

The Effect of Life Design Online Career Counseling to Improve the Career Adaptability and Optimism

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Abstract

Career adaptability and optimism are significant bases for adolescents in career decisions making and learning behavior. Thus, the present research attempted to examine the effects of life design online career counseling on students' career adaptability and optimism. It was carried out in form of an experimental research with the design of randomized pretest-posttest control group and involved 15 students as the samples chosen using a purposive sampling technique. Their data were collected using the instruments of career adaptability scale and career future inventory. In testing the hypothesis, Wilcoxon signed rank and Kruskal Wallis tests with the probability of 95% were performed through SPSS version 26 software. The findings indicated that the life design online career counseling was able to improve students' career adaptability and optimism. It somehow has ensured the potential of efficacy of using websites in applying life design career counseling.

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INTRODUCTION

Communication and information technologies hold an important role in human life. As a social phenomenon, they are related to all aspects of life, education and work that cause changes in the structure of a person's career and organization (Kraus et al., 2010). Today, career changes are mostly influenced by rapid changes in technology, organizations, working conditions (Tian et al., 2016), economic downturns and labor migration (Wright et al., 2010). These changes do not always indicate the betterment of students' career conditions (De Clercq et al., 2019; Mudu, 2018) because other than career changes adaptability, students need to have the skills and knowledge to enter the labor market (Pordelan et al., 2018). Based on some studies, most of the students are not pretty skillful in planning and making career decisions and are not confident in identifying their first career (Jin et al., 2009). Technology and the internet can support counselors in providing high-quality services with the rapid use of computerized tests to clients (Sampson & Osborn, 2015). Not to mention, technology can enable career counseling to reduce costs and reach large numbers of people (Soresi et al., 2014).

In the cyber world, students not only need technical and academic skills for jobs (Pordelan et al., 2021), but also the one for decision making. They must be acknowledged their weaknesses, personal characteristics and strengths to succeed in a changing, unknown, complex and ambiguous world (Chelin et al., 2019). All these things are influenced by career adaptability and optimism. Career adaptability plays an important role in guiding individuals in determining actions and strategies for the realization of the goals (Savickas & Profeli, 2012), while optimism estimates the extent to which individuals have good expectations about their future. Usually someone who has high adaptability can be more flexible, own the ability to deal with changing conditions and is confident about good things for the future. This is supported by career construction theory that career success is obtained by individuals who can adapt and

perform appropriate behavior in dealing with changing conditions. This is indicated by good adjustment, success and satisfaction in life (Savickas & Profeli, 2012).

One career counseling method to deal with career adaptability and optimism is life design counseling. This study made use of life design career counseling with a website format and online interaction. It was inspired by Nota et al., (2016) that life design online counseling interventions can increase career adaptability skills and higher life satisfaction in terms of better expectations in life. Life design is a new career paradigm that supports individuals to become experts in building their life career, anticipate and deal with transitions, as well as create hope for a meaningful future regardless of the complexity of work, economic conditions, globalization and the digital revolution (Savickas et al., 2009). This online program is designed to encourage early adolescents to design their future and formulate their career goals and life satisfaction by considering issues such as the importance of education, future determination and the role of relationships in career planning and decision making.

Regarding the previous descriptions, this study attempted to determine the level of effectiveness of life design online career counseling to increase adaptability and career optimism of students at SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon. Its findings were expected to contribute an alternative in the implementation of life design counseling with a website format and online interaction, especially in terms of increasing adaptability and career optimism.

METHODS

The subjects involved in this study were the eleventh graders at SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon whose career adaptability and optimism were low with an age range of 16-18 years. They were sampled using a purposive sampling technique and grouped by random assignment into three groups with 15 students in each.

The subjects' data were collected using the scales of career adaptability and career future

inventory whose options were five. After being validated, all 35 items of these instruments were declared valid (with the α , γ range of 0.29-0.66), while their reliability were 0.83 and 0.69.

Randomizedpretest-posttest comparison group design was implemented in this study and involved three groups, namely group one which used website and online interactions, group two which used online interactions, and group three which used website. All groups were treated using the life design online career counseling in an individual format, got pretest prior to the treatment, and posttest after the treatment.

The life design online career counseling intervention process was carried out based on the Life-Design Counseling Manual by using the media of website and online interactions. There were 5 stages in the intervention. In stage 1, each counselee in a different group filled out a pre-test questionnaire to get an overview of the level of career adaptability and career optimism in baseline conditions (before intervention). Next, each counselee was given an opening question "How can I be useful to you?", "What career difficulties did you find at SMK?" to get the basis of problems and the goals students expected from the counseling session. After the counselee has stated the goals, the next step was to conduct a career construction interview (CCI). CCI is a semi-structured interview consisting of 5 questions that will describe the life themes.

Stage 3 covered life portrait (LP) construction stage which combined pieces of the counselee's story into a complete story that will reveal the counselee's self-definition. Here, the researchers interpreted the counselee's story/response to CCI into Life Portrait Sentences (LPS) with the help of the Life-Design Counseling Manual. In stage 4 the counseling session was focused on discussing LPS with counselees. In the last stage 5, the counselee made a mission statement and action plan, and filled out a post-test questionnaire. In the mission statement, each counselee wrote down his career goals, while in the action plan, each wrote down the steps to be taken to achieve his career goals.

The intervention was given online and offline according to the category of the

intervention group. Each group received the counseling for \pm 45 minutes with the time lag between the first session and the next session was approximately 1-2 days.

The effectiveness of the life design online career counseling to increase the adaptability and career optimism of the research subjects was tested using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test technique and followed by testing between groups with Kruskal Wallis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to table 1, 15 students have not yet achieved significant career adaptability and optimism. It was proved by the mean of all three groups. In terms of career adaptability, the website and online interactions group obtained ($M=76.6$, $SD=11.7$), online interaction group obtained ($M=72.8$, $SD=2.77$), and website group obtained ($M=71.4$, $SD=3.65$). Meanwhile, the pretest mean of the three groups in terms of career optimism was ($M=31.6$, $SD=2.41$) for the website & online interaction group, ($M=32.8$, $SD=2.47$) for the online interaction group, and ($M=31.8$, $SD=2.77$) for the website group. Thus, the three life design online career counseling experimental groups had a low category.

After the provision of the treatment, the data in table 1 showed an increase in the website group career adaptability and optimism scores, namely ($Z= -2.03$, $p<0.05$) and ($Z= -2.02$, $p<0.05$) respectively. Similarly, it happened to the online interactions group, namely ($Z = -2.02$, $p <0.05$) for the career adaptability and ($Z = -2.02$, $p <0.05$) for the career optimism. In the website and online interactions group, the scores of both career adaptability and career optimism also increased, namely ($Z= -2.02$, $p<0.05$) and ($Z= -2.03$, $p<0.05$) respectively.

The results of the Kruskal Wallis test have confirmed that there were no differences between groups after being given the life design online career counseling treatment to increase career adaptability and optimism. It was known that career adaptability obtained the post-test score of (χ^2 (2): 0.56, $p\geq 0.05$) and career optimism was (χ^2 (2): 0.88, $p\geq 0.05$).

Regarding the above results, all three experimental groups which received the life design online career counseling experienced

significant improvement. In addition, all data presented in the previous discussion can be seen in the following table 1.

Tabel 1 The Data Analysis of Career Adaptability and Career Optimism.

Notes : 1: Website, 2: Online Interaction, 3: Website dan Online Interaction

The findings of this research are supported situations they face because they are superior and

Var.	Group	Pretest		Posttest		Z	P
		M	SD	M	SD		
Career Adaptability	1	71.4	3.64	101.8	8.40	-2.02	<0.05
	2	72.8	2.77	100.0	6.04	-2.02	<0.05
	3	74.6	11.7	100.8	9.03	-2.03	<0.05
	χ^2	0.40		0.56			
	p	>0.05		>0.05			
Career Optimism	1	31.6	2.40	46.6	7.70	-2.03	<0.05
	2	32.8	2.16	48.8	5.84	-2.02	<0.05
	3	32.4	3.64	49.4	7.70	-2.02	<0.05
	χ^2	0.87		0.88			
	p	>0.05		>0.05			

by a study conducted by Taylor and Beukes (2019), namely the counseling intervention using life-design can improve career adaptability skills in adult workers in the industrial era 4.0. Their findings have confirmed that the intervention using career life design counseling is proper to be applied in the 21st century where there is an increasingly high level of competition in obtaining jobs in the manufacturing, engineering and industrial sectors.

Career counseling can also cover activities related to lack of employment, mental health problems, stress relievers and development programs to improve work skills, interpersonal relationships, flexibility, adaptability and other that shape independent individuals (Zunker, 2006). This fact shows that life design online career counseling can develop career adaptability. In this study the life design career counseling was applied in form of a website format and online interactions. This is in accordance with Nota et al., (2016) which state that life design online counseling intervention increases career adaptability skills and higher life satisfaction in terms of better expectations in life. In addition, Aspinwall et al (2004) show that optimistic people are able to adapt well to new

flexible in processing the information they get.

A major process in the life design paradigm is the counselee’s life story statement. The online media enabled counselees to watch inspiring movies and others’ success stories for then communicating their impressions through video conferencing with unlimited time. Numerous possibilities were also created within the implementation of website and online interactions, such as the counselees had a chance to gain some insights regarding people success stories on websites and download the information easily to direct their career based on the required experiences. Moreover, life design provided awareness to the counselees and enabled them to understand themselves further. It is in line with Savickas (2015) that in the life design stages called life-portrait, clients contemplate things they have done, but not yet explicitly expressed to themselves and others. This process is also known as a process of reflection and sense-making (Savickas, 2015).

Based on the findings, counselors are suggested to give the life design online career counseling in form of website and online interactions to improve career adaptability and optimism. It aims at facilitating counselees in

designing their future, formulating career goals, and life satisfaction by considering issues such as the importance of education, future determination, and the role of relationship in career planning and decision making. Such program can be used in a school context since it is simple and effective (Harris-Bowlsbey, 2013).

CONCLUSION

The present research was done to examine the effects of life design online career counseling to improve the eleventh graders at SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon. The findings have proved that this online career counseling has been effective to improve students' career adaptability and optimism..

School counselors can implement this life design online career counseling to deal with problems related to the low career adaptability and optimism. In addition, the future researches can analyze more specific use of life design in an online medium on students' career adaptability and optimism within a certain period of time.

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