

Development of a Vocational Career Guidance Module to Improve Career Decision-Making Skills of Social Work Students

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Abstract

Career decision-making challenges remain a critical issue in vocational education, particularly at the secondary level, where many students choose majors that do not align with their interests and abilities. This condition highlights the need for early career guidance to help students map their career paths and develop their competencies appropriately. This study aims to develop a vocational career guidance module for Social Work students; to determine the validity of the module based on expert evaluation; to analyze the validity and reliability of the test instruments; and to examine the effectiveness, efficiency, practicality, and implementability of the module. This research employed the ADDIE R&D model involving 60 tenth-grade students of SMK Negeri 5 Samarinda, divided into experimental and control groups. The results indicate that the module is highly feasible, with material expert validation at 94% and media expert validation at 91%. The test instrument demonstrates strong quality, with 30 of 33 items deemed valid and a Cronbach's Alpha reliability of 0.925. The module is proven to be highly effective (91.6%), efficient (89.6%), and practical (93.8%), with an implementation rate of 86%. In addition, teacher and student responses reached 90.8% (excellent category). Statistical analysis confirms significant improvement in students' career decision-making skills, with $t_{count} = 13.396 > t_{table} = 2.002$, $Sig. = 0.000$, and an N-gain score of 0.72964 (high category). These results show that the developed module effectively enhances the career decision-making skills of Social Work vocational students.

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INTRODUCTION

Career decision-making is an essential component in vocational education because students must be able to align their interests, skills, and future aspirations with the expertise program they choose. In reality, many vocational students still struggle to determine an appropriate career direction, resulting in choices that do not reflect their actual competencies or personal interests. This mismatch has implications for academic motivation, adaptability, and readiness to transition into higher education or the world of work. Research shows that difficulties in career planning are often caused by low levels of self-understanding, limited access to accurate career information, and the absence of structured guidance integrated into learning activities (Agnia, 2022; Antika et al., 2019). External influences such as parental pressure and unclear perceptions about future jobs also increase the risk of students making uninformed decisions (Alm et al., 2019). These conditions underline the urgency of strengthening career decision-making competencies from the earliest stages of vocational education.

In the Indonesian context, particularly at SMK Negeri 5 Samarinda, preliminary observations and needs analysis indicate that many students in the Social Work Expertise Program enter the major not based on interest but external encouragement or lack of knowledge about the field. As a result, many students demonstrate low self-awareness, limited exploration of job profiles in social services, and difficulty identifying the competencies required for future employment. The learning process has also been dominated by theoretical textbooks, with minimal interactive materials and limited integration of career guidance into classroom learning. Teachers face constraints in providing systematic career support due to the absence of structured materials that connect Social Work competencies with real career pathways, contributing to students' uncertainty about their future choices.

The subject *Dasar-Dasar Pekerjaan Sosial* taught in Phase E is intended to provide students with foundational knowledge about social welfare systems, basic helping skills, and occupational

opportunities in the social sector. However, observations at SMK Negeri 5 Samarinda show that students still struggle to relate classroom content with actual career opportunities in fields such as child protection, community services, rehabilitation, and social advocacy. Limited exposure to contextual learning materials results in students having an incomplete understanding of the scope of social work practice. Therefore, a career guidance module aligned with the Social Work curriculum is needed to provide structured information about job prospects, introduce reflective activities, and improve students' ability to make informed decisions.

Previous research supports the importance of career guidance interventions in helping students build self-awareness, explore career alternatives, and develop confidence in choosing future paths. For example, Fadilah (2020) found that structured career guidance programs can improve students' self-efficacy in planning further studies. Turrohmah et al. (2023) demonstrated that modules designed using a systematic development model are effective in enhancing students' career readiness. Studies on vocational guidance also highlight that students need opportunities to reflect on personal strengths, access updated labor market information, and engage in guided learning activities to make mature career decisions (Tomaszewski et al., 2017; Thenmozhi, 2018). These findings indicate that well-designed, student-centered, and contextually relevant learning materials are essential in supporting students' career development.

The need for structured learning materials is further emphasized by principles of vocational education, such as Prosser's Theorem, which states that effective vocational instruction must reflect real occupational situations and be informed by expert practice. In this regard, a career guidance module for Social Work students should incorporate authentic job information, examples from practice, and learning experiences that help students understand the competencies required in actual work environments. By integrating real-world occupational expectations into the learning process, such materials can help students bridge the gap between school learning and career decision-making.

From an instructional design perspective, the ADDIE model provides a systematic framework for developing high-quality learning materials. The model consisting of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation ensures that products are developed based on learner needs, validated through expert review, and improved through iterative refinement (Yuni Kartika et al., 2022). In this study, the analysis phase identified gaps in students' understanding of job profiles, limited career exploration skills, and the absence of digital learning resources in Social Work classrooms. These findings support the need for a career guidance module that is comprehensive, interactive, and accessible in both print and digital formats.

Considering these theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and the specific needs of Social Work students at SMK Negeri 5 Samarinda, the development of a vocational career guidance module is both relevant and necessary. The module is expected to help students recognize their strengths, explore career opportunities in social services, and strengthen their ability to make informed career decisions. Moreover, the module supports teachers by providing structured, curriculum-aligned, and interactive materials that enhance the quality of Social Work learning.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to: (1) develop a vocational career guidance module tailored to the Social Work Expertise Program; (2) evaluate the module's feasibility through expert validation; (3) assess the validity and reliability of its accompanying test instruments; (4) determine the module's effectiveness, efficiency, practicality, and implementation quality; and (5) analyze its impact on improving students' career decision-making skills. The results of this research are expected to contribute to strengthening vocational career guidance practices and supporting students' readiness for future careers in social services.

METHODS

This study applied a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE

instructional design model. The ADDIE model provides a structured and systematic sequence of activities for developing instructional products aligned with learner needs. According to Yuni Kartika et al. (2022), the model consists of five stages: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation, each functioning as an iterative cycle to refine learning resources effectively.

The research was conducted in the Social Work Expertise Program at SMK Negeri 5 Samarinda. Participants included 60 Grade X students divided into two groups: 30 students in the experimental class who used the developed vocational career guidance module, and 30 students in the control class who received conventional instruction. Class assignment followed existing school groupings based on scheduling and curriculum structure. Data collected consisted of expert validation results from material and media specialists, student and teacher responses on practicality and efficiency, classroom implementation observations, and a 33-item career decision-making test. The validation sheets were used to assess the feasibility of the module, observation sheets were utilized to document the implementation process, questionnaires measured the practicality and efficiency during learning activities, and the test items were analyzed to determine their validity and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha.

Data analysis consisted of quantitative descriptive analysis and inferential statistical testing. Descriptive analysis was used to assess module validity, practicality, efficiency, and implementation percentage. Inferential analysis included independent sample t-tests to compare post-test results between the experimental and control groups, along with N-gain analysis to measure improvement in career decision-making skills. All statistical analyses were conducted at a significance level of 0.05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Following data analysis, the study presents the development and evaluation of a vocational career guidance module integrated into the Social Work Fundamentals subject. Validation by material experts resulted in a total score of 510

from three raters, with an average percentage of 94%, categorized as “very feasible.” Meanwhile, the media expert validation produced a total score of 273 from two raters, with an average percentage of 91%, also classified as “very feasible.” These results indicate that the vocational career guidance module is highly feasible for use in terms of both content accuracy and media design quality. Furthermore, instrument testing confirmed that 30 out of 33 items were valid and the reliability coefficient reached 0.925, demonstrating high internal consistency and ensuring that the instrument accurately measures students’ career decision-making skills.

Table 1. Results of Material and Media Expert Feasibility Analysis

Material Experts	Score	Media Experts	Score
Rater 1	170	Rater 1	138
Rater 2	168	Rater 2	135
Rater 3	172	—	—
Total Score	510	Total Score	273
Maximum Score	540	Maximum Score	300
Percentage	94%	Percentage	91%
Category	Very Feasible	Category	Very Feasible

The effectiveness, efficiency, practicality, and implementation of the vocational career guidance module were evaluated through

classroom observations conducted by two observers over three learning sessions. The module demonstrated a high level of effectiveness, achieving a score of 91.6%, which falls into the *very effective* category. This finding indicates that the module successfully supports the intended learning objectives, particularly in helping students enhance their career decision-making skills within the Social Work field.

In terms of efficiency, the module obtained a score of 89.6%, classified as *efficient*. This shows that the learning process was carried out smoothly, utilized time effectively, and did not require additional resources beyond the standard classroom setting. The practicality aspect also showed strong results, with a score of 93.8%, categorized as *very practical*. This demonstrates that both teachers and students found the module easy to use, accessible, and well-aligned with the learning characteristics of Social Work vocational students.

Furthermore, the module’s implementation quality reached 86%, which is categorized as *very good*. This indicates that the module can be applied consistently across sessions and integrates well with the instructional flow in the classroom. Taken together, these findings confirm that the vocational career guidance module is not only effective, efficient, and practical, but also highly implementable in real classroom settings, making it a strong instructional tool for enhancing vocational learning in the Social Work program.

Table 2. Results of Effectiveness, Efficiency, Practicality, and Module Implementation

Aspect	Session	Observer 1	Observer 2	Average per Session	Total Average (%)	Category
Effectiveness	1	6	6	75%	91.6%	Very Effective
	2	8	8	100%		
	3	8	8	100%		
Efficiency	1	6	7	75%	89.6%	Efficient
	2	7	8	93.8%		
	3	8	8	100%		
Practicality	1	6	7	81.3%	93.8%	Very Practical
	2	8	8	100%		
	3	8	8	100%		
Implementation	1	14	14	78%	86%	Very Good
	2	17	19	90%		
	3	19	20	95%		

Table 3. Results of Teacher and Student Response Evaluation

Respondent	Number of Respondents	Total Score	Maximum Score	Percentage	Category
Teacher	5	44	50	88%	Very Good
Students	30	281	300	93.7%	Very Good
Average				90.8%	Very Good

Teacher and student responses were collected to assess the usability and overall functioning of the vocational career guidance module after its implementation in the Social Work classroom. As shown in Table 4, teacher responses reached 88%, indicating that the module is perceived as highly supportive of instructional delivery and easy to integrate into classroom activities. Meanwhile, student responses averaged 93.7%, demonstrating that learners found the module helpful, engaging, and relevant to their needs in exploring career pathways.

The combined response average of 90.8%, categorized as *very good*, indicates that the module functions optimally from both the teacher and student perspectives. These findings demonstrate that the vocational career guidance module is well-received by users and effectively supports the learning process, strengthening its feasibility as an instructional tool for Social Work vocational education.

Subsequently, pretest and posttest analyses were conducted for tenth-grade students in the Social Work Skills Program, consisting of 30 students in the experimental group and 30 students in the control group. The normality test using the Shapiro–Wilk method showed that all pretest and posttest data met the normal distribution assumption, with significance values above 0.05—pretest (experimental = 0.771; control = 0.183) and posttest (experimental = 0.397; control = 0.465). The homogeneity test indicated that the variances of both groups were

also homogeneous, with significance values of 0.198 for the pretest and 0.060 for the posttest ($p > 0.05$), confirming that the data satisfied the requirements for performing an independent sample t-test. The independent sample t-test on the pretest scores revealed no initial differences in career decision-making abilities between the two groups, with $t\text{-value} = -0.552 < t\text{-table} = 2.002$ and $\text{Sig.} = 0.583 > 0.05$. These results demonstrate that both groups started with comparable baseline abilities prior to the intervention.

After the vocational career guidance module was implemented in the experimental group, the posttest results showed a significant difference between the experimental and control groups. The $t\text{-value}$ of 13.396 exceeded the $t\text{-table}$ value of 2.002, with $\text{Sig.} = 0.000 < 0.05$, indicating that the module had a significant effect on improving students' career decision-making skills. The experimental group achieved a substantially higher mean posttest score (137.77) compared to the control group (107.93).

Further evidence of improvement was observed in the N-gain analysis. The control group showed only a 2.66% increase with an N-gain score of 0.059 (low category), whereas the experimental group achieved a 32.81% increase with an N-gain score of 0.72964 (high category). These findings confirm that the vocational career guidance module for Social Work students significantly enhances career decision-making skills compared with conventional learning methods.

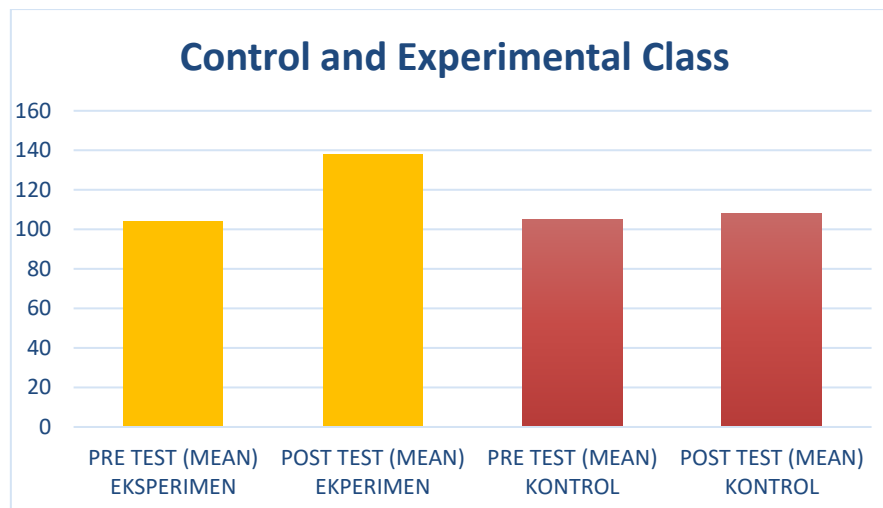


Figure 1. Learning Outcomes Diagram for Control and Experimental Classes

The results illustrated in the diagram above reveal a clear distinction in the level of improvement achieved by the control and experimental groups. The experimental group obtained a mean posttest score of 137.77, markedly higher than the control group's average of 107.93. This outcome demonstrates that the vocational career guidance module designed for Social Work students contributed meaningfully to strengthening their career decision-making competencies, with the complete statistical output provided in the Appendix. Further evidence of this effectiveness is reflected in the comparative gains from pretest to posttest. The control group improved by only 2.80 points, equivalent to a 2.66% increase, indicating that conventional instruction produced minimal progress. Conversely, the experimental group achieved a 34.04-point increase, or 32.81%, representing a substantial enhancement that underscores the strong impact of the implemented module on students' career decision-making skills.

The N-gain analysis further confirms the effectiveness of the vocational career guidance module. The N-gain interpretation consists of three categories high ($0.70 \leq g \leq 1.00$), medium ($0.30 \leq g < 0.70$), and low ($0.00 < g < 0.30$). The experimental group achieved an average N-gain score of 0.72964, which falls within the "high" category. This result indicates that the module was substantially more effective than conventional instruction in improving students' career decision-making abilities in the Social Work Foundations course.

Discussion

The vocational career guidance module in social work effectively improved students' career decision-making skills, as shown by a high N-gain score (0.72). This aligns with Khojanatun et al. (2023), who found that a career exploration module using the ADDIE model enhanced vocational students' ability to evaluate options and make informed, value-based career decisions. Both studies highlight that structured, interactive modules support students in aligning their choices with personal goals and future aspirations.

The results of this study show that the vocational career guidance module in social work effectively improves students' career decision-making abilities, supported by a high N-gain score (0.72). This confirms that the module outperforms conventional instruction in strengthening students' conceptual understanding and decision-making skills. These findings are consistent with previous research demonstrating that digital modules and technology-assisted learning tools are valid, practical, and impactful in improving learning motivation and performance (Nisa et al., 2023). The results of this study indicate that the vocational career guidance module in social work effectively enhances students' career decision-making skills. This is reflected in the high N-gain score (0.72), showing that students' conceptual understanding and decision-making abilities improved more than with conventional instruction. These findings suggest that technology-based modules can provide more structured, interactive learning

experiences that support students' motivation and overall learning performance.

The practicality, efficiency, and implementation scores 93.8%, 89.6%, and 86%, respectively indicate that the module is easy to use, supports instructional flow, and functions effectively in the classroom. Similar results were reported by Khoirunnisa and Lestari (2024), who found that structured career guidance activities enhance learning efficiency and student engagement during career decision-making tasks. These outcomes align with arguments that high-quality learning media increase motivation and participation in career-related learning (Kim & Chung, 2020).

The t-test and N-gain analyses further confirm the module's effectiveness. The significant posttest difference between the experimental and control groups ($t = 13.396$, $p = 0.000$) demonstrates that the module contributed substantially to improving students' decision-making abilities. The experimental group's improvement of 32.81% and high N-gain score (0.729) indicate strong conceptual mastery. These findings align with Lau et al. (2021), who reported that career exploration interventions significantly enhance students' career maturity and clarity in planning.

These results also support broader evidence emphasizing the importance of structured career interventions and supportive learning environments. Previous studies by Karamoy et al. (2023) and Khoirunnisa & Lestari (2024) highlight that guidance programs positively influence career maturity and decision-making readiness. International research further strengthens this perspective, showing that career experiences, parental support, and teacher facilitation contribute significantly to career preparation behavior and self-efficacy (Kim, 2021; Kim & Jeon, 2022). Moreover, assessments of career readiness among adolescents suggest that well-designed modules help students develop vocational identity and clearer future pathways (Liu et al., 2024).

Overall, the findings confirm that the developed career guidance module is an effective learning innovation that supports students' career decision-making abilities, aligns with national and international empirical evidence, and offers a

practical contribution to vocational social work education.

CONCLUSION

Based on the overall findings of this thesis research, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding the development and implementation of the vocational career guidance module for the Social Work Expertise Program. First, the module developed using the ADDIE model demonstrated high feasibility, as evidenced by expert validation scores categorized as "very feasible," confirming that the material content, structure, language clarity, and media presentation meet the standards of vocational instructional materials. Second, the module showed strong practicality and implementation quality, supported by positive feedback from teachers and students and smooth learning flow during classroom application, indicating that it is easy to use and well-suited for vocational learning contexts. Third, the module proved highly effective in improving students' career decision-making abilities, as shown by a significant difference between the experimental and control groups ($t = 13.396$, $p = 0.000$) and a high N-gain score of 0.729, reflecting substantial conceptual mastery and enhanced decision-making competence. Finally, this study contributes to the body of knowledge by providing an empirically validated, contextually appropriate module specifically tailored to the Social Work Expertise Program, offering a model for integrating structured career guidance into vocational subject matter and supporting students' readiness for future career pathways.

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