The effectiveness of social cognitive career theory on career decision making

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Abstract: Students with high academic anxiety can cause a decrease in motivation to learn. This kind of situation will harm the learning achievement achieved by students. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of social cognitive career theory on improving student career decision making. This study used a randomized experimental pretest-posttest control group design. A total of 16 students of VHS Boyolali were the subjects in this study. Selection of subjects using purposive sampling technique which is based on the criteria of low career decision-making ability, obtained from the score of career decision making scale. The data analysis technique used was the Wilcoxon test. The results of statistical tests show that there is an effect of social cognitive career theory on increasing student career decision making. The findings of this study prove that the social cognitive career theory is effective in improving student career decision making at VHS Boyolali.
Keywords: Career Decision Making; Career Theory; Social Cognitive

Introduction

In a person's life, he must make decisions that are small or simple, for example, about life, dreams or careers. Career is a part of life that affects one's happiness. Therefore, students must make career decisions as a basis for determining their career development, so that the future will be directed and planned. Students have different levels of preparation for choosing careers, some of whom are unable to make future career choices, some are still exploring career choices, and some have reached the stage of selecting a plan (Sadewi et al., 2019).

Career decision making is a multidimensional matter and needs a complicated process (Argyropoulou & Kaliris, 2018), meaning that it is continuous and continuous where decisions are obtained from the process of conversion or change from one knowledge system to another. Decision making cannot be done only at this time, without the knowledge and understanding of the risks and obstacles that will be faced if we take that decision. Decision making describes the process of solving a particular problem through a series of selected activities (Levin et al., 2020), by choosing specific options to answer the questions that must be taken to solve the problem, thus stopping the thought process of the problem ((Ahn & Kim, 2018).

Search or exploration of career information is an attempt to obtain information about self-characteristics such as strengths and weaknesses, talents and interests to achieve appropriate career goals (Zhang & Huang, 2018). Indirectly, this will help individuals decide career choices to achieve success in the future depan (Gestiada et al., 2017). The importance of the ability to make career decisions will influence personal satisfaction, work income, lifestyle, choice of friends, and interpersonal relationships (Dalimunthe et al., 2018).

Most Vocational High School (VHS) graduates experience this decision-making problem. They are not ready to enter the world of work, due to the low ability to make career decisions and cause the labour market in the industrial era 4.0 to be unfulfilled (Karacay, 2018). Most VHS graduates choose to work outside their field of ability. They do not have many opportunities to make choices about the types of work available due to a lack of competence and lack of information. Before deciding to choose a major, students should

already have information and knowledge about the majors and job opportunities they will select in the future. Lack of information related to career planning is a source of constraints and will affect future career decision making. The process of making vocational school student career decisions generally has many problems because many student decisions are made based on the advice of others such as friends, teachers or parents; not based on the results of one's thoughts.

The results of a survey conducted at several VHS schools in Boyolali Regency with a total of 3676 students showed that 55% of students were unable to make career decisions, 35% had difficulty making career decisions, and 10% were able to determine and decide on their future careers. Every new school year, most VHS students have problems choosing a major of further study or a choice of job determination. The first consideration for students in selecting a study program is to have job opportunities after graduating from college (Pascual, 2014). Deciding on further study or determining job choices is a complicated decision-making process for VHS students (Bahtiar, 2017).

The inability to make career decisions appears in behaviour that tends to be passive, difficulty recognizing self-potential, and not being able to take advantage of learning experiences. The inability to make career decisions will have a negative impact (Creed et al., 2009), individuals often encounter obstacles and many questions when trying to achieve their ideal career (Stambulova, 2017). They are prone to conflict, pressure and uncertainty (Maher, 2013), dependence on others, do not have responsibility for the decisions they have taken (Walker & Tracey, 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to increase the ability of students to make career decisions so that students are more independent, have commitment and responsibility for their future career development (Vertsberger & Gati, 2016).

VHS students need help in recognizing themselves, their potential, and fostering self-confidence in entering the world of work, getting adequate knowledge and information (Carpi et al., 2017). Helping students choose careers by integrating student career plans. The assistance that can be used is a social cognitive career theory (SCCT) approach by providing service based on social adjustment, composing thoughts and recognizing the work environment. SCCT is a theory that not only understands the experience of career selection behaviour and development of secondary school students but also to understand the experiences and behaviour of post-secondary students. SCCT explores career perspectives, how academic interests, choices, and performance influence individual career decisions (Lent & Brown, 2019). In its development, SCCT combines four elements, namely self-efficacy beliefs from social cognitive theory (Byars-Winston & Rogers, 2019), outcome expectations, interests, and goals. This theory suggests that a person's career decisions and behaviour will be influenced by internal and external elements, including personal and background factors (Dos Santos, 2019c). Personal influences include gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, health status, and place of origin (Barsigian et al., 2020). Background elements include social networks, school relationships, and peer interaction (Dos Santos, 2019b). Therefore, student behaviour can be affected and changed for various reasons

In this study, researchers used SCCT (Brown & Lent, 2017; Dickinson et al., 2017; Tran & Von Korflesch, 2016), as a lens used to explore students, especially in vocational high schools (VHS) to understand career decisions and processes. Career decision making. The use of SCCT can help students practice career decision-making skills, provide advice and information on career choices (Saputra & Widiasari, 2017). VHS students need to master decision-making skills as a living provision to be able to plan their future careers (Gati et al.,

2010). These skills are essential to be taught and trained so that students can plan their future based on self-understanding and understanding of careers in their social environment. One of the career counselling approaches (Foley & Lytle, 2015).

Methods

This experimental study used a randomized pretest-posttest control group design. The study took two measurements. The measurement in question is the pretest-posttest, which is the provision of data collection instruments (career decision-making scale). Pretest to find out the initial description of the ability level of student career decision making before being given treatment. Postest sees the final picture of the student's career decision-making ability level after treatment. The treatment offered is group counselling with the SCCT approach. Selection of subjects using a purposive sampling technique. Boyolali VHS students who are identified as having decision-making problems will become subjects in the study, with a predetermined number of 16 people, one experimental group and one control group. The data collection technique used an anxiety scale, which was developed by the researcher. The number of items on the career decision-making scale is 28 items which represent individual statements relating to themselves. The indicator includes three subscales, namely nine items of self-efficacy, ten items of expected results, and nine items of personal goals. This measuring instrument has previously received an instrument reliability test, with a score of 0.934. Data analysis techniques to test hypotheses using the Wilcoxon test.

Results and Discussion

Validity test on 35 respondents who were not samples in this study. The SPSS program validated the instrument of career decision-making scale. For the self-evaluation sheet and group counselling guide, the SCCT approach had previously been validated by two experts in the field of guidance and counselling. The validation results show that the assessment scale instrument for career decision making from the statement items is 28 items which are declared valid. The results of the validity test of the ability-making assessment scale ranged from 0.783 to 0.893.

Reliability test to determine indicators can be trusted as a measuring instrument for variable scale instruments. A hand that is declared reliable is if the Cronbach alpha (α) value is> 0.06. The results of the instrument reliability test based on Cronbach's alpha value obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.934.

Table 1. Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.934	28

Based on the table above, it shows that the results of the Cronbach alpha (α) value for variable X are 0.934, which indicates that variable X is in the interval 0.80-0.95, which means that this variable is reliable.

The results of the pretest and posttest tests are as follows:

Table 2. Results of one group pretest-postest design

Parameter	Pretest		Posttest	
	Eksperimen	Kontrol	Eksperimen	Kontrol
Mean	34,7	36,2	84,37	60,62
Std. Deviation	6,41	5,33	5,82	5,95
	0,29		8,06	
	> 0,05		< 0,01	

Based on the results of the one group pretest-postest design test, the results of the experimental group pretest the average level of students' career decision-making ability was at a low criterion (pretest, M = 34.7, SD = 6.41). After being given counselling for the SCCT approach group, the results of the posttest of the experimental group, the average level of students' career decision-making ability was the high criterion (posttest, M = 84.37, SD = 5.82). In the control group, the average level of students' career decision-making ability was at a low criterion (pretest, M = 36.2, SD = 5.33). After being given posttest group counselling, the average level of students' career decision-making ability became the medium criteria (posttest, M = 60.62, SD = 5.95). Table 2 above shows that after being given treatment, each group has increased. The experimental group experienced a significant increase compared to the control group so that the results of the analysis (Table 2) show that the social cognitive career theory approach improves the career decision-making abilities of VHS Boyolali students.

Table 3.Wilcoxon-Test Calculation Results

	Posttest-Pretest Experiment	Posttest-Pretest Control
Z	-3.628[a]	-2.117[a]
Asymp. Sig	0.014	0.011

The result of the statistical test is that the calculated Z value is -3,628. After being consulted, table Z, the significant level was 5% or 0.05, the value was around -1.645, while the Asymp Sig value was 0.014. Z count is more than Z table, which is -2.628> -1.645 or the sig value 0.014 <0.05. So Ho's hypothesis which reads "there is no influence of the social cognitive career theory approach on the career decision-making ability of VHS Boyolali VHS students for the 2020/2021 academic year", based on this hypothesis Ho is rejected. This means that H1 which reads "there is an influence of the social cognitive career theory approach on the career decision-making ability of VHS Boyolali students for the 2020/2021 academic year" was accepted because it was tested for its correctness.

The statistical test results listed in tables 2 and 3 show a significant difference between before and after the intervention. It can be concluded that the social cognitive career theory improves the career decision-making abilities of VHS Boyolali students. Career decision making is a process which includes not only career choices but also a commitment to carry out the necessary actions to realize those choices (Kirdök & Harman, 2018). Individuals with low career decision-making skills tend to experience more negative experiences when making career decisions because of difficulties in solving problems that require complex information management. Negative experiences, in turn, give negative beliefs and reduce self-confidence in a person's ability to make career decisions (Xu & Tracey, 2015). The condition of the high level of the inability of VHS students to make career decisions is quite alarming; the need for an effort to improve career decision-making skills.

One of the career decision-making skills that students must have is self-efficacy, which is a person's belief in their ability to successfully achieve tasks related to the career decision-making process (Ngafifah, 2016). Five sub-dimensions of self-efficacy were identified as necessary for making efficient career decisions. These dimensions are an accurate assessment of one's job-related abilities, understanding the world of work, adjusting personal characteristics for job requirements, planning one's career path, and overcoming problems related to career decisions (Bozgeyikli et al., 2009). In addition to self-efficacy, the skills students must have in making career decisions are the expected results and the choice of personal goals. Self-efficacy affects outcome expectations (Pérez-López et al., 2019), where both are related to intention and function is very important (Brown & Lent, 2017), providing support and confidence to receive beneficial results (Lent, 2020), Self-efficacy beliefs help to inform outcome expectations (Sheu et al., 2018). In short, individuals who have confidence in their ability to engage in career decision-related activities are expected to be more motivated to make career decisions, information about the reasons for their choice, and tend to consider it, due to insufficient or inconsistent available career information (Storme et al., 2019). Besides, personal goals are consistently strongly associated with considering career decision making seriously (Wu,2018), which tends to reflect the belief in facing obstacles that will be encountered (Lent et al., 2019). Besides, personal goals are consistently strongly associated with considering career decision making seriously (Wu, 2018), which tends to reflect beliefs to face obstacles that will be encountered (Lent et al., 2019).

An approach that predicts increasing self-efficacy in career decision making accompanied by expected outcomes and choice of personal goals is the SCCT approach career counselling (Foley & Lytle, 2015). SCCT presents a learning model and cognitive behaviour that helps individuals to develop and elaborate on career-related interests, academic and career choices, performance and persistence in completing education and work (Dos Santos, 2018). In SCCT, self-efficacy career decision making can be conceptualized as cognitive motivation that is important for career decision making (Cordeiro, 2016; Schunk & Usher, 2019).

SCCT states that individuals develop their career goals in a socio-cultural environment that is influenced by the structure of opportunities, such as educational opportunities, socio-economic background, and social support (Rodríguez et al., 2016). SCCT predicts that effective career decision making depends on a complex combination of general abilities and values, concrete career decision-making skills, contextual factors, and cognitive, motivational processes related to career decision making (Randolph, 2019). SCCT integrates the behaviours and strategies that individuals use to manage their career development (Thompson et al., 2017), emphasizing the concept of development and adaptive behavior (Dutta et al., 2015; Lent et al., 2019), namely on resources, competencies and behaviour that strengthens the individual, the capacity for self-regulation in career management (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2018; Tolentino et al., 2014).

Significantly, SCCT categorizes the difference between intentions (personal beliefs and goals) and behaviour (exercises and actions) because individuals tend to do what they believe (Dos Santos, 2019a). If individuals continue to take steps that are oriented towards success, interest, self-capacity, then the chances of achieving their goals increase. SCCT includes elements such as the influence of family members, friends, teachers, peers, and counsellors on self-capacity, interests, and goals (Lent et al., 2008). According to SCCT,

cultural, social, and economic elements can influence people's self-knowledge and opportunity outcomes (Dos Santos, 2016). SCCT sees everyone as having the ability to carry out some self-directed efforts with the help of the environment (Dharma & Akmal, 2019), and environmental perceptions contribute directly to goal setting (Lane et al., 2017).

The consistency of these findings replicates and extends previous results where SCCT influenced career decision making. In particular, these findings are mostly consistent with research in middle school students showing that self-efficacy and outcome expectations are good predictors, adding to the interest in the prediction of choice goals. The completion of the problem of the ability to make career decisions experienced by students will significantly impact their future, so that assistance is needed from supervisors, especially counsellors in dealing with students who experience problems with career decision-making abilities. Based on the findings, opinions and relevant research results, it can be concluded that the social cognitive career theory approach has a positive influence on the career decision-making abilities of VHS Boyolali students.

Conclusions and Suggestions

This finding adds to the knowledge base of SCCT by showing that there is a significant increase in the experimental group that has an increase in the score of career decision making after receiving group counselling treatment with a social cognitive career theory approach. This shows that the social cognitive career theory approach is effective in improving career decision making for VHS students. Hopefully, the results of this study are useful for guidance and counselling teachers in schools who can use a social cognitive career theory approach as an alternative in providing career services at school.

Suggestions for future researchers are to explore more deeply the dominant social barriers in directing and making student career decisions as well as the supporting variables for the SCCT theory.

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