3 for neutral (N), 4 for disagree (D), and 5 for strongly disagree (SD).

The study respondents were eleventh-grade students at a public high school in Bogor Regency for the 2022/2023 academic year. The sample consisted of 78 eleventh-grade students, including 19 male and 59 female students. The data analysis used was descriptive statistical analysis, which involves describing or portraying the collected data as it is without intending to make generalizations (Creswell, 2012).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An overview of career issues among eleventh-grade high school students in Bogor Regency for the 2022/2023 academic year can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.

General Profile of Career Issues Among High School Students

Category	Description	Frequency	Percentage
High	>2,89	11	14
Moderate	2,18-2,88	54	69
Moderate	<2,17	13	17
Total		78	100

Based on the research results conducted on eleventh-grade students in Bogor Regency, most students fall into the moderate category for career issues. The results show that in the "High" category, 11 students (14%) have higher levels of career issues with scores above 2.89. In the "Moderate" category, 54 students (69%) have moderate levels of career issues with scores ranging from 2.18 to 2.88. Meanwhile, in the "Low" category, 13 students (17%) have lower levels of career issues with scores below 2.17. The total number of respondents involved in this study is 78 students, with a percentage distribution reaching 100%.

The research results shown in Table 1 indicate career issue tendencies among eleventh-grade high school students in Bogor Regency for the 2022/2023 academic year based on aspects that can be presented in Figure 1 below.

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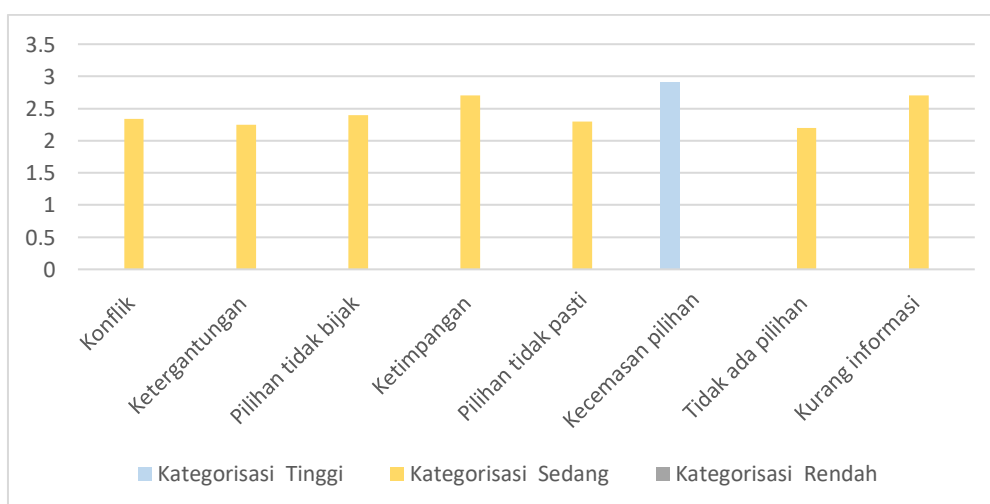
Figure 1. Career Issue Tendencies Among High School Students Based on Aspects

According to Figure 1, the aspect of "Career Choice Anxiety" has the highest categorization compared to other aspects. In the "Conflict" aspect, students show an average score of 2.34. The "Dependence" aspect has an average score of 2.25, while "Unwise Choice" has an average score of 2.4. Furthermore, the "Imbalance" aspect reaches a score of 2.7. The aspects of "Uncertain Choice" and "Career Choice Anxiety" have average scores of 2.3 and 2.9, respectively. Meanwhile, the aspects of "No Choice" and "Lack of Information" have average scores of 2.2 and 2.7, respectively. Apart from the aspect of "Career Choice Anxiety," which falls into the moderate category, no aspect falls into the low category.

This study shows that the highest career issue among eleventh-grade students in Bogor Regency for the 2022/2023 academic year is "Career Choice Anxiety." Here, students experience career choice anxiety due to concerns that their chosen university might burden the family's financial condition, lack of confidence in excelling or participating in competitions, fear that the selected university may cause future issues, pressure from the surrounding environment in choosing a university, and a lack of support for their chosen university.

Career anxiety is influenced by several factors, including fear of failure, frustration with past outcomes, negative self-evaluation, negative feelings about one's abilities, and a negative self-orientation. The negative consequences of career anxiety highlight the importance of measuring career anxiety. Once people are aware that they experience career anxiety, they can seek help to reduce their anxiety and lessen its negative impact. Differentiating career anxiety from career indecision ensures that interventions can serve everyone who experiences career anxiety, not just those struggling to make career choices

Freud identified three types of anxiety (in Corey, 2016)

1. Reality anxiety, which occurs when individuals feel fear from external threats
2. Neurotic anxiety, where individuals fear their own actions might lead to punishment
3. Moral anxiety, where individuals feel fear or worry when their actions conflict with norms or morals

Hammond & Zimmermann (2012) explain that anxiety includes five disorders.

1. Panic disorder, often occurring without warning during routine, non-threatening activities
2. Generalized anxiety disorder
3. Obsessive-compulsive disorder, typically beginning in childhood or adolescence
4. Post-traumatic stress disorder, which develops after experiencing a fear-inducing event
5. Phobia

Career choice anxiety can be classified as reality anxiety, where individuals face concerns about making the right career choice for their future growth. This can be observed when students feel doubt, fear, and worry when making career decisions. Typically, teenagers make these decisions thoughtfully, as they often prefer making personal choices about who they want to be and what they want to do (Afdal et al., 2014)

Schools play a crucial role in addressing career anxiety among students through services provided by Guidance and Counseling. These efforts aim to help students understand and assess themselves, particularly their potential, and recognize the values within themselves and society. This enables them to plan their future and find a compatible career and life path. One form of guidance counseling service applied in schools is group counseling. According to Gibson (2004), group counseling involves activities that focus on providing information or experiences through planned and organized group activities. The content may include educational, career, personal, and social information, aiming to provide accurate information to help students plan and make better life decisions. This service can help students understand and plan their careers, leading to career maturity in line with their vocational development tasks. Group counseling can utilize any technique to meet the research goals, allowing group counseling activities to be more varied than those previously conducted in schools. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a group counseling model using the modeling technique

Modeling is a technique popularized by Albert Bandura. According to Bandura, modeling is a process where individuals learn by observing others (Morgenroth et al., 2015). Modeling is also known as imitation, identification, observational learning, and vicarious learning. Modeling can produce three types of responses.

1. Students can acquire new behavior patterns by watching others, known as observational learning effect
2. Modeling can strengthen or weaken behavior inhibition, known as inhibitory or disinhibitory effect
3. Model behavior can signal students to respond, known as response facilitation effect (Era et al., 2014)

Modelling is suitable for group settings, as students tend to form groups with their peers, allowing them to interact and adopt positive values from group dynamics. Students can learn and imitate observed behaviors and use the group as a space to express behaviors they have observed with other group members (Puspitaningrum, 2019). In practice, Guidance and Counselling teachers bring in facilitators, such as alumni or inspirational figures, to share their experiences, knowledge, and support to help students better understand their potential and interests regarding career decisions. After observing the model's behavior, the Guidance and Counseling teacher can guide students to practice or apply appropriate behaviors in their daily lives (Edeltrudis et al., 2017)

Career guidance and counselling services also play an optimal role in helping students understand themselves in making future career decisions through various strategies or techniques, including providing career information using lectures, panel discussions, interviews, field trips, career seminars, and sociodrama, developing interactive career information media, such as multimedia technology for student use, applying modelling techniques, conducting group discussions, and developing career guidance modules (Nurmalasari & Erdiantoro, 2020). Career guidance counseling services can be provided by counselors to direct students' career planning or decision-making. Proper guidance counseling will lead students to plan their career choices accurately. One available service is individual counseling, where students and counselors can direct career planning based on students' internal and external factors (Sari et al., 2021)

It is essential for schools to incorporate emotional management and anxiety coping training into the curriculum. This will help students develop emotional intelligence, manage stress, and make wise decisions. Introducing the world of work through inspirational figures and partnerships with industries can also reduce student anxiety. By understanding the realities of the working world and gaining direct experience through industry visits or internships, students can feel more prepared to face their future with confidence and a clearer perspective.

Schools can also provide specific training on effective decision-making, helping students understand the rational steps involved in decision-making and how to handle uncertainties that may arise

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the field of education especially at the Senior High School level, career choice anxiety is a common issue. High school students face challenges in making decisions that can impact their future, including selecting an appropriate educational and career path. Research results indicate that most students experience a moderate level of career-related issues, with career choice anxiety being the most prominent aspect.

In addressing the challenge of career choice anxiety among students, optimizing the role of Guidance and Counseling in high schools is crucial. Through the application of group counseling techniques, modeling techniques, and individual counseling, Guidance and Counseling teachers can provide effective solutions to help students manage this anxiety. Group counseling allows students to interact with peers and gain diverse perspectives, while modeling provides positive and inspiring examples from individuals who have succeeded in their careers. Meanwhile, individual counseling offers a safe space for students to explore their fears and uncertainties more deeply. By combining these three techniques, Guidance and Counseling teachers can create an environment where students feel supported, guided, and more prepared to face their future with confidence and optimism.

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