

Constructivist Career Counseling: A Method for Helping Students Career Decision

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Abstract: Constructivist career counselling is a form of career counselling that can help students who have difficulty making career decisions due to a lack of information. This research is an intervention program that aims to determine the effectiveness of constructivist career counseling in reducing career students' career decision-making difficulties. A quantitative and qualitative research with a single subject ABA design. The research subject was a 21-year-old student, who had difficulty deciding on a career after graduating from college because of the lack of information he had. Measuring the success of counseling was carried out using Career Decision Making Difficulties. The results of the research show that constructivist career counselling can help students overcome career decision making difficulties. Subjects no longer find it difficult to decide on a career and can understand the process of searching for information about careers..

Keywords: Career Counselling; Career Counselling Constructivist; College Student

Introduction

Making a career decision is a difficult process and not everyone can face it easily. Information technology in the 21st century is developing rapidly and the globalization that is occurring has created many changes, including in the world of careers (Kennedy & Sundberg, 2020). These changes make the challenge of making career decisions increasingly complex, so that many students have difficulty deciding on a career (Baran et al., 2021). Students who are unsure about deciding on a career admit to experiencing anxiety that closes their view of past experiences which makes them unable to plan their future. Therefore, the student ends up seeking professional help because he cannot depend on himself.

The difficulty for someone to make a career decision is often associated with career indecision or career doubts (Priyashantha et al., 2023). There are three levels of individual difficulty in deciding a career, consisting of lack of readiness, lack of information, and inconsistent information. Lack of readiness or unpreparedness in deciding on a career includes a lack of motivation and difficulty in making decisions in general. Lack of information or difficulty making career decisions due to a lack of individual information about the career decision-making process (Bian, 2023). Thus, identifying the difficulties that prevent individuals from making career decisions is a fundamental step in providing them with the help they need.

The process of making career decisions can also be explained through the development of an individual's identity status. This stage of identity development is related to how committed an individual is to their beliefs and self-values in dealing with various life issues. The four stages of identity status in hierarchical order are diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement (Hayden & Osborn, 2020). As emerging adults, students are in a state of moratorium between childhood and adulthood. They have the freedom to explore themselves but are also faced with a lot of uncertainty and doubt about various problems. The

decision to choose a career made by young adults is important because it has a significant impact on self-satisfaction and future work (Gu et al., 2020).

After passing the exploration stage, it is hoped that individuals will be able to apply their vocational self-concept and explore work more widely by opening themselves up to various types of work. Success in passing this exploration stage will result in planning, curiosity to explore work roles and knowledge about the principles of career decision-making and the world of work (Udayar et al., 2020). However, at this exploration stage, not all individuals can successfully obtain information and be able to decide on the job and career choices they will make. One of them is the individual KS (his initials) who is the subject of this research.

KS is a 21-year-old 4th-semester student at a university who has problems making career decisions after graduating from college. He has not been able to decide which career he will choose because he has always been directed and guided by his family. Since childhood, KS has been accustomed to being directed by his father in carrying out his education. Every activity he does, both academic and non-academic, is always with the advice and approval of his father. Growing up, KS always needed advice from other people in deciding things, including his activities in college and career planning. KS himself will feel unsure about his decision if he doesn't ask his father or older brother for his opinion.

This behaviour continues to this day. While studying, this behaviour was displayed by KS who carried out many activities, such as organizations and competitions, but without considering the benefits for his future career. The activities they choose tend to be less focused on their current life goals and career hopes. Apart from that, he has not yet received complete information about the career he wants and the types of activities he should choose to support that career. So far, the effort he has made in planning his career is by asking senior students on campus about the job they want. He has a lot of desire to work in several fields but he doesn't know much information. The lack of information that KS has is due to his ignorance of the right way to dig up information about careers and what abilities are needed to achieve that career..

Some of the things above show that KS doesn't know much about himself and doesn't know very well the true extent of his abilities in the field he is currently working in. KS is not used to making his own decisions, always needs other people's opinions, and does not know the direction of his interests and potential abilities. So far, he has carried out various activities that he thinks he can do well, but not activities that support and lead to his future career goals. Even though he has goals for his future career and his parents have given KS the freedom to choose a career and job that he likes, he is still hesitant about determining and deciding on his career choice. The conflict that occurred within KS made it difficult for him to determine and plan the career he would choose after graduating from college. Therefore, to help KS overcome difficulties in deciding their career in the face of lack of information, researchers conducted a constructivist career counselling intervention.

To help individuals make decisions about their careers, the right step to take is to undertake career counselling. Career counselling at universities can be provided to assist students in the career decision-making process and help them overcome career decision-making difficulties they may face (Akyol & Bacanlı, 2019). One type of counselling that can be carried out on students who have difficulty deciding on their careers is constructivist

career counselling. Constructivist career counselling given to students can help students redesign their career stories and take meaningful and appropriate actions to achieve their career goals. (Savickas, 2020). This counselling is carried out to direct and guide KS in finding and planning a career that suits his potential and abilities.

Counselling in this theory involves several processes, namely construction, deconstruction, reconstruction, and co-construction to reveal, dismantle, and then rewrite the client's career story (Xu, 2020). In the construction process, the counsellor and client gather past and present stories about how the client has shaped his career. Deconstruction involves unpacking these stories and seeking different perspectives to encourage flexibility; search for different meanings, and increase potential and aspirations. The reconstruction or rewriting phase involves the construction of a new story supported by the counsellor to fit the story into the broader elements of the client's life. Counselling ends by making goals and plans and providing encouragement for the client to start a new story, first by sharing it with people around him who are influential in his career planning (Patton, 2019).

Constructivist career counselling has previously been carried out on students aged 19-25 years in Nigeria in groups showing significant results in helping their career planning. In this study, there were two groups, namely the experimental group and the control group. Students in the experimental group were given intervention in the form of individual constructivist career counselling totalling 6 sessions, while the control group received no intervention (Ugwuozor, 2020). The results of this research showed a decrease in difficulty in deciding on a career choice, anxiety about future career instability, uncertainty in finding a job after graduating from college and insecurity regarding future financial conditions among students in the experimental group. In Indonesia, literature regarding the application of constructivist career counselling is still limited, both individually and in groups. Therefore, providing intervention to KS can enrich information regarding evidence-based intervention in the form of constructivist career counselling for individual students. The aim of this research is that providing constructivist career counselling can reduce the level of difficulty in determining a career and help students with career planning

Method

This research is a quasi-experimental research with a single-subject design. The approach used in this research is qualitative and quantitative. This research was conducted on KS, who is a 21-year-old fourth-semester student. KS underwent a psychological examination because he was confused about deciding on a career after graduating from college. He feels that he doesn't know himself and doesn't know what interests he likes, and he has little information about the types of work that suit his major. This makes it difficult for him to plan and determine his career after college graduation. Psychological examination and intervention were carried out by the first author currently undergoing work practice in the psychology profession under the supervision of a licensed psychologist, namely the 2nd author.

The level of difficulty in deciding on a career due to lack of information in the baseline condition will be compared with the difficulty felt after being given the intervention. To determine the effectiveness of the intervention program provided, this research uses a measuring tool in the form of a questionnaire regarding difficulties in making career

decisions in the lack of information category which has been adopted by Anastiani & Primana (2019) in the context of Indonesian culture and language from the career decision-making difficulties questionnaire (CDDQ) measuring tool Gati et al (1996). This measuring instrument was used because it was by the problems experienced by the KS subject where he had difficulty making career decisions due to a lack of information about his career decision-making process. The level of difficulty in deciding a career in the subject's baseline condition will be compared with the difficulty in deciding a career after being given intervention in the form of counselling. The questionnaire for difficulty deciding on a career in the lack of information category has 12 items with a 6-point Likert scale (1=Very Unsuitable, 2=Not Appropriate, 3=Somewhat Unsuitable, 4=Somewhat Appropriate, 5=Suitable, and 6=Very Appropriate). The more appropriately an individual answers an item, the higher the difficulty they experience. The results of the reliability test showed that the questionnaire items on difficulty deciding on a career are reliable ($\alpha=0.94$) and valid (cRIT=0.60-0.84) for final-year students (Anastiani dan Primana, 2019).

Constructivist career counselling intervention activities were carried out by adapting the counselling sessions given to the experimental group in Obi's (2015) research. In this research, Obi conducted 6 counselling sessions for each student with a duration of 30 - 45 minutes per session. However, in this study, the counselling sessions were structured into 4 sessions with a duration of 45 - 75 minutes per session, adjusting to the client's limited availability of meeting time. Condensing the counselling sessions into 4 sessions was carried out by combining sessions 2 and 3 and sessions 4 and 5 each into 1 session in this program. Meanwhile, sessions 1 and 6 remain 1 session each. This also takes into account that several sessions can be carried out in one counselling session. Apart from that, due to differences in domicile between counsellors and KS and KS's busy schedule of activities in lectures, counselling sessions are carried out in 2 ways. The first and last sessions were conducted offline, while the second and third sessions were conducted online.

Result and Discussion

Based on the results of data analysis on the results before the intervention and after the subject intervention, it was discovered that there was a decrease in the score for the level of difficulty in deciding on a career in the category of lack of information and lack of information on the subject. The score results before and after the intervention can be seen in figure 1.

Figure 1. Changes in the Career Decision Making Difficulties Questionnaire Lack of Information Category scale between after and before intervention

Based on a comparison of scores from the career decision difficulty questionnaire in the lack of information category, it was clear that KS showed a decrease in score of 56 points from 63 points before the intervention to 22 points after the intervention was carried out. From these scores, it is known that there was a 65.07% decrease in career decision difficulty scores for KS by 65.07% after being given the intervention. This shows that the intervention in the form of career counselling can help reduce KS' difficulties in making career decisions after the intervention is given.

Apart from that, the evaluation of counselling activities is also carried out within-condition analysis and between-condition analysis. As previously explained, counselling was carried out in 4 sessions. In session 1, the researcher started the activity by inviting KS to recognize their abilities and potential as well as things that needed to be developed for career development. Next, KS was asked to write down the supporting and inhibiting factors from within and outside himself at this time in determining his career based on his experience so far. KS wrote it on the sheet that had been provided for some time. After writing down the factors in determining a career in the form of points, the researcher asked KS to explain each point comprehensively. In this session, KS was able to explain well and he was able to identify every supporting and inhibiting factor in deciding on his career.

In the second session, KS was asked to discuss the assignment given in the previous session, namely finding out about figures who inspired him and writing about the career journey that figure had gone through and things related to their success. After KS explained about his inspirational figure, the researcher then invited KS to flashback about his life experiences in the past. After KS told about his life experiences at school, the researcher asked KS to see the similarities between KS's desires and the careers that his inspirational figures had achieved. KS was also invited to reflect and connect past experiences with the type of career he wanted, as well as identify prejudices, views and values in the environment that could influence his career choice. From all the reflections carried out, KS began to find a career field that suited his personality, interests, desires and values. One example is when KS realized that he had always liked helping other people and felt happy when his abilities could be useful to other people.

At the end of session 2, all indicators of success can be achieved by KS. KS can analyze things that he can take from his inspirational figures so that he gets information about that field of work. Apart from that, through self-evaluation of his past and current experiences, KS gained insight into the things he likes and hopes for at work. Not only that, KS can also identify cultural values and norms that can become obstacles in their efforts to achieve their chosen career..

The activity in session 3 is to first discuss the assignments given in the previous session. KS wrote down and told the information he had obtained about other people's career success in the field of KS's interest which he had determined in session 2. After telling the story of that person's career success, KS was asked to explain the reasons and interesting things about that person for himself. According to KS, the character's career success journey describes his dream career journey. At the end of the third session, KS was more confident in deciding what career field he would pursue in the future. He also began to have an idea of the plans he would take to achieve the career he wanted. After determining the career field he

would pursue, KS began planning the things he would do based on the information he was looking for.

From the results of the 3rd counselling session, it was found that KS was able to analyze his career plans for the future. From this analysis, he also evaluated what things could support him and what he needed to do to be able to plan the career he wanted. In the 4th or final session, KS has decided on the career field he will choose and made a clearer and neater career plan starting from the activities and abilities he will hone and carry out while in college which will later be able to support the career he chooses after graduating from college. The plan is then submitted and discussed with the counsellor to help KS adapt the plan to the counselling activities carried out in the previous session. This session shows that KS has been able to decide on his career choice and is committed to the plans he has made to achieve his career.

After attending all sessions of the intervention activities, constructivist career counselling was found to be able to help the difficulties experienced by KS in deciding on a career by planning their chosen career compared to before participating in the intervention. During the counselling session, KS was able to self-reflect on the tasks given. Through constructivist career counselling, clients can reconstruct their career stories and organize them into meaningful actions by career goals and the world of work in the 21st century by actively seeking knowledge about careers. KS uses this knowledge about careers to plan his career. In career counselling, clients participate actively in gaining awareness of their past roles and beliefs during the counselling process.. From his past experiences and the values he believes in, KS can finally get to know himself better determine the career field that will suit him and then make plans to achieve these career goals. This is in line with the constructivist paradigm in which clients are encouraged to construct their own identities and careers through life planning skills, personal meaning-making, and participation in knowledge creation(Majidi et al., 2022).

In line with research that finds clients who experience difficulties in making career decisions, constructivist career counselling empowers clients themselves to be able to decide on their careers (SAYED et al., 2022) . Through constructivist career counselling, KS is helped to determine his own career choices, plan a job that suits his major after graduating from college and be confident about his career future so that the difficulties he experiences in making career decisions decrease. This is also in line with research results where students who received constructivist counselling showed a decrease in difficulty in deciding on a career (Falco & Shaheed, 2021). This decrease in difficulty in deciding on a career occurred due to an increase in students' self-efficacy which encouraged them to make career decisions. This ability is an important skill that is needed to navigate the world of work in the 21st century and helps individuals to change and adapt. Not only helping individuals navigate careers in the 21st century, constructivist career counseling is a promising paradigm for integrating multiculturalism into career decision-making. (Maree, 2020). Previous research shows that constructivist career counselling is a form of career counselling that can be applied to students with different backgrounds and cultures.

On the other hand, the results of this research have provided insight into the application of constructivist career counselling to students. The results of this research can also be used by practitioners in the fields of psychology and education to help student clients

who experience difficulties in making career decisions to plan their careers. These results answer the research question that constructivist career counselling can reduce the level of difficulty in determining a career and help career planning for students. Constructivist counselling offers a perspective that shifts from the traditional focus on what is wrong with a particular client to paying more attention to a person's strengths. It is more optimistic and attentive to the client's resources or potential, goals, hopes, and dreams (Golparvar & Yousefi, 2022). Here the counselor focuses on the counselee's strengths, and does not look for illnesses or deficiencies, but rather emphasizes the resources or potential that exist in the counselee (Wilkinson et al., 2020). They are focused on the future are full of hope and are optimistic about the client's ability to make positive changes for the better in the future. Constructive counsellors adhere to a belief in socially constructed reality and see the counsellor's work with clients as mutually constructing meaning through conversation (Binkley & Minor, 2021).

During the counselling process, the subject's good understanding and reasoning in participating in the counselling session also supports the successful implementation of this counselling. Career counselling for KS is carried out offline and online. Career counselling carried out online in 2 sessions out of 4 counselling sessions was proven not to affect the overall implementation of career counselling. Furthermore, the duration and number of sessions that have been carried out show that compressing the number of sessions by increasing the time for each session is considered to help achieve the goals of constructivist career counselling..

However, this research also has weaknesses. The constructivist counselling carried out is a single case subject where the counselling process may be different for each individual. On the other hand, this career counselling session has not been followed by a follow-up session. This means that the results of this research cannot ensure that the results of the counselling sessions obtained by clients can be applied in real life.

Conclusions and Suggestions

The intervention program carried out for KS in the form of constructive career counselling showed positive results in directing and guiding KS to find and plan a career that suited his potential and abilities. The decrease in the score shows that the difficulty in choosing a career has decreased for KS. Through constructivist career counselling, the subject also shows changes in knowledge about himself and information about several jobs, thereby helping him to plan a career that suits his personality, potential and interests. Suggestions for future researchers are that counselling can be carried out in the future on several subjects, so that career counselling activities are not just for a single subject. However, for this, it is necessary to consider the background conditions of the subject, including the ability to perceive because it requires a self-reflection process to create insight into the subject.

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