

The Relevance of Vocational Choice Theories to Students Career Insights and Choices

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Abstract--Career is the primary objective in the process of education, especially in vocational education. This study analyzed the extent to which vocational choice theories relevant to the career choices and career insights of Vocational High School (VHS) students in Yogyakarta regency in 2016. This study was designed with a survey approach to examine the Vocational High School students' career insight at Yogyakarta regency. This study was categorized as ex-post facto with three variables namely vocational choices, career insight and career choice of the VHS students. The population of this study were VHS students in Yogyakarta regency while the samples were selected using purposive random sampling. It consisted of 20 students from 10 VHS in Yogyakarta regency, so the total of the sample is 200 students. The instrument to collect the data were questionnaires. The data analysis was conducted using descriptive and correlational analysis to assess the relationships between the variables. The results show that vocational choice theories which are still relevant to the student's career choices are a theory of nature and factors, psychodynamic theory, the theory of economic, socio-cultural theory, and theory of development. In relation with the student's career insight, the analysis of the students' career insights proves that the students generally have intentional plan to enter vocational education prompted by their personal motives and family supports according to their interests, talents, desires and aspirations oriented to large incomes and prospective careers and employment. More concrete evidence also indicates a significant and positive correlation between career insights and career choices. It suggests the importance of career guidance and counselling in preparing the students' future careers to adapt the demands of the recent labour market.

Keywords--career insights, career choices, theories of vocational choice, vocational high school student

I. INTRODUCTION

The educational paradigm shift from a traditional supply-driven method to demand-driven method requires Vocational High Schools (VHS) to accept full responsibility for the quality of their graduates, including the employment rate of the graduates. Education not only serves as a supplier of labour, but it is required to produce graduates who are really required by the community and the world of work. This paradigm shift has strong implications that lead to the changes of teaching-learning method and the management of the vocational education institution providing middle-level manpower. Vocational schools must be active and responsive to this fast developing market's demands. They should be ready to adapt to the changes every time.

In the future VHS is required to strengthen its students to have the skills of the XXI Century. In this context, the graduates must have the capability to work, critical thinking, creativeness, innovativeness, problem-solving ability, communicative skills, ability to cooperate, integrity, discipline, and characters of a global citizen. Therefore, to produce competitive graduates, Vocational High Schools need to equip the students with the following basic competencies: (1) the ability to demonstrate a high cognitive mastery; (2) problem-solving skills; (3) social skills to interact and work collaboratively with other people; and (4) field skills. The schools should provide the students with effective programs in the process of developing and implementing these basic competencies.

In addition, Information and Technology development drives the changes of works procedures which stimulates the changes of competency demands to adapt to the workforce requirements. Changes in competence demands in the world of work can be overcome in a fast solution by doing job training for employees. In order to support the training, it is necessary to follow the good governance system as well. Vocational education institutions should also be prepared with these changes by introducing the students to (1) efficient production systems, (2) automation systems technology; and (3) modern production systems.

Vocational High Schools are struggling to prove their accountability by conducting several programs to produce graduates who function effectively in the frame of the real workforce. The programs consist of link and match, dual system of education, competency-based education, broad-based education, and life skills education. All of these programs aim to improve the quality of graduates in accordance with the real market needs. These issues also strongly influence the vocational students' career insights. Therefore, it is urgent to analyze the vocational students' career insight today to be used by the stakeholders of vocational education to design relevant strategies and instructional materials.

Based on the background above, the problems formulated in this study are (1) theories of vocational choices relevant to the student's career choices; (2) the description of vocational student careers insight; (3) the relevance of vocational choice theories to the student's career insights and choices. Vocational choice theories in the field of vocation are still commonly used as a reference (for prospective students of VHS) or career guidance (for those who have become students of VHS).

II. NON-PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY

Crites [1] divides the theories of vocational choices into two groups, non-psychological and psychological. The theory is defined as the phenomenon of vocational choice involving various systems outside one's self.

The non-psychological theory consists of coincidence theory, the theory of economic and socio-cultural theories. The explanations are as follows: (1) accident theory, is a theory vocational choice that is not planned or calculated for two reasons, namely negative and positive. Negative reasons due to unexpected events such as after the war, the economic crisis and not getting a job. While the positive reason is job opportunities to improve economic status; (2) economic theory, is the choice of work on the consideration of benefits, income, and prestige; and (3) socio-cultural theory, namely socio-cultural conditions of the environment, among others: (a) culture and subculture; (b) community background; (c) school environment; and (d) family background. The advantage of this theory is that the individual in determining his choice is based on various situations and conditions outside his personality. That is, the information obtained is used to make decisions to make choices based on the conditions and situations of society or social conditions around them. For example, information from industries, community, close friends, companies, and so on. Thus, the information obtained to make the vocational choice is actually based on the situation and conditions in the field. The weakness of this theory is it does not consider the condition of psychological properties owned by the individual, for example, talents interests, ability, skills, and so forth.

The second theory is a Psychological theory. This theory illustrates the phenomenon of vocational choice depending on the potential of the individual, such as talent, interest, nature, intellectual prowess, and so forth. While all that is outside the individual is only a supporting factor [1]. It consists of trait and factors theory, psychodynamic theory, development theory and decision theory. The following is a brief explanation: (1) the trait & factor theory is the vocational choice based on individual differences and the analysis of the occupation occupied or which will be occupied by three steps: self-understanding (intelligence, Interests, ambitions, resources, limitations), knowing the knowledge of needs and success (profit, compensation, opportunity & prospects), and the right reasons for linking and matching the two elements above; (2) psychodynamic theory (psychodynamic theory), namely the theory of vocational choices which is based on individual psychological dynamics. Dynamics will arise if the individual can express the existing potential, can break down and exploit his own potential to make his choice. This theory in its development is divided into (a) psychoanalytic theory, namely the choice of work in accordance with the expectations of society; (b) the theory of needs (needs theory), the theory of needs is based on the hierarchy of needs that exist in the individual itself. The prioritized needs are tailored to the individual himself and not by others; (C) the theory of self-choice the theory of self-choice is based on self-concept, self-esteem, and meta-dimensions. Self-concept will arise if individual maturity has played a role in all the psychological

dynamics of the individual [1]; (3) development theory (development theory, based on the development of individual potential.

Although the development is done in a long time this theory is still considered relevant in the development of the times. The vocational choice that can be formed within a certain period of time. There are two periods of time that can be used to refer to the vocational choices, namely (a) the period of anticipation (pre-occupation), the period for exploration, crystallization, selection, and clarification in determining vocational choice; (B) the period of implementation and adjustment ie the period of time for induction, reformation, and information integration for vocational choice (Crites 1969: 92); (4) decision theory, namely the choice of vocational fields based on the choice of work, so one must choose and make the right decision to make the choice. The decision may be terminal or final. Starting from the investigation, the estimate of the probability of success, the desired outcome, followed by the determination of the election that applies the criteria based on the best-regarded self-decision [1]. The advantage of this theory is that all decisions taken for the selection of the vocational field are based on the psychological factors that the individual has, thus the choice is decided according to the condition of the psychological factors. The weakness of the theory is complicated and difficult in its application, both at the time of recruitment or on the placement of a person's job (especially in educational institutions), especially in preparing the device to be used in the field.

The next theory is a general theory. The general theory describes the phenomenon of vocational choices which is the interaction between the potential of the individual with the existing system outside the individual. Blau (1956: 534) explains the general theory consists of an interdisciplinary conception and general developmental interpretation.

The explanation is as follows: (1) interdisciplinary conception developed by Blau is based on principles and empirical investigations in terms of three disciplines namely, economics disciplines, psychology disciplines and disciplines sociology [2]. These three concepts underlie the individual self in considering choosing a job, because entering the work is an interaction between vocational choice and job selection, and in the work always involves individuals and individuals within the group; (2) the general developmental interpretation states that the choice of vocational field is a process, which evolves over time. The choice of vocational field can be predicted based on the choice of the vocational field that combines personal & social factors, self-concept, and reality. One's mobility in work depends on intelligence, socioeconomic parent, the status of needs, values, interests, skills, and supply and demand conditions in the economy. Job satisfaction depends on one's ability to implement self-concept through a role in work. This theory has the advantage that the individual in considering choosing a job is based on the interaction between the potential of the self with the existing system outside, because entering the work is an interaction between the choice of field of vocation and job selection, and in the work always involves individuals and individuals in the group. Another advantage will be obtained by individuals who can be accepted in the work environment, individuals who are capable and able to work in the environment, because this theory

combines the potential of self, social and reality in the field. The weakness of this theory is if the potential of the individual is too prominent, it will damage the work of a system. The weakness of a prominent person is he usually difficult to compromise and unruly, emphasizing an excessive idealistic attitude. The importance of decision-making in choosing a vocational field is based on careful consideration. Designing and planning careers need to consider individual motivation and knowledge factors with regard to social and demographic characteristics [3]. Toma and Raimonda [4] argue that career development and one's work to develop one's career need to consider the philosophical and psychological factors it has. Explicitly, these two studies show that the importance of the role of psychological factors in the determination or selection of career and career guidance of a person, which if it is traced further will be related and influential also in the selection of one's vocational field. Referring to ILO R.087's recommendation on Vocational Guidance Recommendation in 1949 [5], it was said that the vocational guidance at the school was one of the educational programs, which took into account the talents, interests and qualifications of various occupations and careers in order to determine the choice of vocational fields in ahead of him. This is reinforced by [6] about New Challenges for Vocational Counseling and Career Planning, that career is interrelation that occurs throughout life and skills in the community. It means the process that occurs in the community will affect the career development potential of someone on his career ladder. Considering the problems of prospective workers (in this case teenagers, youth, unemployed or the like) associated with the labor market, it is mentioned that information from the public, on employment supply and demand, the problems of teenagers themselves, and the integration of adolescents with markets are determining factors of work thus, if it is related to the problem of vocational election, it gives some idea that it is necessary to consider the three theories mentioned earlier, which are related to psychological, non-psychological and general factors in society.

Based on the background of problems, literature reviews and relevant previous studies, this study determines: (1) which theories of vocational choices relevant to the students career choices in Vocational High Schools of Yogyakarta regency in 2016 (2) the description of vocational students careers insight in Vocational High Schools of Yogyakarta regency in 2016; (3) the relevance of vocational choice theories to the students career insights and choices in Vocational High Schools of Yogyakarta regency in 2016

III. METHODS

The study was conducted using survey method. It is categorized as an ex-post facto method by the independent variables of vocational choice theories and career insights and the dependent variable of student's career choice. The study was conducted for 8 (eight months) from April to November 2016. The procedure of the study includes: (1) preparation; (2) literature review of vocational choice and career insights of vocational students; (3) literature review of career choice; (4) determining the variables of the study; (5) data collection; (6) data analysis and evaluation; (7) writing the report; and (8) the

final report seminar. The population consist of 20 students from 10 vocational schools selected by purposive random sampling. Data analysis was done descriptively. Correlational analysis was done to know whether there is a correlation between variables. Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS 21.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study is based on several vocational choice theories of nature and factor, psychodynamic theory, economic theory, socio-cultural theory, and development theory. This study revealed that: (1) based on the theory of nature, 70% of vocational students understand that vocational high schools are designed to prepare the graduates to enter the workforce and 57% of students choose vocational education based on purposeful plans; (2) based on psychodynamic theory, 61% of students choose vocational schools because they prepare for competency skills required to work after graduation; (3) based on economic theory, 57% of students choose a job according to the situation of labor market and 62% of students choose the prioritized skills relevant to the labor market; (4) based on the socio-cultural theory, 58% of students receive family supports related career decisions and 54% of students learn about morality, honesty, discipline, socialization and academic basics from their family environment; and (5) based on the theory of development, 52% of students acted as students developing themselves both in the academic and non-academic and 60% of the students understand how to choose a good location suitable for businesses. The fifth theory dominates the obtained data.

Observing the data, it can be concluded that the reasons for the students enter vocational schools is determined by the students' interest to be employed immediately after graduation. Future careers are influenced by the students their selves and their family. The immediate family support is very crucial. The transitional period of maturity occurs when students enter high schools. Vocational school graduates are not fully matured so the role of the family in career decision is significant. Besides skills and expertise nurtured in schools, in the family environment, the students develop their morality, honesty, discipline, socialization and academic basics. The student's career insights are also supported by career guidance. The career consultation is the right media to access information about their career plans in the future.

The students' career insights should be systematically developed, not only about the knowledge of employment but also the process of looking for a job, applying, working environment, and the existing working system. Career guidance should play effective roles as a medium to help students choose their career paths. The prospect for a career in the labour market needs to be considered in selecting the job which is closely connected with relevant skills required in the labour markets thus it is obvious that the career guidance and vocational learning activities have a strong impact on the students' career.

Curriculum development should always work collaboratively with the existing career guidance to prepare the students' career. Besides vocational education and family environment, the community also affects the student's career.

Social experiences enable the students to organize, socialize and train the soft skills. Within the community, the students develop teamwork and leadership which cannot be acquired formally in schools.

Findings showed an inclination towards vocational schools as a result of family influence. However, the selection of department meets the student's talents, interests and ideal motivated by job opportunities and greater income. The constraint experienced by the students when entering vocational education is expensive tuition fee thus the income of the parents is very influential. Another obstacle is depressing practical activities. This problem could be complex and resulted from various reasons. The deeper analysis is required. The problems in practical activities may include the job description, the media, workshop environment or existing equipment.

The results of correlation analysis between career insight and career choice, obtained the positive value of 0.532 or, if it is compared with the value of r table 0.444, $r_{count} > r_{table}$, so it is obvious that there is a significant correlation between career insight and career choices with a correlation value of 0.532. The detailed result of correlation analysis is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1. CORRELATION ANALYSIS RESULT

		Career Insights	Career Choice
Career Insights	Pearson Correlation	1	.532
	Sig. (2 tailed)		.016
	N	20	20
Career Choice	Pearson Correlation	.532	1
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.016	
	N	20	20

The value of 0.532 indicates a strong correlation between the two variables. A positive value indicates that the higher the students' career insight then the career options will be increasing. This suggests that the career insights are useful for the students determine the right career. Career insights are closely connected with career guidance. The role of career guidance should be improved to support students' career. The career insights through career guidance can be included either in the classroom or in the other consultation. Career insight can be given through career guidance as an effort to improve student career insight.

Career insights are given not only limited to theories but related issues of the current world of work, job opportunities,

and update skills information through various training schemes offered by training institutes. Occupational qualification work is chosen on the basis of competence relevance and affordable training costs [7].

Career counselling cooperation needs to be established with BKK (Special Working Exchange) which is a bridge between SMK and Industry so that given career insight can be optimized. Student career choice is the impact of the given career insight. The higher career insight leads to the career choices that exactly match the student's goals.

V. CONCLUSION

As a result, it is concluded that: (1) several vocational choice theories relevant to the student's career choice consists of the theory of the nature and factors, psychodynamic theory, the theory of economic, socio-cultural theory, and theory of development; (2) the students generally have intentional plans to select vocational education prompted by their personal motives according to their interests, talents, desires and aspirations oriented to large incomes and prospective careers and employment but it is also affected by the family support; (3) vocational career guidance has a very important role in preparing the students for future career in accordance with the demands of the current job market; (4) there is a positive and significant relationship between career insights and career choices so that the higher the students' career insights, the more precise the student career choice.

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