

The Influence of Career Guidance Services on Student Career Planning at SMA Negeri 7 Ambon

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the effect of career guidance services on the career planning of eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 7 Ambon. This research was motivated by the fact that some students had not yet developed mature career plans. Therefore, career guidance services are needed to help students understand their potential, obtain information about higher education and the world of work, and make appropriate career choices. This study employed a quantitative approach using an ex post facto research design. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique, while data were collected through career guidance service and career planning questionnaires that had met the requirements of validity and reliability. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, prerequisite tests, and simple linear regression analysis with the assistance of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of the study indicated that career guidance services had a positive and significant effect on the career planning of eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 7 Ambon. This finding was supported by the hypothesis testing results, which showed a t-value of 4.236 with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the research hypothesis was accepted. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R Square) was 0.236, indicating that career guidance services contributed 23.6% to students' career planning, while the remaining 76.4% was influenced by other factors beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, it can be concluded that the better the career guidance services provided, the better the students' career planning. The findings of this study are expected to serve as valuable input for guidance and counseling teachers in improving the quality of career guidance services to help students prepare for higher education and their future careers in a more focused and systematic manner

Keywords

Career Guidance Services, Career Planning, Senior High School Students



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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional developmental period in which individuals experience physical, psychological, social, and cognitive changes while gradually preparing for adult roles. One important developmental task during this period is preparing for the future, including decisions concerning education and career. For senior high school students, career planning becomes particularly important

because they begin to face choices concerning higher education, employment, and the competencies needed to achieve their aspirations. Rahayu (2022) emphasizes the relevance of career planning for students approaching the end of secondary education, while Hidayati et al. (2025) place future orientation and career planning among important concerns of late adolescence.

Career planning is not simply the selection of a job. It involves understanding personal interests, abilities, talents, values, opportunities, and limitations and then translating that understanding into realistic goals and actions. Dillard (1985) describes career planning as a continuing process involving self-understanding, goal setting, and strategies for achieving desired career outcomes. From this perspective, students need both knowledge about themselves and knowledge about the educational and occupational environment. They also need attitudes and practical skills that enable them to transform career aspirations into achievable plans.

The need for systematic career planning is strengthened by the complexity of contemporary educational and occupational choices. Students who lack clear career goals may experience uncertainty when choosing a study program, may select educational pathways that do not match their interests or abilities, and may have difficulty preparing for work. Conversely, students who understand their strengths and limitations and possess adequate information about education and employment opportunities are more likely to make deliberate decisions. Thus, career planning should be viewed as an educational process rather than a single decision made at the end of high school.

Career guidance services can provide an important mechanism for supporting this process. Career guidance is a structured form of assistance that helps students understand themselves, obtain information about educational and occupational opportunities, and relate their potential to realistic career choices. Walgito (2010) emphasizes self-understanding, understanding the world of work, and the adjustment of personal potential to career choices. In the school context, career guidance therefore functions not only as information delivery but also as a process of assistance that supports decision making and preparation for future transitions (Agustina et al., 2024).

The theoretical foundation of the present study combines the career guidance perspective associated with self-understanding, occupational knowledge, and matching (Parsons, 1909; Walgito, 2010) with Dillard's (1985) career planning dimensions of knowledge, attitude, and skills. Career guidance is expected to strengthen the information and reflection needed for students to formulate realistic goals. Fikriyani and Herdi (2021) similarly emphasize the importance of planned career guidance programs in supporting students' career exploration. Juwitaningrum (2013) also shows the importance of career guidance programs for students' career maturity.

Previous empirical findings provide support for the relationship examined in this study. Hasanah et al. (2019) reported an effect of career guidance services on career planning among eleventh-grade students in Lumajang. Khoirani (2025) likewise found that career guidance was related to improved career planning among eleventh-grade students. Afriana et al. (2022) reported a positive contribution of classical guidance to students' career planning, while Noer et al. (2025) highlighted the effectiveness of career guidance in supporting career planning among senior high school students. These findings suggest that structured guidance may contribute to students' ability to formulate future-oriented career decisions.

Initial interviews conducted by the researcher with guidance and counseling teachers and several eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 7 Ambon revealed two conditions. Some students already had clear career goals, understood their interests and talents, and knew the steps they would take after

graduation, either by continuing their education or entering employment. Other students still demonstrated uncertainty, including unclear career goals, limited understanding of their potential, and hesitation when selecting further study or occupational alternatives. The school routinely provides guidance and counseling services, including career guidance, making it a relevant setting for examining whether the existing service is associated with students' career planning.

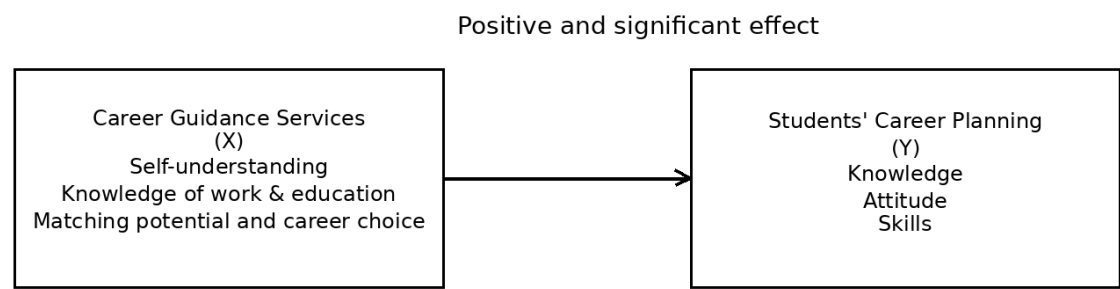
Based on this context, the present study aims to determine whether career guidance services significantly affect the career planning of eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 7 Ambon. The study addresses the hypothesis that better career guidance services are associated with better student career planning.

METHODS

This study used a quantitative approach with an ex post facto design. The design was selected because the researcher did not administer a specific treatment but examined existing conditions and the relationship between career guidance services as the independent variable (X) and students' career planning as the dependent variable (Y). The study was conducted at SMA Negeri 7 Ambon, Jalan Dr. J. Leimena, Hative Besar, Teluk Ambon, Ambon, Maluku, during the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, from May to June 2026. The population comprised all 123 eleventh-grade students. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 60 students from classes XI 1 and XI 2 because, according to the school guidance and counseling teacher, these classes were more active in guidance and counseling activities and were therefore considered relevant to the research objective. The sample consisted of 30 students from XI 1 and 30 from XI 2.

Data were collected through two Likert-scale questionnaires. The career guidance services instrument was developed from the study's operationalization of Walgito's framework and covered three dimensions: self-understanding, knowledge of the world of work and education, and the compatibility of personal potential with career choice. The initial instrument contained 40 items; 37 items were declared valid. The career planning instrument was based on Dillard's framework and covered knowledge, attitude, and skills. The initial instrument contained 50 items; 42 items were declared valid. Validity was examined using Pearson product-moment correlations, with the critical value of $r = 0.2542$ at the 5% significance level. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. The career guidance services instrument obtained $\alpha = 0.833$, while the career planning instrument obtained $\alpha = 0.913$, indicating adequate to very strong internal consistency. Data analysis used descriptive analysis, normality testing, linearity testing, heteroskedasticity testing, coefficient of determination, and simple linear regression using IBM SPSS Statistics 26.

Research Framework



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The study involved 60 respondents from two eleventh-grade classes. Each class contributed 30 students. Female students represented 56.7% of the sample (34 students), while male students represented 43.3% (26 students).

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by class

Class	Number of Students
XI 1	30
XI 2	30
Total	60

Source: SMA Negeri 7 Ambon

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	26	43.3%
Female	34	56.7%
Total	60	100%

Source: SMA Negeri 7 Ambon

Descriptive findings showed generally positive responses toward the career guidance services provided by the school. Students indicated that the service helped them understand their interests, talents, abilities, information about the world of work, and possible future career directions. Career planning was also described as fairly good, particularly in students’ ability to formulate career goals, maintain motivation toward their aspirations, understand opportunities for further education, and identify steps needed to achieve desired careers.

Table 3. Prerequisite test results

Test	Statistic / Value	Decision
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Normality (Monte Carlo Sig.)	0.191	Residuals normally distributed
Linearity (Deviation from Linearity)	0.543	Linear relationship
Glejser heteroskedasticity (Sig.)	0.897	No heteroskedasticity

Source: Researcher's analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics 26, 2026

The normality test produced a Monte Carlo significance value of 0.191, which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the residuals were considered normally distributed. The linearity test produced a Deviation from Linearity significance value of 0.543, also greater than 0.05, indicating a linear relationship between career guidance services and career planning. The Glejser test yielded a significance value of 0.897 for the career guidance variable, indicating that the regression model did not show evidence of heteroskedasticity.

Table 4. Coefficient of determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.486	0.236	0.223	10.631

Source: Researcher's analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics 26, 2026

The coefficient of determination was $R^2 = 0.236$. This means that career guidance services statistically explained 23.6% of the variation in students' career planning. The remaining 76.4% was associated with other factors outside the variables examined in this study.

Table 5. Simple linear regression and t-test

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	50.803	18.004	—	2.822	0.007
Career guidance services (X)	0.678	0.160	0.486	4.236	0.000

Source: Researcher's analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics 26, 2026

The regression coefficient for career guidance services was 0.678, producing the regression equation $Y = 50.803 + 0.678X$. The t-test produced $t = 4.236$ with $p = 0.000$, while the critical t-value reported in the source study was 2.002. Because $4.236 > 2.002$ and $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, career guidance services had a positive and statistically significant effect on the career planning of eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 7 Ambon.

Discussion

The main finding indicates that career guidance services are an important factor in students' career planning. The positive regression coefficient means that increases in the quality or level of career guidance services were associated with increases in career planning. This result is consistent with the conceptual foundation used in the study, in which career guidance is intended to help students understand themselves, understand educational and occupational opportunities, and match their potential with appropriate career choices. When these components are available, students have a

stronger informational and reflective basis for determining what they want to achieve and how they can pursue it.

The finding can be interpreted through the three career guidance dimensions used in the instrument. First, self-understanding allows students to identify interests, talents, strengths, weaknesses, confidence, and aspirations. Second, knowledge of the world of work and education provides information about occupational requirements, higher-education pathways, and future career prospects. Third, matching personal potential with career choices helps students connect self-knowledge and external information when making decisions. These dimensions are closely related to the process of career planning because planning requires both knowledge of the self and knowledge of available opportunities.

The finding is also compatible with Dillard's (1985) perspective that career planning includes knowledge, attitude, and skills. Knowledge provides a foundation for recognizing career alternatives; attitude reflects motivation, responsibility, confidence, and independence in career decision making; and skills enable individuals to formulate realistic steps toward desired goals. The results suggest that career guidance can contribute to these components by providing information, facilitating reflection, and supporting students as they consider educational and occupational alternatives.

The result supports previous studies cited in the research source. Hasanah et al. (2019) found that career guidance services were associated with career planning among eleventh-grade students in Lumajang. Khoirani (2025) likewise reported that career guidance could improve students' career planning. Afriana et al. (2022) found that classical guidance contributed to students' career planning, while Fikriyani and Herdi (2021) emphasized the importance of planned career guidance programs in increasing career exploration. The consistency of these findings strengthens the argument that guidance and counseling services can play a meaningful role in preparing students for future educational and occupational decisions.

At the same time, the R^2 value of 0.236 indicates that career guidance services are not the sole determinant of career planning. The source study identifies other possible influences, including self-efficacy, parental support, family environment, socioeconomic conditions, interests, talents, personality, learning motivation, and peer influence. This finding is important for school practice because career planning should not be addressed only through isolated counseling sessions. Schools may need to integrate career guidance with family involvement, student self-development, educational information, and opportunities for career exploration.

The practical implication is that guidance and counseling teachers should maintain and strengthen systematic career guidance services. Services can be designed to help students assess their interests and abilities, obtain reliable information about higher education and occupations, compare alternatives, establish realistic goals, and formulate concrete action plans. Because the present study used an ex post facto design, the result demonstrates a statistically significant association and effect within the observed data but does not establish the same level of causal certainty as a controlled intervention study. Future research can therefore use experimental or longitudinal designs and include additional predictors to explain the remaining 76.4% of variation in career planning.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that career guidance services have a positive and significant effect on the career planning of eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 7 Ambon. The hypothesis was supported by the t-

test result of 4.236 with $p = 0.000$, and the regression coefficient was positive ($B = 0.678$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.236$) indicates that career guidance services explain 23.6% of the variation in students' career planning, while 76.4% is related to other factors beyond the scope of the study. The findings suggest that career guidance should be implemented systematically to strengthen students' self-understanding, access to educational and occupational information, career decision making, and practical planning skills. Future studies are recommended to examine additional factors such as self-efficacy, parental support, family environment, motivation, personality, and peer influence and to consider experimental or longitudinal designs.

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