

## Group Counseling with Symbolic Modeling Technique to Improve Students Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy

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### Abstract

Self-efficacy focuses on the component of self-confidence that a person has in doing his tasks including career decision making. To be able to decide the career appropriately, students need confidence in making choices based on their abilities. This study aimed to improve self-efficacy in students' career decision making through group counseling with symbolic modeling technique. The experimental research method with one group pre-test post-test design was used and involved eight students as group members. After their data were analyzed by using the Wilcoxon test, it showed that group counseling with symbolic modeling technique was effective to improve self-efficacy in students' career decision making. Further, the discussion of this study is directed at identifying the implication of group counseling with symbolic modeling technique to improve self-efficacy in students' career decision making.

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## INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period of change or transition from childhood to adulthood. This period requires individuals to carry out developmental tasks. The importance of developmental tasks according to Havighurst (in Yusuf, and Nurishan, 2011) is that developmental tasks are tasks which appear in a particular period in which when these tasks are accomplished, they would bring happiness. Oppositely, when these tasks are failed, the individuals would experience unhappiness and difficulties in carrying out future tasks.

Concerning developmental tasks, particularly students' Independence Standard Competence, the Ministry of National Education (2007) mentions ten aspects of development which need to be achieved by Senior High School students, one of which is knowledge and career readiness. However, to decide career appropriately, students need confidence in their choices based on their abilities. Bandura calls this confidence as self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) says that self-efficacy is the results of cognitive processes in the form of decisions, beliefs, or rewards about the extent to which individuals predict their abilities in carrying out tasks or particular actions needed to achieve the desired goals.

Puspita study findings (2010) conclude that there are various anxieties associated with the type of study continuation choices, work plans selection, unpreparedness of Senior High School graduates and vocational high school in entering higher education or the world of work. Meanwhile, Santrock (2002) explains that difficulties, confusion, and fear are felt when individuals must choose and decide departments at the university level. Lacks of information about departments and jobs to choose after graduation add to students' worries in making a decision.

Previous studies done by Hayadin (2006) found that 47.7% of Senior High School students already had the choice of Higher Education, and 52.3% had no choice. Whereas, Margaretha study (2013) asserts that decision making is a

process when an individual renders decisions from several available choices.

Meanwhile, in Yulianto study (2012), it is found that the Twelfth-grade students hesitate in choosing education after graduating from Senior High School. They feel less confident in choosing further education programs because of limited information and no career planning.

The phenomenon happened in Public Senior High School throughout Pati District showed the low level of students' career decision making. According to the results of DCM process with the topic of the future and desired education/position, it was known that 64.3% students did not know what to do after graduation, followed by the same percentage namely 60.7% students had no specific future goals and the goals kept shifting or changing.

When the above problems keep going on, there will be worries about the slow career development experienced by students of Public Senior High School in Pati caused by the low level of self-efficacy in career decision making. Whereas the graduation from Senior High School would be the first step to reach the desired dreams or goals, so there is a need to do the right career decision making.

By referring to the above description, therefore, there is a need to give intervention in form of group counseling with symbolic modeling in order to help counselors improving self-efficacy in students' career decision making because particular characteristics from models in films, comics or stories are preferably liked and easy to be understood by students as well as they can encourage students to improve self-efficacy based on what is played by the models. Further, modeling is effective to improve self-efficacy, especially when students are observing the success of their peers who have the same abilities as them (Bandura, 1997).

Since self-efficacy has a significant influence on the level of students' career decision making, this study was interestingly conducted because there were many students showing behaviors which disadvantaged themselves and others caused by the disability in making right decisions.

**METHODS**

This study used one group pre-test – post-test design by employing purposive sampling technique to choose the samples. As a result, there were eight students chosen homogeneously from the level of self-efficacy ranged from very high, high, fair, low, and very low in career decision making. In addition, group counseling was carried out as many as 6 times session with the materials of: self-confidence (session 1), career opportunities exploration (session 2), career planning (session 3), career decision making (session 4), career target pursuit (session 5), and career selection consistency (session 6). Furthermore, the data collection technique in this study used self-efficacy scale. This scale has 60 items. After the instrument was validated, there were 54 items valid and six invalids with the level of alpha coefficient of 0.964. Meanwhile, the data analysis technique used was a non-parametric statistical test, namely the Wilcoxon test.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The effectiveness test of group counseling with symbolic modeling technique can be seen from the comparison of the level of self-efficacy in students' career decision making before (pre-test) and after (post-test) receiving the treatment of group counseling with symbolic modeling technique. The details of these findings can be seen in the following Table 1.

The results of statistical calculation through Wilcoxon test in Table 1 showed that the mean of the level of self-efficacy in students' career decision making in the dimensions of self-confidence, career opportunities exploration, career planning, career decision making, career target pursuit, and career selection consistency gained higher results in the post-test than pre-test. As a result, there was an improvement on the level of self-efficacy in career decision making after giving group counseling with symbolic modeling for each dimension.

Overall, the mean of the level of self-efficacy in students' career decision making experienced improvement of 5.71 viewed from

the results of pre-test, namely 21.04, and post-test of 26.75. Besides, the results of the Wilcoxon test showed that group counseling with symbolic modeling was effective to improve self-efficacy in career decision making ( $Z = 2.207, p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 1.** The Results of the Wilcoxon Analysis Test

Dimensions	Pre-test		Post-test		Z	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
1	26.75	9.004	32.13	7.530	-2.530	< 0.05
2	26.50	7.464	33.25	6.089	-2.530	< 0.05
3	22.25	5.625	29.00	5.555	-2.524	< 0.05
4	16.13	4.970	20.75	4.027	-2.530	< 0.05
5	16.75	5.203	21.50	4.106	-2.530	< 0.05
6	17.88	6.266	23.88	4.324	-2.527	< 0.05
Σ	21.04	4.824	26.75	5.441	-2.207	< 0.05

Information:

Dimension 1: Self-Confidence; Dimension 2: Exploration of Career Opportunities; Dimension 3: Career Planning; Dimension 4: Career Decision Making; Dimension 5: Career Target Pursuit; Dimension 6: Career Selection Consistency

These findings are in line with previous studies. Namely, self-efficacy strongly influences on career decision making. This is similar to Febriantomo, and Suharnan (2015). Also, Widyastuti, and Pratiwi (2013) revealed that self-efficacy affects career decision making. Another study by Nurrega, Wahyuningsih, and Gusniarti (2018) shows that students' career decision making can be improved through group counseling.

Other findings were that group counseling with symbolic modeling could improve students' activeness when the process of group counseling took place. This fact is the same as Susanti study (2013) that group counseling with symbolic modeling can improve students' activeness. This was proved when the implementation process was conducted, members of the group were very enthusiastically involved in the discussion of videos by the group.

Other things which were observed during the implementation of group counseling was the improvement of the communication by the members of the group who were initially shy, then turned into brave to deliver opinions. In the same way, Basuki study (2013); Fiah, and Anggralisa study (2016) reveal that group counseling can improve interpersonal communication skills. Also, Maya, and Rohyan study (2016) argue that group counseling can improve self-confidence. In brief, group members

are more confident in delivering ideas in the discussion when symbolic modeling is displayed.

The processes in the implementation group counseling with symbolic modeling technique were highly related to the improvement of students' self-efficacy according to the displayed videos. Likewise, Widaryati study (2013) concludes that there is a significant influence by group counseling on self-efficacy. Meanwhile, the study findings of Sintadewi, Suarni, and Putri (2014) show that behavioral counseling model with a modeling technique is effective to improve students' self-efficacy. Additionally, Sari study (2014) concludes that the modeling technique is effective to improve students' career self-efficacy. Equally, Mumpuni study (2015) summarizes that symbolic modeling technique is very effective to improve self-efficacy.

Furthermore, the study found that when students had good career planning, they would be able to make good decisions. This is associated with Izzawati, and Lisnawati study findings (2015) which conclude that career planning training is very effective to improve self-efficacy in career decision making. Another study was done by Adiputra (2015) that modeling technique can improve students' career planning.

By referring to the above explanation, it can be concluded that group counseling with symbolic modeling is effective to improve self-efficacy in career decision making, including self-confidence, career exploration, and career planning.

## CONCLUSION

Group counseling with symbolic modeling technique is effective to improve self-efficacy in students' career decision making. Further, it is important for guidance and counseling teachers/counselors to understand the basic concept of group counseling service and symbolic modeling. It is because the implementation of group counseling with symbolic modeling elaborates group counseling and symbolic modeling. Besides, it also applies group counseling with symbolic modeling to improve self-efficacy in students' career decision making.

The future researchers are recommended to explore group counseling with symbolic modeling technique on other developmental aspects of students. They are also suggested to do a trial for group counseling with symbolic modeling technique to improve students' career decision making at another educational level for the advancement.

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