Implementation of Trait and Factor Career Counseling Services for Students' Career Readiness at SMK Negeri 1 Palopo

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Abstrak. Kesiapan karir merupakan hal yang krusial bagi siswa dalam menentukan keputusan karirnya setelah menyelesaikan studinya, terutama di tingkat SMK. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh penerapan Layanan Konseling Karier Trait and Factor untuk meningkatkan kesiapan karier siswa di SMK Negeri 1 Palopo. Populasi penelitian ini terdiri dari 85 siswa dari kelas dua jurusan TKJ, dan melalui pre-test, teridentifikasi 9 siswa yang memiliki kesiapan karir yang sangat rendah hingga rendah. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian pra-eksperimental dengan pendekatan onegroup pretest-post-test. Dimulai dengan pre-test yang dilakukan melalui penyebaran kuesioner, dilanjutkan dengan pemberian layanan konseling karir, dan diakhiri dengan post-test. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan kuesioner kesiapan karir yang dikembangkan dari berbagai aspek, termasuk informasi pekerjaan, pengetahuan tentang kelompok pekerjaan yang disukai, pengambilan keputusan, perencanaan karir, eksplorasi karir, dan realisme. Kuesioner terdiri dari 30 item pernyataan, yang dianggap valid dengan nilai cronbach's alpha sebesar 0,931. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan adanya perbedaan nilai: nilai rata-rata pada pretest adalah 112,66, dan pada posttest meningkat menjadi 115,55. Berdasarkan hasil uji hipotesis dengan menggunakan uji T-test, dengan nilai signifikansi 0,000 < 0,05 menunjukkan bahwa konseling kelompok dengan menggunakan teori trait and factor dapat meningkatkan kesiapan karir siswa.

Abstract Career readiness is crucial for students in determining their career decisions after completing their studies, especially at the vocational school level. This research aims to investigate the influence of implementing Trait and Factor Career Counseling Services to enhance students' career readiness at SMK Negeri 1 Palopo. The population for this study consisted of 85 students from the second grade of TKJ department, and through a pretest, 9 students were identified with very low to low career readiness. This study used a pre-experimental research design with a one-group pretest-post-test approach. It began with a pre-test which was conducted through questionnaire distribution, followed by the provision of career counseling services, and concluded with a post-test. Data were collected using a career readiness questionnaire developed from various aspects, including work information, knowledge of preferred occupational grup, decission making, career planing, career exploration and realism. The questionnaire consists of 30 statement items, which were deemed valid with a cronbach's alpha is 0.931. The results of the data analysis show a difference in values: the mean score on the pretest was 112.66, and on the posttest, it increased to 115.55. Based on the hypothesis test results using the T-test, with a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05, it indicates that group counseling using the trait and factor theory can improve students' career readiness.

Key word: "Career counselling; Trait and Factor; Career readiness"

INTRODUCTION

Vocational High Schools (SMK) are schools which aim to develope students' abilities in order to be ready and capable of working in the real life. The existence of vocational schools with various choices of majors is one of the attractive factors for junior high school students who want to continue their education to a higher level because education is very important in the survival of a nation, in fact education is one way to improve the quality of human activity (Sersian, 2013).

The basic education data from the Ministry of Education and Culture for the even semester of the 2021/2022 academic year shows that there are more private schools than state schools, especially vocational schools. Likewise, in Palopo City there are 11 private vocational schools and 7 public vocational schools. This data highlights that education presents a significant opportunity for private entities to establish schools offering appealing majors and excellent facilities, thereby attracting both parents and students (Lindawati et al., 2022). Vocational schools provide opportunities for graduates to enter the workforce without pursuing higher education, developing the talents and interests of their students.

Vocational school students are in the adolescent phase, which according to Hurlock, identifies as crucial for determining their future, as their current characteristics and activities significantly impact their future life (Resti Wulandari, Donal, 2022). Understanding their career readiness after graduation plays a vital role in the paths they choose to take, with each student having a vision of their future shaped by various factors such as interests, talents, media, family environment (including parents), community, and school (Nyoman et al., 2022).

According to Holland's career theory, most high school students aspire to continue their studies at universities. However, many face challenges in choosing the right majors due to lack of detailed information, understanding of their potentials, and alignment of their interests and talents, leading to occasional missteps in their career choices (Rahayu, 2022).

Vocational High School (SMK) students are basically prepared to be ready to work after graduating from school, some students experience confusion and doubt regarding

their career choices due to external factors like peer influence or parental expectations, indicating that their career readiness is still underdeveloped (Yenes et al., 2012).

To this day, many students struggle with career decisions, resulting in regrets and various consequences such as decreased curiosity, diminished enthusiasm, laziness, and ultimately deciding not to pursue their chosen careers or further studies. Previous research indicates that many students exhibit career confusion, characterized by factors such as lack of clarity on further studies or employment options, incomplete understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and inadequate information on job references (Saputra & Widiasari, 2017).

The Minister of Manpower revealed that the latest data shows that vocational school graduates contribute the highest rate of unemployment in Indonesia, with a figure reaching 8.6% (Pratiwi, 2024). Despite a general decline in unemployment numbers in 2022, SMK graduates still dominate the unemployment figures compared to other educational levels (Saripah et al., 2023).

This phenomenon illustrates the lack of career readiness among SMK students and emphasizes the need for guidance, particularly from counseling teachers. Interviews conducted on December 13, 2023, revealed that students have awareness of their talents and interests but remain uncertain about career choices when these do not align. Additionally, they are unsure about which majors to choose for their future university studies. Furthermore, interviews with a guidance and counseling teacher on December 14, 2023, highlighted that many students face challenges in career planning, such as limited understanding of career planning, lack of knowledge about talents and interests, misunderstanding about their post-graduation direction, and confusion between entering the workforce or continuing their studies.

Effective career planning is crucial for students to achieve career maturity and ultimately succeed in their future careers (Irma Oktavia et al., 2021). Therefore, Based on consideration of the problems above, one of the proposed solutions to overcome students' career planning problems is through the implementation of trait and factor career counseling services.

Trait and factor career counseling emphasizes differences in student characteristics which ultimately have an impact on students' career decisions. This counseling can help students to recognize themselves and their abilities so as to help in determining their career (Jannah & Hidayat, 2022). Through guidance and counseling services, BK teachers can help students navigate conflicts that may hinder their personal, social, learning, and career development. The role of BK teachers includes aiding students in resolving issues and empowering them to make independent decisions, including career choices after completing their studies.

Group counseling involves a counselor working with several clients, primarily focusing on providing support and understanding to help clients resolve their issues. Group counseling sessions involve members facing similar problems, enabling each member to share experiences, exchange ideas, and provide feedback to foster self-evaluation and understanding (Latipun, 2010).

Its primary objective is to support students in daily life aspects and provide useful guidance in decision-making processes. Therefore, group counseling can support students in making career planning decisions that align with their talents, interests, and desired aspirations (Adityawarman, 2021). Through the implementation of group counseling services in school settings, students gain experience, knowledge, and information related to their career planning (Syafitri et al., 2023).

One technique of group counseling can involve using the trait and factor theory, which examines intelligence, interests, talents, occupations, and personalities through results obtained from psychological tests (Wirdatun Nisya, Daharnis, 2023; Umami et al., 2022). Thus, this study aims to delve deeper into the trait and factor theory within the realm of career counseling, specifically for high school students currently experiencing confusion in continuing their education (Ristian et al., 2020).

Trait and factor counseling include helping individuals achieve true development across various life aspects, developing self-control and management by helping them assess strengths, weaknesses, and programs to enhance life and career goals, enhancing self-awareness, limitations, and contributions to human development and integration.

Thus, the goal of this research is to assist students in planning and preparing for their future careers.

METHODS

The research approach applied was a quantitative study using a pre-experimental approach, specifically employing a one-group pretest-posttest design. The researcher conducted measurements before administering the treatment, which involved providing career counseling services, and then conducted measurements again after the treatment to evaluate the outcomes (citra reski ramadani, arman bin anuar, 2023).

Research Design



One-Group Pretest-Posttest

O1: Initial knowledge test (pretest) conducted before administering the treatment.

O2: Final knowledge test (posttest) conducted after administering the treatment.

X: Treatment involving the implementation of group counseling using the Trait and Factor theory (Ica et al., 2024).

The research population consisted of 85 students from three different classes of grade XI (TKJ) at SMKN 1 Palopo. Sample was selected using purposive sampling techniques by setting criteria, namely having a very low career maturity score, and based on the guidelines for implementing group counseling services (For group counseling services with a membership of 2 to 10 people). The sample in this study consisted of 10 people (5 with very low scores and 5 with low scores). However, during the implementation of the service, 1 of participant did not complete the process. Therefore, the researcher only analyzed 9 participants. The instrument used was a career planning questionnaire utilizing a Likert scale ranging from 5-1 for statements considered favorable and 1-5 for statements deemed unfavorable. This questionnaire was distributed via Google Form to students after validity and reliability testing of 63 statements based on career planning aspects among a small group of 32 students using SPSS software version 25. As a result,

30 statements were validated and found reliable with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.93 (citra reski ramadani, arman bin anuar, 2023).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The pre-test results on the sample conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Palopo involving 85 students from the Information and Communication Technology (TKJ) class XI regarding career planning overview can be seen as follows:

Table 1. Pretest Category

Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
129 – 146	Very high	6	7,1%
117 – 128	High	18	21,2%
104 – 116	Medium	39	45,9%
91 – 103	Low	17	22,4%
< 91	Very low	5	3,5%

Azwar suggests that before categorizing students' scores into categories, it is important to know the mean and standard deviation of those scores (Ariani et al., 2021). Using SPSS version 25, the mean score obtained was 101.03 with a standard deviation of 9.904. The minimum score was 78, and the maximum score was 124. Based on the category table above, the career planning overview of 85 students is as follows: 6 students fall into the very high category (<146), 18 students in the high category (117-128), 39 students in the moderate category (104-116), 17 students in the low category (91-103), and 5 students in the very low category (<91).

Based on these pretest results, the researcher observed students' career planning based on their scores. Subsequently, the researcher selected samples with the lowest scores to provide intervention in the form of career information services based on group counseling, delivered directly to the students who had previously completed the pretest questionnaire to evaluate score changes after the intervention. After the intervention, the researcher again distributed a posttest questionnaire containing the same statements as the pretest questionnaire to the students (Citra Reski Ramadani, Arman bin Anuar, 2023).

Table 2. Post-test Categories

Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage		
129 – 146	Very high				

117 – 128	High	4	44,4%
104 – 116	Medium	4	44,4%
91 – 103	Low		
< 91	Very low	1	11,1%

In Table 2, the researcher sampled 9 students who initially had scores categorized as very low and low. The table shows that there was a change after group counseling, with students' scores shifting from initially very low and low categories to high, medium, and very low categories. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a change after the students participated in group counseling services.

Table 3. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test

	Kolmogrov	– Sig		
-	Statistic	N		
Pre-test	0.228	9	0.195	
Post-test	0.198	9	0.200	

The significance values of 0.195 for the pretest and 0.200 for the posttest indicate that both datasets have a normal distribution.

Table 4. Paired Sample Statistics

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Mean N Std. Deviation Std. Error							
Pair 1	Pre-Test	112.66	9	14.31	4.77		
	Post-Test	115.55	9	10.18	3.39		

The difference in average scores between the pretest, which was 112.66, and the posttest, which was 115.55.

Tabel 5. Tes statistic

Tabel 5. Tes statistic									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig (2- Tailed)
					95%				
			Std.	Std.	Confidence				
Pair 1		Mean	Deviation	Error	Interval Of The				
				Mean	Differences				
					Lower	Upper			
	Pretest-	2.88	18.27	6.09	-11.16	16.93	0.474	8	0.000
	Post test	2.00	10.27	0.09	-11.10	10.93	0.4/4	o	0.000

The problem identified in this research is the lack of career readiness among eleventh-grade students. Therefore, to enhance their career readiness, they were provided with group counseling services as treatment.

Career maturity is a serious issue that requires immediate solutions so that students can effectively identify themselves and determine their career paths (Mahardijaya et al., 2019). Career maturity is a stage where an individual has a good understanding of their

career development tasks, both from academic and work perspectives. Career maturity has several indicators, including knowing about oneself, having the skills to make effective career decisions, gathering career information, being able to integrate knowledge about oneself and one's career, and having career planning (Krisdiyanti et al., 2023).

Choosing the right career can have a positive impact on students in the future; conversely, choosing an unsuitable career can have a negative impact on them (Daniati, 2016). To improve career readiness that is less than optimal, the trait and factor theory is used. The results show a significant increase in career readiness after treatment.

Hypothesis testing using paired sample statistics with SPSS version 25.0 was conducted to evaluate the differences between pretest and posttest scores after providing services through group counseling. The test results showed an Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) value of 0.000, which is less than the significance level α = 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. From these findings, it is concluded that providing career information services based on trait and factor theory has a positive impact on improving students' career readiness.

Previous research also found that there was a difference in career planning between the experimental group and the control group. According to the study, there was a 17% increase in career planning scores in the experimental group (Syafitri et al., 2023). Additionally, other studies conducted in high schools and vocational schools have shown that group counseling based on trait and factor theory can significantly enhance students' career maturity (Nyoman et al., 2022; Ristian et al., 2020; Violina & Ginting, 2023). A person's career choice should consider several factors, including: 1) understanding one's own talents, interests, attitudes, and self; 2) having knowledge about job types, or information regarding drawbacks, compensation, and opportunities that the individual should be aware of; 3) understanding field conditions, and being aware of the existing realities and facts (Diana et al., 2020).

Group counseling is a suitable counseling technique and strategy used to provide services for students experiencing career confusion in school (Praswastantika, Yutrika Nuryono, 2018). The trait and factor theory, developed by Frank Pearson, aims to provide

information and training for young people seeking specific jobs, train teachers in schools to perform career counselor duties, train teachers to select students, and assist students in choosing careers according to their potentials (Ristian et al., 2020).

The pioneers of trait and factor theory had underlying assumptions that led to the development of this theory. These assumptions include: each person has unique characteristics, each person has specific personality traits, an individual's personality can be matched with their job, the better the match between a person's personality and their job, the greater their chance of success, and career counseling can be tailored to the individual's developmental tasks (Putri et al., 2021).

These views form the basis of the theory, which continues to be widely used in career guidance and counseling today. Understanding oneself in career choice is crucial because the alignment between one's abilities, potential, and interests in work will enable them to take responsibility for the chosen job. Furthermore, this theory asserts that an individual's career choice is heavily influenced by the alignment of their abilities, interests, achievements, values, and personality with the work environment (Sugiati & Fitri, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, there was a difference between the pre-test and post-test scores in the research sample, indicating that career counseling services using the trait and factor theory can be implemented in school career counseling services. This study can serve as a reference for guidance and counseling teachers in schools for providing career services to students. The limitations of this study include student responsiveness, as the sample initially consisting of 10 students decreased to 9. Additionally, like other theories, the trait and factor theory has its own strengths and weaknesses.

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