JVCE 9 (2) (2024) : 140-146

Journal of Vocational Career Education

https://journal.unnes.ac.id/nju/index.php/jvce

The Role of Career Guidance in Preparing Vocational School Students in the Building Construction Department for the Workforce

Siti Zulaikhah[1]✉, Yeri Sutopo[2], Rini Kusumawardani[2], Eko Supraptono[2], Muhammad Nur Fuad[2], Sintya Andryati Nurfitriyani[1]

[1]SMK Negeri 3 Semarang, Indonesia
[2]Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

Article Info

Article History :
Received
June 2024
Accepted
September 2024
Published
December 2024

Keywords:
Career Guidance;
Vocational High School;
Building Department;
Workforce

Abstract

The Central Bureau of Statistics indicates that the open unemployment rate for vocational high school graduates remains one of the highest categories at 9.60%. In vocational education, particularly in the Design Modeling and Building Information program, this gap is also evident in the low preparedness of students in understanding the career paths available and the lack of strategies they have to enter the workforce. This study aims to analyze the role of career guidance in preparing vocational high school students for the workforce. The role of career guidance is focused on three main directions for vocational high school graduates: working in industry, continuing education to higher education, and entrepreneurship. This study uses a quantitative approach with a sample of 72 students from Vocational High School Negeri 3 Semarang, divided into two classes. The sampling technique used is total sampling. Data collection was conducted through work readiness and career guidance questionnaires, as well as interviews with instruments that were previously validated by experts. Data analysis included tests for normality, homogeneity, linearity, and simple linear regression. The results showed that career guidance plays a very significant role in the work readiness of students with a value of 68.8%. Meanwhile, the remaining 31.2% is influenced by other factors not explored in the study, such as motivation, interests, talents, and effort. This was supported by interview results, where students stated that career guidance helped them recognize their potential, explore job opportunities, and begin planning their next steps, whether for employment, continuing education, or entrepreneurship.

✉ Correspondence:
Jl. Atmodirono No.7a, Wonodri, Kec. Semarang Sel., Kota Semarang,
Jawa Tengah 50242, Indonesia
E-mail: sitizulaikhah@students.unnes.ac.id

p-ISSN 2339-0344
e-ISSN 2503-2305

INTRODUCTION

Developments in the fields of economy and technology have driven significant changes in the structure and workforce needs across various industrial sectors. Today, the workforce does not only demand technical skills but also the ability to adapt, career understanding, and professional attitudes that align with the dynamics of the industry (Karend et al., 2020; Ismiatun et al., 2023). In this context, Vocational High Schools play a strategic role in producing graduates who are competent and ready to compete in the workforce (Santika et al., 2023). Through the Independent Learning policy and the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, the government strives to make vocational education more adaptive to the needs of the Business and Industrial World. The Vocational High School curriculum emphasizes the importance of integrating learning with the world of work so that graduates can achieve one of three main goals: employment, continuing education, or entrepreneurship (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). This is in line with Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which stresses the importance of Vocational High Schools in producing professional and independent workers according to their area of expertise (Republik Indonesia, 2003).

However, data from the Badan Pusat Statistik (2023) shows that the open unemployment rate for Vocational High School graduates still reaches 9.60%. This is the highest unemployment rate compared to other education levels. This fact reflects a gap between the education provided in schools and the actual demands of the workforce. In vocational education, particularly in the Design Modeling and Building Information program, this gap is also evident in the low readiness of students to understand the available career paths and the lack of strategies they have for entering the workforce. Many Vocational High School students do not yet have sufficient understanding of the career paths they can pursue. They struggle to identify relevant job prospects, suitable further education options, or potential entrepreneurial opportunities they could develop. This situation is further exacerbated by the low readiness of their work mentality, lack of motivation, and limited information about strategies for achieving success in the field they choose (Dewanto & Hadi, 2022; Nurfauziah et al., 2023).

The failure to integrate into the workforce is also driven by the limited understanding of students regarding career paths, job prospects, and essential non-technical skills in the workforce, such as communication, teamwork, and initiative (Harahap, 2019). Many students appear passive, lack clear career goals, and are unprepared for the challenges of the recruitment process (Dewanto & Hadi, 2022). Based on interviews with industry partners of Vocational High School Negeri 3 Semarang, such as PT. Pola Dwipa and CV. Sekawan Daya, it was found that graduates of the Design Modeling and Building Information program often lack a clear vision of their career direction and struggle to demonstrate professional attitudes in the workplace. One of the main causes of this issue is the lack of structured and ongoing career guidance implementation. Career guidance plays a crucial role in helping students recognize their potential, understand industry developments, and plan concrete steps for their future (Iswara et al., 2021). According to Hidayati (2015), students not only need to master technical skills but also need to have a thorough understanding of the career options available to them after graduation. This is supported by the opinion of Magdalena et al. (2024), who state that early career awareness helps students make strategic decisions and avoid confusion during the transition period after graduation.

On the other hand, the implementation of career guidance in vocational high schools today tends to be general and limited to activities just before graduation, such as curriculum vitae writing workshops or mock interviews (Hidayati, 2015). Ideally, career guidance should begin when students first enter Vocational High School, so they have enough time to explore their interests, identify suitable career paths, and develop supporting skills (Astuti & Purwanta, 2020). Therefore, career guidance is crucial as a bridge to address the gap between the education system and the workforce. Particularly for students in the Design Modeling and Building Information program, career guidance must be directed to help them map out career

opportunities in the construction sector, whether as workers in the industry, students in higher education, or entrepreneurs in the construction services sector. The strategic role of career guidance in shaping career readiness and direction should be the main focus in addressing the lack of understanding and career goals among Vocational High School graduates (Saputra & Widiasar, 2017; Asnur & Heriyadi, 2021).

This study aims to analyze the role of career guidance in preparing building department students in Vocational High Schools to face the workforce. The primary focus of this research is to explore how career guidance can help students determine their career paths, whether in industry, continuing education, or entrepreneurship, and enhance their readiness to face the demands and competition in the workforce.

METODHOLOGY

This research adopts a quantitative approach with the goal of examining the role of career guidance in preparing students for the workforce. The participants in this study are students from the Design Modeling and Building Information program at Vocational High School Negeri 3 Semarang. The total sample consists of 72 students, divided into two classes. A total sampling technique was used, meaning that all members of the population were included in the sample. Data was gathered using a questionnaire that assesses two key variables: career guidance and work readiness. In addition, interviews were conducted to provide further support and enrich the quantitative data (Sugiyono, 2023). The questionnaire was validated by experts in the field, confirming its reliability and making it suitable for data collection (Singarimbun & Effendi, 2016).

Before proceeding with the main analysis, the data were tested for prerequisite conditions, including normality, homogeneity, and linearity. After confirming that these assumptions were met, the analysis continued with simple linear regression to examine how career guidance influences the readiness of students for the workforce. To facilitate understanding of the role of career guidance, a conceptual diagram is provided in Figure 1.

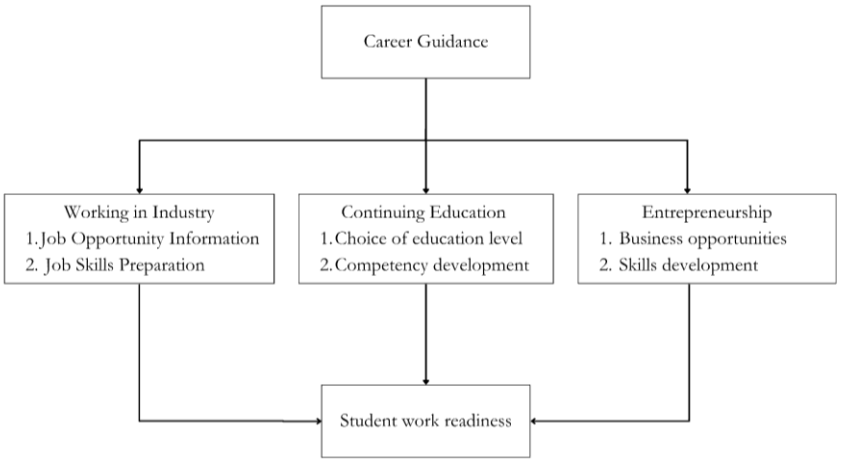

Figure 1. Concept of Career Guidance for Vocational High School Building Department

Figure 1 illustrates that this research focuses on the important role of career guidance as a factor in preparing vocational high school building department students for their future careers. Career guidance serves to provide support and direction along three main career paths: Employment, Continuing Education, and Entrepreneurship (Ridni Eliza et al., 2023). In the employment path, career guidance helps students understand the job opportunities available within the construction industry, preparing them with the necessary skills and attitudes to compete effectively in the workforce (Prianto et al., 2019). In the continuing education path, career guidance offers information about further education opportunities relevant to their field of study, helping students plan for ongoing development and competency enhancement (Suryana & Ismi,

2019). In the entrepreneurship path, career guidance assists students in recognizing entrepreneurial opportunities and developing independent skills, offering them an alternative career route after graduation (Sabilah et al., 2021). These three career paths work together to help prepare students to face a competitive and dynamic job market.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The data collected for this study were analyzed using SPSS with the simple linear regression method. The analysis of prerequisite tests, including the normality test using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test, showed a significance value of 0.200, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the data follows a normal distribution. The homogeneity test using the Levene Statistic resulted in a significance value of 0.584, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the data is homogeneous. The linearity test showed a deviation from linearity value of 0.936, which is greater than 0.05, confirming that the relationship between variables is linear. Since all three conditions were met, the data is considered suitable for further analysis using simple linear regression, as shown in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Table 1. Output 1 Simple Linear Regression Test

Model Summary[b]				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.830[a]	.688	.684	3.035
a. Predictors: (Constant), Career Guidance				
b. Dependent Variable: Work Readiness				

Table 2. Output 2 Simple Linear Regression Test

ANOVA[a]						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	1425.064	1	1425.064	154.687	.000[b]
	Residual	644.881	70	9.213		
	Total	2069.944	71			
a. Dependent Variable: Work Readiness						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Career Guidance						

The results from the regression analysis using SPSS show that the coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.688. This indicates that career guidance plays a significant role, contributing 68.8% to work readiness. The remaining 31.2% is influenced by other factors not covered in this study, such as motivation, interests, and effort (Khairiah, 2020). The correlation value (R) of 0.830 shows a strong and positive relationship between career guidance and work readiness. Therefore, it can be concluded that career guidance plays a key role in enhancing the work readiness of Vocational High School learners in the Design Modeling and Building Information program, preparing them for employment, further education, or entrepreneurship.

From the ANOVA table for the regression analysis, the significance value for the regression is 0.000. This value is smaller than the significance threshold of 0.05, which means the regression model used in this study is valid and reliable. This result shows that career guidance has a significant impact on work readiness. As career guidance becomes more effectively implemented in schools, learners will become increasingly prepared to face the workforce, pursue further education, or engage in entrepreneurship.

Table 3. Output 3 Simple Linear Regression Test

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	19.009	4.959		3.833	.000
	Career Guidance	.779	.063	.830	12.437	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Work Readiness						

Based on the output from the Coefficients table, the significance value for the career guidance variable is 0.000. This value is smaller than the threshold of 0.05, meaning career guidance has a significant effect on work readiness. Additionally, the calculated t value of 12.437 is much higher than the t-table value of 1.997, further supporting the strong relationship between career guidance and work readiness.

Discussion

The analysis results presented above indicate that career guidance has a significant influence on the work readiness of students from Vocational High School Negeri 3 Semarang, specifically those in the Design Modeling and Building Information program. The regression coefficient value of 0.688 shows that career guidance contributes 68.8% to work readiness. This suggests that nearly all aspects of work readiness can be explained by the role of career guidance, making it one of the key factors in significantly improving the preparedness of students.

Career guidance plays a crucial role in developing work readiness through several key aspects. First, career guidance offers comprehensive information and insights into various job opportunities related to the Design Modeling and Building Information field. Graduates from this program can take on roles such as drafter, building designer, project estimator, CAD technician, or construction document manager. By understanding the nature of these positions, students can align their skills and knowledge with the industry requirements, making them better prepared for the construction sector.

In addition to providing information, career guidance also supports students in identifying their interests, talents, and personalities through career assessments. These assessments act as an essential first step in determining the most suitable career path, as they allow students to gain an objective understanding of their potential. With the assessment results, educators can offer career recommendations and specific self-development strategies, ensuring that students are not simply following trends but actively preparing for a future that is meaningful to them.

Second, career guidance helps students recognize and understand the options for pursuing higher education, such as enrolling in technical universities or polytechnics focused on construction and building technology. This awareness motivates students to plan for ongoing competency development and to prepare for future academic and professional challenges.

Career guidance is also intended to equip students with practical industry knowledge through activities such as visits to industries, internships, and seminars led by professionals. These activities help students expand their understanding of workplace culture, the organizational structure of projects, and the level of professionalism required in the field. In this way, these hands-on experiences enhance the theoretical knowledge and career guidance provided at school, offering students a practical basis when making career decisions.

Third, career guidance encourages students to develop entrepreneurial skills, such as starting a building design service or a construction consultancy. By understanding the entrepreneurial opportunities available, students are encouraged to embrace independence and creativity, offering them an alternative career route apart from working in the industry or continuing their education. The concept of Employment, Continuing Education, and Entrepreneurship adopted in career guidance provides a flexible and realistic path that aligns

with the interests and potential of students (Asnur & Heriyadi, 2021).

Moreover, the development of soft skills, including communication, teamwork, leadership, and work ethics, is an essential part of career guidance. These skills are cultivated through various simulations such as job interviews, project presentations, and group work activities that replicate real-world industry situations. These non-technical skills are just as important as technical expertise, as they determine the ability of students to adapt to dynamic and collaborative work environments.

The results from interviews with students further support the findings of this study. Students mentioned that career guidance provided them with clear direction on how to prepare for entering the workforce or continuing their education. Most students reported that after participating in career guidance, they became more proactive in seeking job opportunities that matched their competencies or considering further education. This shows that career guidance acts as a bridge between the education system and the workforce, linking the theory learned at school with practical industry needs.

This study suggests that career guidance plays a vital role in shaping the mindset of students, making them more forward-thinking and strategic when making decisions after graduation. This aligns with the view of Karamoy et al. (2023), who emphasize the importance of career guidance in Vocational High Schools to inspire motivation in determining a career direction. This motivation drives students to explore career opportunities and potentials while still in school. Additionally, this finding is supported by Sari et al. (2023), who state that career guidance can raise awareness about the importance of early career planning. Such awareness forms a critical foundation for students, enabling them to actively design career strategies that align with their interests and competencies (Karina Permatasari et al., 2024).

Finally, periodic evaluation of the career guidance program is essential to assess its effectiveness. Evaluation can be carried out through alumni tracking, feedback from industry partners, and surveys among final-year students. The results from these evaluations will serve as a basis for developing a more adaptive and responsive program that can meet the changing demands of the workforce. As a result, career guidance will no longer be just an administrative task but will truly become an effective activity that prepares graduates from Vocational High Schools with high employability.

CONCLUSION

Career guidance holds an important role in preparing students from the Vocational High School Design Modeling and Building Information program to enter the workforce. Based on the analysis, career guidance significantly influences the readiness of students, contributing 68.8% to their preparedness. The guidance provides crucial information about various career options, including employment in the construction industry, continuing education at higher levels, or pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities. Through career guidance, students actively seek out job opportunities and further education that align with their interests and skills. This overall preparation strengthens their readiness, addressing both technical competencies and the mindset necessary to face challenges in the workforce.

REFERENSI

Asnur, L., & Heriyadi, B. (2021). *Mempersiapkan Siswa Memasuki Dunis Industri dan Dunia Kerja*. Bintang Pusaka Madani.

Astuti, B., & Purwanta, E. (2020). *Bimbingan Karier Untuk Meningkatkan Kesiapan Karier*. UNY Press.

Badan Pusat Statistik. (2023). Keadaan Ketenagakerjaan Indonesia Februari 2023. *Badan Pusat Statistik*, *No. 35/05/Th.XXVI*.

Dewanto, P. A., & Hadi, M. S. (2022). *Problematika SMK dalam Menghadapi Industrialisasi: Degradasi Keterampilan dan Dilema Posisionalitas*. Yayasan INFEST.

Harahap, D. (2019). Pengambilan Keputusan Karir. *AL-IRSYAD: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Islam*, *1*(1), 172–186.

Hidayati, A. (2015). Perencanaan Karir Sebagai Bentuk Investasi Pendidikan Siswa SMK

(Studi Kasus di SMK Negeri 1 Batang). *Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu Sosial, 25*(2), 1–10.

Ismiatun, S. R., Neliwati, N., & Khairuddin, K. (2023). Manajemen Kepala Sekolah dalam Meningkatkan Kerja Sama dengan Dunia Industri. *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, *5*(1), 61–72.

Iswara, B., Prasetyani, A., & Sauda, S. (2021). Analisis Keefektifan Layanan Bimbingan Karir di SMK Berdasarkan Keberhasilan Karir Lulusan. *Qalam : Jurnal Ilmu Kependidikan*, *10*(1), 1–7.

Karamoy, Y. K., Afif, H. N., & Mutakin, F. (2023). Pengembangan Modul Bimbingan Karir tentang Perencanaan Karir Siswa. *Ghaidan: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Islam Dan Kemasyarakatan*, *7*(1), 38–47. https://doi.org/10.19109/ghaidan.v7i1.17146

Karend, K. A. A., Sutopo, Y., & Widjanarko, D. (2020). Developing Fashion Design Vocational Career Guidance Module. *Journal of Vocational and Career Education (JVCE)*, *5*(2), 140–148.

Karina Permatasari, Rokhmawati, I., & Yayuk, E. (2024). Comparative Analysis of The High School Double Track Program and Vocational Education: Implications for Graduates' Work Readiness. *Journal of Vocational and Career Education (JVCE)*, *9*(1), 85–93. https://doi.org/10.15294/jvce.v9i1.24853

Kemendikbudristek. (2022). *Spektrum Keahlian dan Struktur Kurikulum SMK*.

Khairiah. (2020). *Kinerja Guru dalam Perspektif Budaya Organisasi, Kepemimpinan, dan Motivasi Kerja* (Vol. 1). CV. Zigie Utama. www.zigie.co.id

Magdalena, L., Putri, N. R., Devi, S., Aulia, S. N., & Nabilah, S. (2024). *Kreatifitas Untuk Peluang Berkarya Menuju Kesuksesan*. PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia.

Nurfauziah, U., Fatimah, S., & Pahlevi, R. (2023). Pengembangan Modul Bimbingan Karir Terhadap Kematangan Karir Siswa Kelas XII SMKN 1 Cihampelas. *FOKUS*, *6*(6), 488–498.

Prianto, A., Winardi, & Qomariyah, O. N. (2019). Pengaruh Penerapan Teaching Factory dan Keterlibatan dalam Pembelajaran Terhadap Kesiapan Bekerja lulusan SMK. *Conference on Research & Community Services*, *1*(1), 968–991.

Republik Indonesia. (2003). *Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*.

Ridni Eliza, Riska Ahmad, Mega Iswari Biran Asnah, & Afdal. (2023). Pengembangan Modul Bimbingan Karir Untuk Meningkatkan Kematangan Karir Siswa Sekolah Menengah. *G-Couns: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, *7*(03), 671–682. https://doi.org/10.31316/gcouns.v7i03.4947

Sabilah, J., Nurfandi Riyanti, S., & Saputra, N. (2021). Kesiapan Kerja Generasi Milenial di DKI Jakarta Raya: Pengaruh Kecerdasan Emosional dan Keterampilan Digital. *Jurnal Akuntansi, Keuangan, Dan Manajemen*, *2*(3), 225–242.

Santika, A., Simanjuntak, E. R., Amalia, R., & Kurniasari, S. R. (2023). Peran Pendidikan Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan dalam Memposisikan Lulusan Siswanya Mencari Pekerjaan. *Paedagoria : Jurnal Kajian, Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Kependidikan*, *14*(1), 84–94.

Saputra, W. N. E., & Widiasar, S. (2017). Konseling Karir Ringkas Berfokus Solusi: Konseling Karir Untuk Membantu Menetapkan Pilihan Karir Siswa SMK Menghadapi MEA. *Jurnal Fokus Konseling*, *3*(1), 24–31.

Sari, H. N., Rahmania, N., & Anshori, M. I. (2023). Pengembangan Karir Dalam Era Ambiguitas. *Jurnal Bintang Manajemen*, *1*(4), 25–46.

Singarimbun, & Effendi. (2016). *Metode Penelitian Survey*. LP3ES.

Sugiyono. (2023). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D*. CV. ALFABETA.

Suryana, Y., & Ismi, F. M. (2019). Manajemen Kurikulum dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Lulusan. *Jurnal Isema : Islamic Educational Management*, *4*(2), 257–266. https://doi.org/10.15575/isema.v4i2.6026