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Student Involvement In Digital Media-Based Career Group Guidance Services And Successful Career Planning: A Case Study At Sma Negeri 1 Sumber

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Abstract

Digital transformation in education has driven a paradigm shift in guidance and counseling services, especially in the development of student career planning services. Although various studies have examined the effectiveness of digital media in career guidance services, there is still limited research that analyzes student engagement as a multidimensional construct involving cognitive, affective, and reflective aspects. This study aims to: (1) describe the implementation of digital media-based career group guidance services; (2) identify variations in student engagement in services; (3) analyze factors that affect student engagement; and (4) examine the relationship between student engagement and career planning success. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The research was carried out at SMA Negeri 1 Sumber Cirebon Regency with the participation of one Guidance and Counseling teacher as the key informant and fifteen students in grades XI and XII who were selected using purposive sampling techniques based on high, medium, and low involvement categories. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies. Data analysis uses Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis which includes data familiarization, initial coding, theme search, theme review, theme definition, and report preparation. The validity of the data is carried out through source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking. The results of the study show that digital media-based career group guidance services are carried out through the

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use of Google Classroom, Google Meet, educational YouTube, interest and aptitude test applications, university websites, and career exploration platforms. Three categories of student involvement were found, namely high, medium, and low. Students with high engagement exhibit broader career exploration abilities, deeper self-reflection, and more mature career decision-making than students with moderate and low engagement. Factors influencing engagement include intrinsic motivation, career interests, self-efficacy, family support, the role of BK teachers, socioeconomic conditions, and access to digital technology. The research findings expand the concept of exposure intensity of career guidance services by asserting that the success of services is determined not only by the frequency of participation, but also by the quality of students' cognitive, affective, and reflective engagement during the service process.

Keywords: **career group mentoring, career planning, case studies digital media, student engagement.**

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0 has changed various aspects of life, including the education system and guidance and counseling services. Education no longer focuses on the mastery of knowledge alone, but also on the development of adaptive competencies, digital literacy, and decision-making skills in the face of dynamic changes in the world of work. In this context, guidance and counseling services are required to be able to facilitate students in developing adaptive and sustainable career planning competencies.

Career planning is one of the important developmental tasks in adolescence that involves the ability to understand one's potential, explore educational and employment alternatives, and make decisions that are appropriate to individual characteristics and environmental demands. However, various studies show that students still experience career *indecisiveness* due to limited self-understanding, lack of career information, and the influence of the social and economic environment.

The use of digital technology in guidance and counseling services opens up new opportunities in the implementation of career services that are more flexible, interactive, and accessible. Various digital media allow students to obtain career information in a broad, fast, and actual manner. However, the abundance of digital information also has the potential to cause the

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phenomenon of *information overload* which can hinder the process of exploration and career decision-making.

Previous research has mostly focused on the effectiveness of digital media use, student satisfaction with services, and increased access to career information. However, there is still little research that examines student engagement as a multidimensional construct involving cognitive, affective, and reflective aspects in the success of digital media-based career group coaching services. In fact, student involvement is an important factor that determines the success of the process of exploration, self-reflection, and career decision-making.

Based on the research gap, this study aims to analyze student involvement in digital media-based career group guidance services and its relationship with the success of career planning. The novelty of the research lies in the development of the concept of exposure intensity of career guidance services which is understood not only as the frequency of student attendance, but also as the quality of cognitive, affective, and reflective engagement during the service process.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with an intrinsic case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because the research aims to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon of student involvement in digital media-based career group guidance services and its relationship with the success of career planning in the real context of schools. The intrinsic case study design was used because the researcher focused on a comprehensive understanding of specific cases that occurred at SMA Negeri 1 Sumber Cirebon Regency.

The research was carried out at SMA Negeri 1 Sumber, Cirebon Regency, West Java, in the period from February to June 2026. The selection of the research location is based on the consideration that the school has implemented digital media-based career group guidance services in a structured and sustainable manner. The research participants consisted of one Guidance and Counseling teacher as the key informant and fifteen students in grades XI and XII as the main informant. Participant selection used purposive sampling techniques by considering the level of student involvement in digital media-based career group guidance services, which were categorized into high, medium, and low engagement groups.

Data collection was carried out through three techniques, namely semi-structured interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies. Semi-structured interviews are used to obtain in-depth information regarding students' experiences, perceptions, and engagement in career group tutoring services. Participatory observation was carried out to

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observe the process of implementing services, interactions between participants, and forms of student involvement during the activity. Documentation studies are used to complement research data through analysis of service documents, activity records, assessment results, and various other supporting media.

The validity of the data is carried out through source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information obtained from Guidance and Counseling teachers and students. The triangulation method was carried out by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. Meanwhile, member checking is carried out by confirming the results of data interpretation to research participants to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the findings.

The data analysis uses a thematic analysis developed by Braun and Clarke (2021), which includes six stages, namely: (1) data familiarization; (2) initial coding; (3) theme search; (4) theme study; (5) definition and naming of themes; and (6) the preparation of research reports. The analysis process was carried out iteratively and continuously to obtain themes that represented students' experiences and involvement in digital media-based career group guidance services.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Implementation of Digital Media-Based Career Group Guidance Services The results of the study show that career group guidance services are carried out systematically through the use of various integrated digital platforms, namely Google Classroom, Google Meet, educational YouTube, interest and aptitude test applications, university websites, and career exploration platforms. A BK teacher explained: "Digital media makes it easier for students to access career information at any time, but we still provide assistance so that students do not experience confusion in making choices." The implementation of services consists of the orientation stage, self-exploration, exploration of career information, group reflection, and preparation of career plans.

Table 1. Braun and Clarke's Thematic Analysis Results

Main Themes	Subtheme	Findings
Service implementation	Digital platform	Google Classroom, Google Meet, YouTube
Student engagement	High, medium, low	Variations in student participation
Internal factors	Motivation, interest, self-efficacy	Defining participation

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External factors	Family, BK teachers, technology	Support engagement
Service impact	Exploration and career decisions	Career planning increases

Table 2. Grouping of Student Involvement in Digital Media-Based Career Group Guidance Services

No.	Student Initials	Categories of Engagement	Characteristics of Engagement
1	NR	Height	Actively discuss, regularly attend, search for career information independently, use digital media optimally
2	MR	Height	Active in discussions, responsive to tasks, independent career exploration, able to formulate career plans
3	PATH	Height	Consistently follow the service, actively ask questions, conduct additional consultations, have a clear career plan
4	OR	Height	Actively discussing, enthusiastic about participating in services, able to connect interests with career choices
5	AFR	Height	Active in all service activities, complete exploration tasks, have clear career goals
6	GPA	Medium	Quite active, but not consistent, still needs the direction of BK teachers
7	AAZ	Medium	Participate quite well, but less active in self-exploration
8	MRH	Medium	Participating in services, but not yet maximizing career information
9	MBA	Medium	Quite involved, but still hesitant in making a career choice
10	NDF	Medium	Follows the service well, but has not been consistent in completing exploration tasks
11	NAKP	Medium	Moderate participation, still needs encouragement in career decision-making

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No.	Student Initials	Categories of Engagement	Characteristics of Engagement
12	APR	Medium	Participate in activities regularly, but are less active in group discussions
13	ARA2	Low	Passive in discussions, rarely completing tasks, lacking in career exploration
14	NNAME	Low	Less active, minimal participation, still experiencing confusion about career options
15	AMH	Low	Passive in service, lack of focus, lack of clear career direction

Table 3. Distribution of Student Engagement Categories

Categories of Engagement	Number of Participants (n)	Percentage (%)	General Characteristics
Height	5	33,3	Active, reflective, exploratory, and independent in career planning
Medium	7	46,7	Participatory but still in need of mentoring and reinforcement
Low	3	20,0	Passive, less exploratory, and experiencing career confusion
Total	**15**	**100,0**	-

Results of analysis of interviews, observations, and documentation of researchers (2026). Based on Table 4.2, the majority of research participants were in the category of moderate involvement, which was 7 students (46.7%). This group showed quite good participation in participating in digital media-based career group guidance services, but still needed direction and assistance from Guidance and Counseling teachers in exploring information and making career decisions.

A total of 5 students (33.3%) were included in the high involvement category. Students in this category show comprehensive involvement, characterized by active participation in discussions, the ability to explore careers independently, the optimal use of digital media, and the ability to self-reflect and develop realistic career plans. These findings suggest that high engagement contributes to improving the quality of students' career planning.

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Meanwhile, as many as 3 students (20.0%) were in the low involvement category. This group tends to show passive participation, low intensity of career information exploration, and still experience confusion in determining further education and employment options. These conditions indicate that student involvement in career group guidance services is determined not only by physical presence, but also by the quality of cognitive, affective, and reflective involvement during the service process.

The findings of this study strengthen the argument that the intensity of exposure in digital media-based career group guidance services needs to be understood as a multidimensional construct that includes aspects of student participation, self-reflection, information exploration, and emotional engagement. Thus, the success of career planning is not only influenced by the frequency of attending services, but also by the quality of student engagement during the service process. One of the students with high engagement stated:

"I am looking for additional information about my own majors and job prospects so that I am more confident in making a choice." Meanwhile, students with low engagement revealed:

"I'm still confused because the information I get is too much and varied."

Factors Affecting Engagement The study found two groups of factors that affect student engagement. Internal factors: intrinsic motivation; career interests; self-efficacy; readiness to learn. External factors: family support; the role of BK teachers; socio-economic conditions; access to technology; school environment.

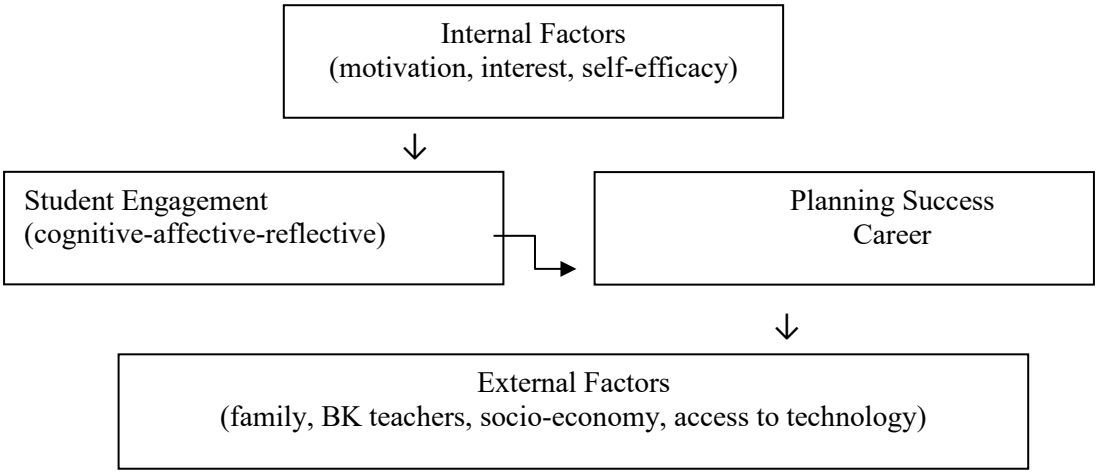


Figure 1.

Conceptual Model of Research Findings

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DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that digital media-based career group guidance services can be an effective means of supporting the development of student career planning if accompanied by the active involvement of students (Savickas, 2013). These findings are in line with the Career Construction theory developed by Savickas which emphasizes that career development is a process of constructing meaning through experiential exploration, self-reflection, and career adaptability.

Students who demonstrate high engagement are not only behaviorally active through attendance and participation in discussions, but also demonstrate cognitive engagement in the form of the ability to critically evaluate career information as well as reflective engagement through the ability to understand personal career potential and goals (Chin et al, 2020). This condition shows that student involvement is a multidimensional construct that affects the success of career planning. The findings of this study also support the perspective of Social Cognitive Career Theory which explains that self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and environmental support have an important role in the career decision-making process. Students with high self-efficacy tend to be more active in exploring various educational and employment alternatives and have stronger confidence in making career choices.

On the other hand, this study found the phenomenon of *information overload* in some students. This condition shows that the ease of access to digital information does not always have a positive impact if it is not balanced with adequate information literacy skills (Owen et al, 2020). Therefore, Guidance and Counseling teachers have a strategic role as facilitators, mediators, and information curators to help students select, evaluate, and interpret career information appropriately.

The main theoretical contribution of this research is the development of the concept of the exposure intensity of career guidance services as a multidimensional construct that includes cognitive, affective, and reflective engagement dimensions. Thus, the success of digital media-based career group guidance services is determined not only by the frequency of student participation, but also by the quality of student involvement during the service process.

Conclusion

Digital media-based career group guidance services at SMA Negeri 1 Sumber have been carried out systematically and adaptively to technological developments. There are three categories of student engagement, high, medium, and low, which are closely related to career

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planning success. The higher the student's involvement in service, the better their ability to understand themselves, explore career alternatives, and make educational and employment decisions. Factors that affect engagement include motivation, interest, self-efficacy, family support, socioeconomic conditions, access to technology, and the quality of BK teacher facilitation. The theoretical contribution of this research is the development of the concept of exposure intensity of career guidance services which includes cognitive, affective, and reflective dimensions as indicators of the success of digital media-based career group guidance services.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In addition, the next researcher is advised to combine quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of students' with career planning. Further research can also develop a research model by adding other variables, such as career self-efficacy, resilience, school support, or career maturity as factors that have the potential to affect the career anxiety of vocational school students

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