Student Careers: What Factors Influence Career Choice?

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ABSTRACT

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is an effort to develop the potential of each student. Based on law number 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system, education is an effort that is carried out consciously and planned in order to create a learning situation so that students actively participate in developing their personal abilities related to elements of religious spirituality, self-control, personality, intelligence, morals, and abilities needed by their personal and social environment (Limpo et al., 2018; Mason, 2020). Education is an important activity for every individual, because education is part of life in the future. Previous study reveal that education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by themselves, society, nation and state (Wibowo & Subhan, 2020). Other research revealed that according to the Indonesian dictionary, education is the process of changing the attitudes and behavior of a person or group of people in an effort to mature humans through teaching and training efforts (Nafrin & Hudaidah, 2021).

The success of education obtained by individuals is one of the keys to the success of the State. In education, various things are taught to become the provision of individuals in the future. Previous study explains that education is one of the foundations or provisions for the future of individuals (Faridin & Syakib, 2020). In addition to the learning taught in education, career selection is also taught as one of the individual's hopes for his future. Other study explains that determining career choices is based on the
individual's own decisions based on an understanding of abilities and interests as well as an introduction
to careers in society (Trisnawati, 2016). The difficulties experienced by individuals in choosing and
determining careers cannot be denied, many individuals do not understand that careers are a way of life in
an effort to achieve a good life in the future. Another study state that career development is career
adaptability which is defined as the readiness of individual resources to face Vocational development tasks
throughout the developmental age period (Lee & All, 2017). The previous period of career development
affects the next stage of career development.

High school age or adolescence is in the exploration stage where at this stage students should
already focus on determining careers in a more specific range, but not a final choice. For example, at this
age most students focus on specific careers through determining majors and colleges. Basically, students
want to have a good career and according to their abilities (Hoth et al., 2017; Veronica et al., 2020). However,
not all students have the right career. A good career is supported by good career planning. According to
previous study career planning is a substantial part of preparing oneself towards the selection of further
education or the desired job (Damai et al., 2019).

Career choice is one of the dynamics of a person's development in choosing a job. Careers are
decisions made by individuals based on subjective self-view. Career choices must be introduced starting
from adolescence because at that age they are required to undergo developmental tasks (Dvouletý et al.,
2021; Nastiti et al., 2019). In line with this opinion, based on the regulations mentioned, it is very important
for students to prepare for their future in determining their career choices (Bouk et al., 2022; Wangi et al.,
2018). Students who are in the Senior High School (SMA) phase have entered adolescence. Adolescence is
an era where students begin to think about determining future life, because the behavior of students during
this adolescent era becomes an engraving in the early history of the future life of each individual. Previous
study said that adolescence is the phase where humans choose and also determine careers (Widyastuti &
Pratiwi, 2013).

Career choice is a lifelong decision-making process for those who seek much satisfaction from their
work. Career choices made early in the vocational development process greatly influence subsequent
choices (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2020; Zotov et al., 2021). The career development of an adult still has to
make choices among the possibilities to improve his career and obtain deep personal satisfaction. Previous
study suggests that career selection is not just the selection of a job or occupation (Tripathi & Agrawal,
2014). Career selection includes preoccupation, occupation, and post occupation during a person's life. A
career is a sequence of positions or main jobs that a person occupies from adolescence to retirement during
the life span (Basuki & Kurniawan, 2022; Zeng et al., 2022). Each position or job also includes preoccupation,
occupation, and post occupation.

Based on the description above, it is known that in education and career selection for individual
future work is very important, especially for students with adolescent age so that future career planning
will be in accordance with what is desired. This contradicts the results of pre-research conducted by
researchers, namely in the career of class X MIPA 1 at SMA N 1 Demak students have problems in career
planning and selection. The problems experienced by students still do not have a plan for the career that
will be undertaken and students' ignorance about how to choose a career that is in accordance with their
interests, talents and abilities. Based on these problems, to guide and assist students in career planning at
school, counseling teachers have an important role in this so that students are able to determine careers for
the future. The purpose of this research is to analyze the factors that influence students' career choices.

2. METHODS

This type of research is descriptive qualitative research. In qualitative research, researchers enter
certain social situations, make observations and interviews with people who are considered to know about
these social situations (Lambert & Lambert, 2012; Vaismoradi et al., 2016). The research results will not be
generalized to the population because, sampling is not taken randomly. The results of research with
qualitative methods only apply to the case of the social situation. The results of the study can be transferred
or applied to other social situations, if these other social situations have similarities or similarities with the
social situation under study. Qualitative data is obtained from significant sources that are the subject of
research. The data sources in this study used primary and secondary data sources. Primary data sources
are obtained directly from 3 subjects who have difficulty in determining their career choices, while the
informants are the Head of Student Affairs, three subjects counseling teachers and parents of these subjects.
While secondary data sources are data sources that are not obtained directly from informants, among
others, researchers know the list of student report cards, student IQ test results, student counseling
notebooks.
The data collection method is the most important step in research. This is because the main purpose of research is to get data. The author uses the following techniques with data collection instruments: observation interviews, documents. After the necessary data is collected, then data analysis is carried out on the data. Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and compiling data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation, by organizing data and sorting into patterns, categories, breaking down into units, synthesizing, selecting those to be studied, and making conclusions so that they are easily understood by oneself and others. The type of data analysis used is descriptive and qualitative analysis.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

Before entering into the results of interviews conducted by researchers regarding career selection plans in class X MIPA students at SMA N 1 Demak below will be displayed a picture of the factors that influence students’ career choices. This picture is expected to be able to provide clear information about the factors that influence the career choice of students of class X MIPA at SMAN 1 Demak. Combined Factors influencing students’ career choices is show in Table 1.

Table 1. Combined Factors Influencing Students’ Career Choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Factors</th>
<th>External Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence and Special Aptitude</td>
<td>Family Background and Socio-Economic Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Students must have special knowledge and skills and achievements that support career selection. (1, 2, 3)</td>
<td>1. Students consider career choices based on decisions approved by parents. (1, 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Intelligence is adequate. (2)</td>
<td>2. Students choose a career because of the selection of past experiences. (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest in Career</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Making career choices based on daily likes and hobbies is something that can make students comfortable, especially if friends and places are supportive. (1, 2, 3)</td>
<td>3. Want to prove to parents that they are capable. (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Students can be consistent in their career choices. (2, 3)</td>
<td>4. Parents are less supportive of career choices (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Self-perception regarding college degrees or education levels. (2)</td>
<td>5. Family expectations of career choices. (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Parents’ work background. (1)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

From the findings sourced from the results of research conducted by researchers, the factors that influence students’ career choices are influenced by many things. Regarding the factors that influence career choices made by KCN, KW, and MZK in class X MIPA 1 SMA N 1 Demak are as follows:

Subject 1 (KCN)

Subject 1 is a kind, quiet, and difficult child to get along with. KCN used to be a student who only had one close friend at school, but now he can get along a little. Since participating in student council activities, KCN has the courage to speak and mingle with new friends. In fact, KCN is currently a candidate for the school’s student council president. Although KCN is not sure that he can be elected as student council chairman, KCN has the courage to try. In addition, KCN’s current close friend, instead of supporting KCN’s courage to run as a candidate for student council chairman, actually put him down by saying that KCN did not deserve to be the student council chairman. KCN wants to prove to his parents that KCN can excel. KCN really wants to fulfill his parents’ request to enter STAN. And be able to work in taxation so that he can help his parents support his young brother. However, KCN’s parents did not demand KCN to enter STAN. According to them, the most important thing is that KCN can go to college so that he is not like most of his extended family who do not prioritize education. Parents want KCN to go to STAN so that his future career will be good.

Subject 1 is in accordance with his career choice to be in the Mathematics and Natural Sciences department, even though he is less able to understand mathematics subjects even though his career choice requires him to be able to do mathematics because one of the selected college entrance tests uses
mathematics subjects. His mathematics score from semester one to semester two can also increase. The parents also really want the subject to enter STAN, which really motivates the subject to study hard. The subject's main goal is to make his parents happy and be able to help his younger siblings in the future.

Subject 2 (KW)

It is different with KW who wants to study while working. KW wants to work according to his hobby of listening to music and radio. In class KW likes to listen to music during break time rather than hanging out with friends. KW is one of the students who is unique and introverted but sometimes when hanging out with his friends he can joke and laugh. KW does not attach much importance to a college degree in determining his future job. It is different with KW's parents who oppose KW's career choice. KW's parents think it is not in accordance with KW's personality. KW's extended family is mostly civil servants so KW is expected to be a civil servant as well. For KW, the comfort of the place and supportive friends are very important for his career choice in determining the choice of study program in college and also the workplace that he will join while studying later. KW considers his career choice based on his hobbies although his parents do not support him but KW tries to find the best way out for him and according to his parents because KW does not want to disappoint his parents.

Subject 2, in accordance with his fondness for learning about compounds, the subject is in the Mathematics and Natural Sciences major and his grades from the first to the second semester have increased in almost all subjects. His hobby of listening to music and radio does not support his career choice, especially since his parents do not support his chosen career choice. This subject is quite unique, very different from other friends, but actually has broad insights. For him, a comfortable place and supportive friends are the main priorities in his career choice.

Subject 3 (MZK)

Just like KCN and KW were also from the beginning interested in entering science class and their wishes could be realized. She sits in class X MIPA 1, coincidentally one class with KCN and KW. MZK’s achievements are getting better and better from semester to semester. From her experience as class leader in class X MIPA 1, it was revealed that MZK has a good leadership spirit and sense of responsibility. It can be seen by teachers at school so that currently MZK is running as a candidate for student council chairman and is supported by many teachers and friends. MZK really wants to become a surgeon in order to help people who need it. The reason MZK chose to become a surgeon was because her grandmother was treated late when she was sick with liver disease. This made MZK’s heart moved and did not want others to feel the way she did. Both of her parents were very supportive of MZK’s career choice and did not demand that she follow in their footsteps. MZK’s father is an economics graduate and her mother is an architect. Based on the initial findings of researchers at SMA N 1 Demak, the majority of students are smart, polite, and outstanding. But not a few who are a little unable to determine their career choices. Based on research, the factors that influence students’ career choices made by KCN, KW, and MZK in class X MIPA 1 SMAN 1 Demak are two factors, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors include intelligence and special talents, interest in careers, and personality. The external factors are family background and socioeconomic status.

Discussion

Based on the analysis conducted, a person’s career choice is influenced by other factors including external and internal factors. The results of the study also revealed that career selection based on majors at SMAN 1 Demak was in accordance with the wishes of each student. Previous study reveals if the improvement in stabilizing career planning is obtained from students’ progress in knowing and understanding themselves, the world of work and their relationship in realizing the relationship between knowledge and understanding of themselves and the world of work to stabilize their career planning so that students have a commitment to stabilize career planning (Agholor et al., 2017). Other study explain that in the career planning of students at Insan Mulia Yogyakarta Health Vocational School, it is influenced by factors that influence student career planning limited to environmental condition factors (Sutiman et al., 2022). It is further explained that the condition of the family environment is an important factor in student career planning.

Previous study state that the importance of student counseling sessions and other interventions to provide them with the latest knowledge, and information to create their interest in the right choices and options available (King et al., 2019; Upadyaya & Salmela-Aro, 2017). Students’ career choices are also influenced by their social class level, financial resources, affordability and future employability. Previous study explained that students’ career maturity is not affected by one variable alone but adversity intelligence, self-awareness, and demographic factors all together contribute in shaping students’ career
maturity (Quinlan & Renninger, 2022; Zeng et al., 2022). Therefore, increasing career maturity as an effort to prepare students before entering the world of work can be done by optimizing the level of adversity quotient and self-awareness while also considering the demographic factors of each student.

Previous study explain if what factors determine this and how their perceptions relate to self-perceived employability, career proactivity, career control and efforts to develop positional excellence (Major et al., 2012). Other study reveal that good career planning is required from the ability of students to recognize themselves and increase motivation to be able to plan their future careers well (Azhari & Wicaksono, 2017). Previous study reveals that the factors that influence the maturity of students’ career choices are the self-awareness of each individual to seek career information independently, and the enthusiasm of oneself to prepare for their careers (Halim et al., 2018; Šimunović & Babarović, 2020).

Career guidance is important for high school students because they will be faced with many career choices that must be determined based on their talents and interests. The importance of preparing for a career early on so that after graduating from high school. Previous study said that the factors that influence students’ career planning include psychological components and gender and contextual factors such as school type and urbanity for the socialization component (Domitrovich et al., 2019; Nguyen, 2021). Other study revealed if the level of related training and challenges associated with the implementation of career service delivery is a concern of participants is an important factor in developing student career planning (Bridgstock et al., 2019). Another study said if the factors that influence career choices are the motivation and innovation of each individual and external factors are family encouragement (Benson et al., 2020; Li et al., 2015).

The implications of this research can provide valuable insight into what factors most influence students’ career decisions. This can help educational institutions and career practitioners in developing more effective career education and guidance programs. In addition, the results of this research can be used by individuals who are choosing a career to plan and make better decisions based on a better understanding of the factors that influence them. However, this research has limitations. For one thing, there are many factors that can influence a person's career choice, and this research may not have considered all relevant factors.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that there are several factors that influence students’ career choices. These factors are in two categories, namely internal and external factors. The factors that influence students’ career choices are: Internal Factors: Gender differences: They assume that the career choice they choose is not influenced by gender differences; Intelligence and special talents: They need special knowledge and skills as well as achievements that support career choices; 3. Interests in careers: They make decisions based on their daily likes and hobbies, which is something that can make students comfortable, especially if friends and places are supportive; Personality: They judge consistent on career choices that match the choice; One of the subjects does not attach importance to a college degree. While External Factors: Socioeconomic background and status: Students consider career choices based on decisions approved by parents; Students choose careers because of past experiences.; Want to prove to parents that he is capable.

5. REFERENCES


