

Psychoeducational Group With Problem Solving And Self-Management Techniques To Improve Career Maturity

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Abstract

Career maturity is important since it enables students to choose the right career and prepare to enter workforce. Lack of career maturity will cause the students have no information about career or further study after graduation. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the effectiveness of psychoeducational group with problem solving and self-management techniques to improve the career maturity of 24 students of Public Vocational High School (SMK Negeri) in Semarang. This experimental study used randomized pretest posttest comparison group design. Based on Wilcoxon and Kruskal Wallis analysis results, the psychoeducational group with problem solving technique, self-management technique, and the combination of those techniques gained improvement in terms of career maturity. In details, the psychoeducational group with problem solving technique obtained better improvement than that of self-management and the combination of those techniques. Finally, this study recommends the use of problem-solving technique to improve the career maturity of Vocational High School students.

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INTRODUCTION

Career maturity is the level of an individual's ability to master his vocational development, covering the components of knowledge and attitude in accordance with career development provision (Pinasti, 2011: 18). The knowledge component is realized in the way individual understands his own power in relation to the world of work, while the attitude component refers to an ability to make career decisions and responsibility for any consequences which may be resulted from the decisions made. Career maturity is defined as knowledge and attitudes which take part in career decision making (Tumanggor, Sunawan, Purwanto: 2018). Both knowledge and attitudes support the right career decision making of individuals. In addition, career maturity is also a reflection of individuals' career development process to improve their career decision making (Richard, 2007). Career guidance that is focused on helping those who have the competence/expertise to present successful works in their life journey (Sugiharto, 2014).

Vocational High School students are generally at the age of 15-18 years. According to the career development stage, at this age human starts to enter growth and exploration phase (Bardick, Kerry Magnusson, & Kim: 2006). Career decision making is one of challenging processes for adolescents because it requires self information processing and career world (Alexsander, D., Purwanto, E., Awalya: 2014). Regarding career developmental task, students in this stage are assumed to have achieved career maturity indicated by the ability to show their interest in career choices, explore their abilities, obtain knowledge about career choice, and start making career plans (Abimanyu, 1990). Tjalla, Heru, & Kustandi's study (2015) found that Vocational High School students have not yet had career maturity indicated by the absence of career plans and minimum information, lack of comprehensive information, such as types of job and how to make career decisions.

Counsellors truly have significant roles in helping students to have career maturity. One

strategy that can be possibly applied is providing technique during counseling services. Some techniques which are considered suitable for this situation are problem solving and self-management techniques.

Problem solving helps students assess changes within themselves, and make the right decisions in line with their goals and life values. Here, individuals must accomplish developmental tasks in every single career developmental stage to achieve career maturity (Winkel & Hastuti, 2006).

A study by Nafisah, et al (2015) focusing on improving adolescents' career maturity using problem solving technique aided by mind map concludes that problem solving technique aided by mind map is able to significantly improve adolescents' career maturity.

Self-management involves self-monitoring, positive reinforcement, contracts or agreement with oneself and stimuli mastery. Regarding Suwanto's study (2016) concerning behavioral counseling using self-management technique to improve Vocational High School students' career maturity, one strategy that is appropriate to be implemented by counselors to help students achieve career maturity is the provision of psychoeducational group. Psychoeducational group emphasizes the use of educational methods to deliver information and develop skills (Henderson & Thompson, 2016). Erniwati's study (2017) revealed that psychoeducational group is effective to improve career decision making ability. Another study by Kesuma, et al (2018) also discovered that psychoeducational group is effective to improve career decision making self-efficacy and career adaptability ability of students.

This study aimed to examine the intervention of psychoeducational group with problem solving and self-management techniques to improve students' career maturity. It is expected that the findings of this study can contribute to all parties who are motivated to use and explore more effective techniques in the provision of Guidance and Counseling services, especially problem solving and self-management techniques.

METHODS

There were 24 of 119 students chosen as the subject of this study by considering the low career maturity they had. Purposive sampling was done by the researchers to place eight students into three experimental group. For more, students' career maturity data were collected using Career Maturity Inventory-Counseling Form C designed by Crites & Savickas (2011) consisting of 24 items with yes-no answer options. This instrument has the Alpha Cronbach coefficient of 0.798 and is categorized as reliable to use.

In conducting this study, the researchers employed experimental method with randomized pretest-posttest comparison group design. There were several steps carried out in this method. First, the provision of pretest using CMI-Form C. Second, the provision of treatment/ intervention in form of psychoeducational group (problem solving) in six sessions for group 1, (self-management) six sessions psychoeducational group for group 2, and (the combination of problem solving and self-management) six sessions of psychoeducational group for group 3. The treatment for each group lasted for 90 minutes. Third, posttest using CMI-Form C.

The psychoeducational group with problem solving technique was given through some systematic activities, namely building cohesiveness, identifying problems, setting goals,

exploring strategies, anticipating results, reviewing and learning, results evaluation and follow-up. Meanwhile, the psychoeducational group with self-management technique gave some materials, including building cohesiveness, self-monitoring, self-reward, self-contracting, self-control, evaluation of results and follow-up. Moreover, the psychoeducational group with techniques combination was given to build cohesiveness, identify problems, determine goals, explore strategies, anticipate results, review and learn, self-monitoring, self-reward, self-contracting, self-control, evaluation of results and follow-up. All gain score data collected through those activities were analyzed using Wilcoxon test and Kruskal Wallis test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data description showed that the mean and standard deviation of the experimental group career maturity increased from the pretest to posttest, namely the psychoeducational group with problem solving technique from (M = 31.88; SD = 1.959) to (M = 41.75; SD = 2.659), the psychoeducational group with self-management technique from (M = 30.25; SD = 2.121) to (M = 35.63; SD = 2.973), and the combination of problem solving and self-management from (M = 31.75; SD = 1.982) to (M = 39.38; SD = 1.768). The complete results are presented in table 1.

Table 1. The Measurement Results of Psychoeducational Groups with Problem Solving, Self-Management, and the combination of Problem Solving and Self-Management

Group	Pre-test		Post-test		Z
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
PS Group	31.875	1.959	41.75	2.659	-2.524*
SM Group	30.25	2.121	35.625	2.973	-2.530*
PS + SM Group	31.75	1.982	39.375	1.767	-2.552*
χ^2 (2)	2.895		12.496**		

*p<0.05 **p<0.01

Table 1 presents the results of Wilcoxon data analysis. It showed that the psychoeducational groups with problem solving

technique, self-management technique, and the combination of both techniques were effective to improve career maturity. In details, the

psychoeducational group with problem solving technique performed better than the other two groups. Thus, Mann Whitney test was carried out to examine the difference between each technique in the way it improved students' career maturity. Similarly, the test proved that the problem solving technique was more effective compared to the psychoeducational group with self-management ($Z = -3.061$; $p < 0.01$) and self-management technique itself ($Z = -1.977$; $p < 0.05$). Furthermore, it was also

found that the psychoeducational group with self-management technique was also more effective in increasing career maturity than the psychoeducational group with the integration of problem solving technique and self-management techniques ($Z = -.2382$; $p < 0.05$). As a result, it can be concluded that the psychoeducational group with problem solving technique was the most effective group to improve career maturity compared to the other groups. The full results can be seen in table 2.

Table 2. Mann Whitney Test

Group Comparison	Z	P
PS – SM Groups	-3.061	<0.01
PS - (PS+SM) Groups	-1.977	<0.05
SM - (PS+SM) Groups	-.2382	<0.05

Information:

PS:Problem Solving; SM: Self-Management; PS+SM: The combination of Problem solving and self-management

The above data explained that the psychoeducational groups with problem solving and self-management techniques were effective to improve career maturity. According to Crites (in Wijaya, 2010: 3) career maturity is a level in which individuals has mastered their career developmental tasks both knowledge and attitudes components which are in line with the stage of career development.

In this study, the researchers attempted to analyze the effectiveness of psychoeducational groups with problem solving and self-management techniques to improve students' career maturity. It was aimed at obtaining an overview of the extent to which the interventions of the psychoeducational groups with problem solving and self-management techniques effective to improve students' career maturity.

The psychoeducational group with problem solving technique was focused on helping students solving career problems which interfered their career maturity. It is in line with what was done by Lusk and Daniel (2009); Junaidi (2012); Nafisah et al (2015); Nurhidayati (2016), who conclude that problem solving technique can improve students' career maturity.

The purpose of the psychoeducational group with self-management technique was to help students manage themselves so that they could deal with career problems well. It is in line with studies by Ji Lim et al (2010); Suwanto (2016) which found that self-management technique can improve students' career maturity.

Furthermore, there is one aspect that distinguishes this study from studies by Lusk and Daniel (2009); Junaidi (2012); Nafisah et al (2015); Nurhidayati (2016); Ji Young Lim et al (2010); Suwanto (2016). It is in terms of the group format, namely the psychoeducational group in which the investigation carried out by previous studies only used common format of group counseling and group guidance. Students in this kind of group was motivated to be able to cope with any challenges which may occur within their developmental stages. Psychoeducation not only helps curing clients, but also prevents clients from similar problems they face in the past, so the clients are able to solve challenges they face prior to becoming distractions.

Based on the findings, experts' theories, and previous studies findings, it has been proved that the psychoeducational groups with problem

solving and self-management techniques were effective to improve students' career maturity and counselors are suggested to use this treatment for the same purpose. Additionally, it was found that the psychoeducational group with problem solving technique became the most effective treatment. If Crites & Savickas (2011) states career maturity is realized by individuals' ability to master developmental tasks, including knowledge and attitudes related to career development, problem solving technique can help with these things. Problem solving technique directs students to understand problem, in this case is career maturity. In this technique, students will discover a lot of problems which may emerge if they do not have career maturity, such as career uncertainty and unfocused activities that will harm them. Through this technique, students are motivated to know and develop career. They will also be guided to identify possible problems which may be experienced in relation to career knowledge and attitudes. Crites & Savickas (2011) confirms that individuals have much potential, but they cannot choose one as their goal; they cannot make a decision or choose any of the alternatives which are appropriate for them; when it comes to the unmotivated individuals, they will feel uncertain about his career choice because it was not the one they are interested in. by knowing various problems through problem solving technique, students can make decisions to solve all problems related to their career maturity. After that, they are expected to gain some changes in attitudes, the right career perception and understanding, and appropriate career plans followed by concrete actions to achieve.

Another technique called self-management is able to be used to build career knowledge and attitudes. This needs to be understood because sometimes counselors guide students to make goals without paying attention to attitudes and knowledge of career.

The last treatment in form of psychoeducational group with the integration of problem solving and self-management techniques were found less effective compared to

problem solving technique alone. It was because the researchers themselves felt less optimal in providing the technique so that it affected students' low performance.

Apart from the above findings, this study has a limitation in form of the absence of follow-up to confirm the effect of time on the psychoeducational groups with problem solving and self-management techniques.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings, it is concluded that there are differences in the effectiveness of the treatment found from the three groups. The psychoeducational group with problem solving technique is more effective to improve career maturity compared to the psychoeducational group with self-management technique and the techniques combination. It implies that counselors are recommended to use the psychoeducational group with problem solving technique in providing intervention increase the career maturity of vocational students. Meanwhile, the future researchers are suggested to focus more on taking subjects who have gender diversity.

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