



## The Extent Of School Relations In Supporting Students' Careers

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### Abstract:

**Background:** This study emerged from a practicum component of a Career Guidance and Counseling course, designed to analyze school-based career programs while providing pre-service training for future counselors. The observation focused on understanding real-world applications of career counseling theory in vocational education settings.

**Objective:** The study aimed to: (1) examine the job responsibilities of guidance counselors in vocational schools, (2) develop practical skills in delivering career guidance to diverse student populations, and (3) assess how school programs support student career readiness.

**Methods:** Using direct observation and semi-structured interviews, researchers documented activities at SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon. Data collection involved: Shadowing guidance counsellors Interviewing the School Career Committee (BKK) regarding career support initiative. Analyzing program implementation against the planned curriculum (RPS)

**Results:** Key findings revealed: Workload Challenges: Each counselor served 300-360 students (10-12 classes), limiting program implementation fidelity. Program Flexibility: While the Guidance and Counseling program followed RPS frameworks, adaptations were necessary due to resource constraints. Student Diversity: Counselor competency and adequate facilities were noted, though student backgrounds (socioeconomic status, parental influence) created varied counseling needs.

**Conclusion:** The study highlights the complex interplay between institutional resources, counselor capacity, and student heterogeneity in vocational school career guidance. Despite systemic challenges, counselors demonstrated adaptive professionalism.

**Implications:** Findings suggest: Need for reduced student-counselor ratios Further research with longitudinal designs to assess program efficacy Professional development for counselors handling diverse student profiles

Keywords: Career counseling, vocational education, guidance programs, student diversity, counselor competency

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### INTRODUCTION

This observation is one of the activities to fulfill the final assignment of the Career Guidance and Counseling course, which analyzes the school's career-related programs for



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students as a learning experience for future counselors and as a preview of what it will be like to be a career counselor. The author conducted research at SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon, located on Perjuangan Street, Sunyaragi Ward, Kesambi Subdistrict, Cirebon City, Western Java, 45132. The researcher observes that SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon has potential that needs to be thoroughly studied in the teaching and learning process, particularly in the guidance and counseling services program to support students' careers at SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon.

This observation is conducted to: find out the extent to which guidance counselors and the school provide understanding, mastery, and knowledge about careers, jobs, interests, and students' talents; understand the programs and efforts of the Career Guidance Center (BKK) in helping develop students' understanding, mastery, and knowledge about careers at SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon; identify the obstacles in implementing BKK programs when channeling students' workforce; support and realize the programs designed by BKK related to students' careers; and assess the effectiveness of the programs at SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon. Seeing for myself that SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon is a vocational school with potential in the workforce, although it cannot be denied that some will continue to higher education.

Career, according to the English dictionary, is defined as the development of a person in their work. A career can be viewed from the perspective of work experience, advancement in position, and the amount of income. Therefore, a career also affects a person's social, financial, and emotional conditions.

Career guidance is one form of integrated counseling services provided in schools. Career guidance is one of the fields of guidance services that is on par with three other guidance services, namely academic guidance, social guidance, and personal guidance. The career guidance program at school aims to help children plan their future careers, ensuring that the chosen career aligns with their talents, interests, and values. If a person finds the right career, then their life will ultimately be happy. And happiness is everyone's goal in life. Therefore, career guidance from an early age is an inseparable part of the educational task. Career guidance is not just about responding to emerging problems, but also about helping to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed in the workplace.

## **METHOD**

The research method used in this study is direct observation, which is a method of data collection where the researcher directly observes the symptoms being studied from a research object, using or without using the designed research instruments, and interviews with the relevant parties. We were first given instructions by the BK to interview the BKK, after which we interviewed with the BKK by asking several questions related to the students' careers at the school and the school's contribution to supporting their careers. The interview we conducted lasted for 40 minutes, using an audio recording. The research was conducted over 4 days from Monday to Thursday, November 27 – 30, 2023. This research was conducted at SMKN 1 Cirebon, located on Perjuangan Street, Sunyaragi Ward, Kesambi Subdistrict, Cirebon City, West Java 45132.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the observations that have been conducted, the result is that there is an effective BKK program to support students' careers. With students first being screened and then grouped according to their career goals. At SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon, there are three paths in determining a career, namely continuing to higher education, working, and entrepreneurship. Of the three paths, the school presented that the number of students continuing their careers in the workforce is higher than in the other two paths. Following up on students' interest in working, the school provides a BKK for the placement of student labor.

Further observations we have made about students who continue their careers in the workforce indicate that the BKK at SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon has a program to prepare prospective alumni to be job-ready. Some of the connections that the school has are as follows:

1. School Committee and Cirebon City Education Council
2. Professional Associations and Business Associations (KADIN, AKLI, GAPENSI, ITO, BNSP)
3. Business World/Industry World/Work World/Institutions (Recruitment of Workforce and Activities for Teacher and Student Internships and Apprenticeships), among others, as follows:

**Table 1. Companies With Open Recruitment During The Research Period**

No.	Wilayah Cirebon	No.	Luar Wilayah Cirebon
1	PT. Arida	1	PT. Wijaya Karya Intrade
2	PT. Astra Auto 2000	2	PT. Gs Battery
3	PT. Teja Berlian	3	PT. Astra – Daihatsu
4	PT. Kereta Api Indonesia (Daop Iii)	4	PT. Astra Internasional
5	PT. Indonesia Power	5	PT. Matahari Departement Store Tbk.
6	PT. Telkom	6	PT. Bridgstone Indonesia Tire
7	PT. Dok Kodja Bahari	7	PT. Network Nusantara
8	PT. PLN P3BJB RJBR UPT	8	PT. Gemilang Engineering
9	UPT Pelatihan Kerja Plumbon	9	PT. Trifonses
10	PT. Tirta Mas	10	PT. LG Electronics
11	PT. Sambu Kejawanan	11	PT. Omron
12	PT. Paket Data Andal	12	PT. Global Biomedialab
13	Hotel Santika	13	PT. Panasonic Manufacturing Ind.
14	CV. Pancuran Jaya Abadi	14	PT. Indocement Tunggal Prakarsa
15	CV. Mataram Sakti	15	PT. Polytama Propindo
16	CV. Suryalaya	16	PT. Cigading Habeam Centre Jakarta
17	PT. Yamakawa Rattan Cirebon	17	PT. Paragon Technology And Innovation Jakarta
18	PT. Arsikon Tama Design Cirebon	18	PT. Chemco Harapan Nusantara Karawang
19	PT. House Of Rattan Cirebon	19	PT. Indo Jaya Sukses Makmur Jakarta Utara
20	CV. Rattan Tegalwangi Cirebon	20	PT. Nutrifood Indonesia Bogor

Besides that, some of the characteristics of the school students are: The advancement of technology changes human character, thus requiring special methods that involve technology in efforts to understand students' character. According to (Ajeng, Cisika, et al., 2023), students' character in the era of technological advancement must possess high competitiveness without neglecting ethics and morals. The character of students at SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon is very diverse due to the influence of their environment and place of residence, as well as their parents' background, which also contributes to the students' character development. The researcher took several samples from class 10 DPIB 3, 11 RPL 2, and 12 TKR 1. The researcher took samples from the three classes to compare the students' characteristics as a reference for the researcher and an evaluation for the school. We provided the three classes with material on career knowledge, jobs, interests, and talents. For the material provided, it is the same across all three classes so that the researcher can compare the characteristics of students at different grade levels.

**Table 2. Alignment of Major and Career Aspirations**

Current Class Level	Current Major	Gender	Job Aspirations	Hobby	Reason for Choosing the Major	Alignment
1. Class X DPIB 3	Building Modeling and Information Design	- Male: 22 Students - Female: 11 Students	-Architect 50% -Pilot 17% -Doctor 10% -Others 8%	-Drawing 70% -Soccer 10% -Cooking 5% -Singing 7% -Others 8%	-Desire for oneself 60% -Hobby 10% -Parents 16% -Following the crowd 5% -Others 9%	From class X DPIB 3, the researcher concluded the hypothesis that 65% of students have aspirations and hobbies that align with the major they have chosen. For example, the hobby of drawing is very suitable for Building Modeling and Information Design, which can lead to a career as an Architect. Meanwhile, 35% of them do not align their hobbies, majors, and career aspirations. From the XI RPL 2 class, the researcher concluded the hypothesis that 85.6% of students have aspirations and hobbies that align with their chosen major, such as the hobby of playing games which is very suitable for Software Engineering, thereby determining their career as a Programmer, Game Developer, and Gamers. Meanwhile, 14.4% do not yet have a match between their hobbies, major, and career aspirations.
2. Class XI RPL 2	Software Engineering	-Male: 22 Students -Female: 9 Students	-Programmer / Software Designer: 65% -Game Development 13% -Entrepreneurs 10% -Gamers 8% -Others 4%	-Playing Games 78% -Sports 6% -Reading Books 9% -Others 7%	-Personal desire 79% -Hobby 10% -Parents 5% -Following the crowd 4% -Others 2%	From class XII TKR 1, the researcher concluded the hypothesis that 56% of students have aspirations and hobbies aligned with the chosen major, such as assembling and disassembling motorcycles, which is very suitable for Automotive Light Vehicle Engineering, thus determining their career as a mechanic. Meanwhile, 44% do not align with their hobbies, major, and career aspirations.
3. XII TKR 1	Automotive Light Vehicle Engineering	-Male: 32 Students -Female: 0 Students	-Entrepreneurs 49% -Military/Police 15% -Mechanic 25% -Veterinarian 2% -Sailing 7% -Others 2%	-Disassembling and reassembling engines 55% -Motor Racing 17% -Exercising 12% -Playing Games 9% -Read Books 4% -Others 3%	-Desire for oneself 36% -Hobby 37% -Parents 8% -Following the crowd 6% -Others 13%	From class XII TKR 1, the researcher concluded the hypothesis that 56% of students have aspirations and hobbies aligned with the chosen major, such as assembling and disassembling motorcycles, which is very suitable for Automotive Light Vehicle Engineering, thus determining their career as a mechanic. Meanwhile, 44% do not align with their hobbies, major, and career aspirations.

From the table, it can be concluded that from the three levels, namely grades 10, 11, and 12, the analysis in the table above answers the hypothesis about the chosen major, hobbies, and aspirations, with 68.8% being aligned while 31.2% are not yet in harmony between the chosen major, hobbies, and aspirations.

#### Analysis of Counseling Results:

1. Attending; The counselee can express and articulate their problems, which makes the counselor feel appreciated and creates a conducive counseling atmosphere.
2. Group discussion on Problem Solving; A group discussion so that students with similar problems can be addressed indirectly.
3. Role Playing; The counselee is able to see the perspective from the other side.(HI and NFQ who switch roles to become their parents).
4. Guessing games; This technique aims to avoid monotony and ensure that the knowledge conveyed can be absorbed and applied in reality.
5. Self-introduction expressed through writing media; Aimed at recognizing the potential possessed by students.
6. Conducting Humanistic Therapy; As is known, humanistic therapy aims to help someone better understand themselves.
7. Conducting Dynamic Interpersonal Therapy; This dynamic interpersonal therapy is indeed more specifically aimed at individuals who have relationships between themselves and their environment.
8. Presentation; Providing engaging information so that the material given can be well absorbed.
9. Ice Breaking; We use this technique so that after the material, we start with a brain refresh to create a relaxed atmosphere that can be understood. This technique appears conditionally as each class is different.

Character analysis of students in the 10th grade DPIB 3, 11th grade RPL 2, and 12th grade TKR 1 as follows:

1. Class 10 DPIB 3; Class 10 DPIB has a cheerful and friendly character but also tends to be shy and has a low level of self-confidence due to the adjustment between middle school and vocational school. In the 10th grade DPIB 3 class, there are 33 students with a ratio of 2:1. There are 11 female students and 22 male students.
2. Class 11 RPL 2; Class 11 RPL 2 has a character that tends to be evenly balanced between introverts and extroverts, cooperative in listening to the material presented, with a good

level of self-confidence by explaining the meaning of words from the researcher, and then following each session well from the introduction, presentation of career material, ice breaking, and so on, up to the last one which is a group photo. In class RPL 2, there are 31 students with a ratio of 3:1. There are 9 female students and 22 male students.

3. Class 12 TKR 1; Class 12 TKR 1 has a character that is 89% extroverted, very enthusiastic about new people, with a good level of self-confidence as evidenced by their willingness to step forward and explain their hobbies, aspirations, interests, talents, and jobs, as well as the steps they will take to achieve their career aspirations. For example, Sandi, a student from class 12 TKR 1, has a dream of becoming a Police Officer. Sandi has a hobby of sports, an interest in policing, and academic talent as measured by psychological tests. He has already prepared physically by training, maintaining height and weight, studying for psychological test exams, and more.

The Guidance and Counseling Program at SMK Negeri 1 Kota Cirebon is quite flexible, with several programs scheduled according to the RPS. However, they cannot be implemented as intended because a single educator (guidance counselor) handles 10-12 classes with an average of 300-360 students per guidance counselor. In our opinion, the guidance counselor at SMK Negeri 1 Kota Cirebon is competent in handling students, and the counseling room is also comfortable.

The Guidance Program we conducted aligns with the very purpose of guidance itself, which is to assist such as direction to help in making decisions on various issues. This is in line with (Amin, Samsul Munir, 2016) who stated that the definition of guidance was first found in the Year's Book of Education 1955, which mentions that "Guidance is a process of helping individuals through their effort to discover and develop their potentialities both personal happiness and social usefulness." This means that guidance is a process of helping individuals through their efforts to discover and develop their abilities to achieve personal happiness and social usefulness.

As per the definition of guidance, the researcher provides career guidance that encompasses the extent of understanding of students at SMK Negeri 1 Cirebon City regarding careers, jobs, interests, talents, and aspirations. The researcher uses classical guidance techniques involving educational interactions through question and answer sessions, group discussions about individual recognition and potential, up to career planning, using media such as paper, whiteboards, and PowerPoint. However, the PowerPoint we

provided was not displayed through a projector; it was only explained in terms of the material we prepared in the PPT.

Meanwhile, we conducted counseling for two students from class 12 TKR 1 named IH and FNQ, who are facing similar issues, namely career determination confusion, lack of parental support, and a toxic classroom environment that hinders career decision-making. The needs of the counselees are a harmonious family environment and support for their aspirations. Then, another issue is the problematic classroom atmosphere among friends, which disrupts the counselee's psychology in recognizing their potential, honing their talents, and developing progress in career planning. In the diagnosis, internal factors within the counselee include difficulty accepting the situation that has occurred, the emergence of negative thinking tendencies, leading to the belief that they cannot develop their potential.

Meanwhile, external factors (environment) such as a less supportive family environment, lack of communication with parents, like exchanging stories, grievances, and others, as well as problematic peer relationships, also contribute to the external factors affecting the counselee. Then the counselee began the treatment by starting with neutral topics such as asking about their well-being, daily activities, and so on, followed by shifting from neutral topics to the core issue, continuing with attending and listening to the counselee (IH and NFQ) by squaring, leaning, and maintaining eye contact. Then provide Responding Body language such as nodding, smiling, and the seating position between the client and the counselor.

Conducting humanistic therapy, as it is known, aims to help someone better recognize themselves. So, IH and NFQ need to recognize their condition, strive to accept their current situation, and then get closer to their religion through self-discovery to have a good foundation for the future. Then, they undergo Dynamic Interpersonal Therapy (DIT). This type of therapy is specifically designed for individuals who have relationships with others and their environment. The aim is to help IH and NFQ become closer to their families and improve communication with their parents. Then the counselor provides motivational stimuli to rise and have enthusiasm for their career.

Additionally, motivation becomes a movement or drive that occurs spontaneously and naturally in humans, leading to the emergence of the self, which is the center of human personality. Lastly, there is the situation or living environment of the client. Then, the counselor also prepares a Program/Plan to encourage the client to be able to do everything with the right decisions and be responsible for all the consequences. Finally, they provide a

positive self-concept and self-confidence to the client, assuring them that they are capable of solving their problems. We use several guidance and counseling techniques, including the following:

1. Attending; it is the ability to focus the attention of the counselee on the counselor, allowing the counselee to express and articulate their problems, thereby feeling valued and creating a conducive counseling atmosphere. This is in line with (Santika, Dwi Putri, 2022) that attending plays an important role in the application of school counselors to students, so that students feel comfortable, at ease, and openness arises regarding problem issues.
2. Group discussion on Problem Solving; This technique is applied to classes that are not yet fully open about common issues, and then we discuss it together so that students with similar problems can find indirect solutions.
3. Role Playing; In this technique, we conduct a game by switching roles, so that the counselee can also see the perspective from the other side. (HI and NFQ, who switched roles to become their parents).
4. Riddles game; When the class starts to become unproductive, we start using riddles. This aims to avoid monotony and ensure that the knowledge conveyed can be absorbed and applied in reality.
5. Self-introduction expressed through writing media; This technique is used for classes that do not yet have career aspirations, such as "*I am proud of myself because I have...*", "*I like...*", "*I have a hobby...*", "*I sometimes...*", "*I do not like...*", and others. This aims to recognize the potential possessed by the students.
6. Conducting Humanistic Therapy; Theoretically, Humanistic Personality is a branch of psychology that studies personality in terms of the potential possessed by the individual, not delving into the individual when they are "sick" but rather the efforts or potential opportunities after recovery. According to (Yurdik, Jahja, 2015), Golden Allport stated, "Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment."

Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment. According to (Pervin, Lawrence A; et al., 2015), personality is a person's character that causes the emergence of consistency in feelings, thoughts, and behaviors.

This broad definition allows us to focus on several aspects that indicate discussing consistent patterns of behavior and qualities within a person that differ from the environment, influencing a person's personality. With the opinion of Lawrence et al., personality can be studied from several aspects, such as environment, socio-cultural influences, learning, and not to forget genetics. Yes, one of the factors is genetics, which turns out to also be a factor that shapes a person's personality. Humanistic therapy, as is known, aims to help someone better recognize themselves.

7. Conducting Dynamic Interpersonal Therapy; This dynamic interpersonal therapy is indeed more specifically aimed at individuals who have relationships between themselves and their environment. Like the response aimed at students, they feel more comfortable when telling stories and other activities.
8. Presentation; The material is delivered using a presentation supported by engaging images so that the information can be absorbed well.
9. Ice Breaking; We use this technique so that after the material, we start with a brain refresh to create a relaxed atmosphere that can be understood. This technique appears conditionally, as each class is different.

## CONCLUSION

The character of students at SMK Negeri 1 Kota Cirebon is very diverse due to the influence of their environment and place of residence, as well as their parents' background, which also contributes to the students' character development. The technique we use in providing guidance and counseling to students at SMK Negeri 1 Kota Cirebon includes group discussions on problem-solving. This technique is applied to classes that are not yet fully aware of the common issues that occur. Role Playing: In this technique, we play games by switching roles. This guessing game aims to avoid monotony in delivering the material, self-introduction expressed through writing media. This technique is used for classes that do not yet have aspirations. With all of that, it allows us to focus on several aspects that indicate discussing consistent patterns of behavior and qualities within a person that differ with the environment influencing a person's personality. We also conduct Dynamic Interpersonal Therapy as a dynamic interpersonal therapy for someone who has relationships between individuals and also in their environment.

## IMPLICATION

It is necessary to conduct research over a longer period so that the material and analysis in our report can be improved. The preparation for participating in the observation of this course is still considered insufficient; it would be better to provide more preparation for this course, as it is very beneficial for us.

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