

## **The Career Development Model of Students of Private Vocational High School Veteran 1 of Tulungagung during the Pandemic**

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**Abstract.** The online learning system during the pandemic of COVID-19 has changed the system for counselling services in such a way that guidance and counselling teachers at vocational high schools are required to be creative and innovative in performing services for students online. They are shouldering more responsibilities because during the pandemic the rate of employment termination has increased, while that of job vacancies has decreased, which constitutes a serious challenge for students' career development. They are also faced with the problem of exploring career choices, finding good jobs in accordance with students' interests and characters, and improving students' career prospects without meeting those students in person. This research focused on knowing the career development model of the students of Private Vocational High School (PVHS) Veteran 1 of Tulungagung during the pandemic. This was a qualitative approach with descriptive research in which the data obtained from interviews and observation were presented in a descriptive report which can be easily understood. The research findings show that guidance and counselling teachers are able to follow technological advances, foster innovation, and establish good communication with industries and the business world during the pandemic of COVID-19. Guidance and counselling teachers of PVHS Veteran 1 of Tulungagung continue to provide counselling services for career development by combining online and offline models in a scheduled appointment by still obeying health protocols.

**Keywords:** career development, guidance and counselling, pandemic, vocational high school

### **INTRODUCTION**

The pandemic of Coronavirus diseases 2019 (Covid-19) for almost two years has changed many aspects of this life, including the academic world. The year 2020 saw a dramatic change in the academic world due to the global pandemic of COVID-19 (Lau et al., 2021). Learning activities in some educational institutions are no longer performed in a face-to-face learning system or traditional classroom teaching; rather, they are conducted online in web-based learning.

Online learning is a learning model which makes use of computer-based technology, which allows students to meet their teachers through internet connection (Kuntarto, 2017). Online learning requires students to adapt to communications technologies and helps remove the time and space limitation to learning activities (Sadikin & Hamidah, 2020). Such transformation was based on the circular letter of the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim, the Circular Letter Number 4/2020 on the Implementation of Education Policy in Emergency during COVID-19 spread. In consequence, teachers are required to make use of technological advances as a medium for online learning. The advance of information and communications technology has eased learning processes during the pandemic by offering application choices, like Google Classroom, Edmodo, and Schoology (Asif et al., 2020).

Likewise, the provision of counselling service at some schools has to adapt to the condition of the COVID-19 pandemic: the service usually provided in a face-to-face meeting should be replaced with the online one (Putra & Shofaria, 2020). Guidance and counselling services give counselling to those students having particular problems or difficulties in planning or choosing specific careers they will make in their future and needing a help in finding solutions to the problems. The use of technology in giving counselling is an innovation counsellors can encourage to streamline the process of delivering information to students and providing services for them (Kushendar et al., 2019). Providing online services and counselling constitutes a new challenge for guidance and counselling teachers of vocational high schools in that it requires them to be more active and creative in performing their jobs and responsibilities. To be a professional, a teacher must acquire fields of competencies relevant to the

development of science and technology in industry (Nurhadi & Lyau, 2017), and today a guidance and counselling teacher is demanded to implement learning strategies and making optimum use of digital learning application to identify students' need, give them solutions, and provide career counselling for them without knowing their body language and facial expression.

Guidance and counselling teachers are assuming heavier responsibilities. Since the pandemic, the rate of employment termination has increased; in reverse, the rate of job vacancies has decreased, thereby asserting greater importance of the task of specialists in career development (Autin et al., 2020). Guidance and counselling teachers are supposed to be more observant of opportunities and more creative in opening up students' horizon in planning their future career. They have to deal with students very eager to carve out their career and provide career counselling amidst widespread, long-term unemployment (Suwidagdhho & Dewi, 2020). Both guidance and counselling teachers and students are faced with the same problems, including exploring career choices, finding good jobs in accordance with students' interests and characters, and taking career planning for all scenarios during the pandemic without meeting those students in person (Suwidahdho & Dewi, 2020). Therefore, according to Nurhadi & Lyau (2017), a counselling teacher of vocational high schools has to have good connections by building, maintaining and managing strong relationships with partners and other external stakeholders, like schools, parents, and industries.

Not only has the pandemic of COVID-19 affected the academic world, it has also affected the industrial world. In addition to the increasing rate of employment termination, many companies have difficulty promoting their products because they can no longer publish informational and promotional brochures extensively. Herein lies the challenge for guidance and counselling teachers, namely to pass on the information about companies to those students and to identify students' essential needs in developing their career during the pandemic. Guidance and counselling services at PVHS Veteran 1 of Tulungagung play a role in overcoming students' obstacles including personal and social problems, learning difficulties, and career development during the pandemic. Based on the aforementioned description, the researcher tried to conduct research on the career development model of the students of PVHS Veteran 1 Tulungagung during the pandemic. The aim of the research was to know clearly the career development model of the students of PVHS Veteran 1 Tulungagung during the pandemic.

### **Career Planning and Development**

Career development is related to an individual's change in values, behaviors, and motivation taking into consideration the fact that the older someone is, the more mature he/she becomes (Muspawi, 2017). According to Supardi (2016), career development is an effort of employees to develop their career and personality to achieve their career advancement by following their career path made available in career planning. Career planning and development constitute employees' process of identifying career progression and walking the path to it (Nurmasari, 2015). Successful careers begin with good career planning and wise decision. Individuals can make a good career planning if they have an ability to know themselves well. Their good understanding of themselves will help them make a good career choice in the future in accordance with their condition. In short, teenagers' understanding of themselves will affect their ability to make a thoughtful career planning for their future (Duntari, 2018).

Planning for the future or career is a phase of cognitive development of students of Senior High Schools (SHS) or Vocational High Schools (VHS). They begin to plan their future career as they wish before actually entering the industrial world. Students of SHS or VHS under the supervision of guidance and counselling teachers must start thinking or planning their career based realistically on their interest, capacity, and potential.

Career choices depend on the combination of internal factors like individual needs, attitudes, personality and intellectual ability and such external factors the socio-economic background of the family, various demands of cultural environments, and available job vacancies. However, internal

factors are considered the main factors. In this regard, it is important for individuals to have self-concept clarity, because the jobs they will have in the future illustrate their whole selves. Super's theory states that career development ad choices take into consideration many factors whose emphasis falls on the internal factors of individuals in relation to their self-images of their future jobs (Jena & Nayak, 2020). Those individuals with good career planning will easily identify their own skills, knowledge, and ability and take steps towards their career purposes (Chetana & Mohapatra, 2017).

### **Innovations in Vocational Students' Career Development during the Pandemic**

Guidance and counselling play an important role in education. Individuals can be intellectual and have particular skills if they pursue education by studying continually, understanding and making use of natural resources for human well-being, which will in turns positively affect science and tehcnology in the world (Killian & Floren, 2020). In the new normal era, guidance and conselling teachers are often faced with a question: how can they provide effective conselling services for unemployed people living in an unstable and uncertain environment, while their clients are facing the same problems of unemployment? (Drosos et al., 2021).

Professional guidance and counselling teachers can evaluate the real condition in the field, understand their students, and adapt to technological advances so much so that they can be professional counsellors who can provide counselling services for students. Counsellors are a profession that will always try to know factual condition in reality (Kushendar et al., 2019). This requires vocational teachers, especially those in charge of guidance adn counselling services, to possess professional and social competencies, good personality and pedagogic strategies, so that they can not only develop competencies at schools but also promote partnerships with the industrial world (Nurhadi & Lyau, 2017)

Online counselling session is not something new. Counselling sessions via emails or the inbox on Facebook have been used before. Before the outbreak of COVID-19, many counsellors had provided cyber counselling by means of certain applications (Sari, 2021). The change in learning methods, as well as counselling methods, accelerates the rapid development of online system. Some applications on gadgets become more sophisticated and bring greater ease of use to guidance and counselling teachers in delivering their services for students. Indeed, they are required to be more active and more proactive about technological advances, which helps them keep up to date to provide guidance and counselling services during the pandemic of COVID-19. Cyber counseling is a professional practice of counselling services when counsellors are separated away from counselees and use digital media to communicate with those clients via live internet chats (Prasetiawan, 2016). Before social media develop as they do today, the digital media often used include webs, emails, and chats among others. Cyber counseling facilitates aan eeffective communication between counsellors and counselees, and it even makes counselling service quicker, more efficnets, and more comfortable administratively (Sari, 2021).

The development of more advanced information and communications technology makes counselling services easier to provide. Social media have offered some applications and features which allow effective communication between individuals or groups. The easiest application used by almost all teachers is the feature of Video Call on WhatsApp. In general, counselling services for career development in groups can be provided by using such digital applications as Zoom, Google Meet, and WhatsApp groups among others.

Guidance and counselling teachers must be active in delivering information about organized programs of guindance and counselling by providing online counselling servises for the related parties in coordination with Vice Principals for Curriculum so that all programs can be successfully implemented.

## **METHODS**

This was descriptive research with qualitative research. This method of research was chosen because the data in this research cannot be analyzed in numbers, and the researcher tended to describe all phenomena arising in society more clearly. The data were collected by holding interviews guidance and counselling teachers and vice principals, making observation and reviewing relevant documents. The data collected were then analyzed using an interactive model and the triangulation method of data sources. Such analysis was expected to generate valid data. Subsequently, the result of the analysis was described in sentences understandable to everyone. The research was conducted at PVHS Veteran 1 of Tulungagung, East Java.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

PVHS Veteran 1 of Tulungagung continues to provide counselling services for students' career development during the pandemic of COVID-19 by running both offline and online services. The offline service is provided at the school by still obeying the health procedures including wearing face masks, monitoring body temperature before entering the school, washing hands using soaps (the school provides hand washing facilities in front of classrooms), avoiding crowds, and ordering students to go back home directly after the counselling session. Additionally, the school limits the number of students who will access the counselling service to avoid crowds. No obstacle was found during the provision of offline counselling service: students attended the counselling in the order of class divisions and their roll numbers and they obeyed the health protocols. On the contrary, there were some obstacles in the way of providing online counselling service. The online service for groups of students through the application called Google Classroom could not be accessed by many students because their lack of internet quota. In response to the fact that some students could not access Google Classroom because of limited internet quota, the teacher would make the information about career counselling available and accessible on respective class' WhatsApp groups.

The online counselling service is also provided for those needing individual counselling. Such individual career counselling is given through WhatsApp in the order of class division. Students can access both offline and online counselling services in the order of class division alternately by their roll numbers in the odd-even scheme. The counselling service is also provided online using Google classroom.

To identify students' needs in relation to their career development, guidance and counselling teachers distributed questionnaires on google forms. They had no difficulty preparing the questionnaire using the application Google Form. Information about job vacancies from various companies was shared through WhatsApp groups of each class, so that students, especially those in the twelfth grade, could access the information. Meanwhile, those students planning to continue their study at universities and needing to collect information about registration and other administrative procedures could receive guidance and counselling services using Google Meet.

Based on the result of an interview with the guidance and counselling teacher, the counselling service for students' career development at PVHS Veteran 1 of Tulungagung is still provided even during the pandemic of COVID-19. This supports the statement of Asmuni (2020) that teachers have to ensure that learning activities should be continued despite the spread of COVID-19 cases.

The service was provided in both offline and online systems. The offline service was provided at the school by still obeying the health procedures including wearing face masks, monitoring body temperature before entering the school, washing hands using soaps (the school has provided hand washing facilities in front of classrooms), avoiding crowds, and ordering students to go back home directly after the counselling session. In addition, the school also tried to avoid crowds by limiting the number of students to access the counselling service. The fact that the school provides both offline and online counselling services is in line with the result of the research by Nissa & Haryanto (2020) stating

that face-to-face learning during the pandemic of COVID-19 can be established by taking thoughtful planning. In fact, there was no obstacle in providing offline counselling service because students attended the counselling sessions according to the established schedule and they obeyed the health protocols meekly. The offline counselling services were provided by still obeying the official rules, namely (1) offline learning activities are conducted in accordance with health protocols; (2) education units should have communication with the related stakeholders (the School Committee, village or district governments, and health centers among others); (3) the School Committee should be involved as the Task Force in the education units; and (4) in case of a violation of health protocols, technical guidelines, or SOP or indications to citizen's being infected with COVID-19, the learning process should be suspended (Nisa & Haryanto, 2020).

Online counselling services were provided for those needing individual counselling. The individual career counselling was given through WhatsApp in the schedule arranged in the order of class division. The guidance and counselling service was in line with the result of the research by Fauzi et al., (2020) stating that counselling services provided during the pandemic of COVID-19 should be online learning. Online learning is the implementation of distance learning by making use of internet connection. Online learning aims to improve students' access to quality learning without having to meet in person in order to avoid face-to-face interactions. Online counselling services at PVHS Veteran 1 of Tulungagung were provided through Google classroom. Students can access both offline and online counselling services in the order of class division alternately by their roll numbers in the odd-even scheme.

However, online counselling faced many obstacles in the way because some students had no internet quota, which made it impossible for them to access classical counselling through Google Classroom. This was in line with the finding of Lisman et al., (2021) stating that the limitation of internet quota and connection causes online learning to suffer from more disadvantages than face-to-face learning. According to Lisman et al. 2021, online learning have more disadvantages (78%) than advantages (40 %), which is low in percentage terms. In order to overcome the problem of students' lacking internet quota with which to access Google Classroom, the counselling teachers would send information about career counselling through WhatsApp Group of each class. WhatsApp is the application commonly used by almost teachers and students, thus making it possible for teachers to reach all students.

For the purpose of identifying students need in relation to their career development, the guidance and counselling teacher used questionnaires on Google Form. They had no difficulty preparing the questionnaires by using the application Google Form. The guidance and counselling teacher of PVHS Veteran 1 of Tulungagung has such competencies as skills, experience, knowledge, personal values, motivation, and individual personality which allow him to produce an impressive performance in a job field (Romadin & Nurhadi, 2021); therefore, he can offer students a good career counselling service in accordance with the existing condition by making use of technological advances.

Having professional partnerships with some companies in the industrial world, PVHS Veteran 1 of Tulungagung is always up to date with the latest information about job vacancies in some companies. The information was subsequently shared with students, especially those students in the twelfth grade, through WhatsApp groups of each class. PVHS Veteran 1 of Tulungagung also helps those students who wanted to continue their studies at universities by giving them information about procedures for registration and other administrative frameworks and providing them with counselling services through Google Meet; therefore, those students will not face any problem when registering at universities online.

The pandemic of COVID-19 has indeed changed learning methods, including the method for guidance and counselling. However, the fact that guidance and counselling teachers could not meet their students in a face-to-face meeting did not necessarily mean that counselling services were not

provided. To overcome the problem of guidance and counselling teachers' lack of understanding of their students, PVHS Veteran 1 of Tulungagung offered those teachers some solutions: (1) The teachers establish communication with students' parents through WhatsApp groups or private chats. With effective communication, teachers are supposed to know more about their students, which allows them to identify students' needs for their career development; (2) The teachers in collaboration with homeroom teachers and stakeholders of the school schedule a meeting with students' parents at the school by still obeying the health protocols; (3) The teachers along with the school administrators consider lending those students school inventory gadgets/ipads which are from government assistance; (4) The teachers conduct home visits to those students who really deserve visiting; and (5) The teachers should keep up with the accelerated development of information and communications technology. They should constantly upgrade their skills in such a way that they can make their counselling service move with the times.

The career development model through providing guidance and counselling services during the pandemic of COVID-19 can be implemented only in a collaboration among all related parties, just as mentioned by Nurhadi and Wu (2016) that the implementation of learning designs in practice involves school principals, heads of study programs, teachers, other academic staff, and students. In this case, leaders play a key role as decision makers or policy developers.

## CONCLUSION

During the pandemic of COVID-19, PVHS Veteran 1 of Tulungagung continued to provide career counselling services by combining scheduled online and offline sessions run by still obeying the health protocols. The performance improvement of counselling service during the pandemic can be carried out by counselling teachers's establishing communication with both students and their parents, upgrading their skills to keep up with the latest methods of providing counselling services, and conducting home visits if they are necessary.

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