

Overview of Elementary School Students' Career Awareness in Bandung City

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Abstract

Career awareness is defined as an individual's understanding of the roles and career paths they can choose, as well as the relationship between personal abilities and preferences with the demands of the workplace. Career awareness is a career development that needs to be achieved by students and needs to be given at the beginning of the school year, namely at the elementary school level. This article aims to describe the level of career awareness in elementary school students in the upper grades, namely starting from grades IV, V, and VI in the form of a general description of the level of achievement obtained by students at each level. This study uses a quantitative approach with a descriptive method. The number of research samples was carried out using random sampling techniques using Slovin calculations. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to 189 students in Bandung City. The results showed that most students in grades IV, V, and VI were in the high category. These results indicate that students in the upper grades have career awareness in accordance with the developmental stages that elementary school students should have. This achievement can support students in carrying out career development tasks at the next stage. Efforts that can be made to help develop students' career awareness, especially in schools, include introducing them to various jobs, exploring interests and talents, developing social skills, and using media and direct experience in career teaching.

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INTRODUCTION

The term career is often identified with work, so the use of the word career is more directed at individuals who are working or preparing to work. This meaning shows that career can only be applied to teenagers or adults, while children cannot. This statement causes restrictions on

individual career development, meaning that children do not need to prepare for their careers. So that the narrowing of the meaning of career used makes the phase of life in childhood disrupted and unstable. Meanwhile, careers actually need to be developed since individuals are in childhood.

Regarding children's career development, it has been put forward by several experts including Gottfredson, Super, Mc Daniel. Gottfredson (Sharf, 1992) stated that individuals aged 3 to 14 years and above can develop their careers. Children's career development that refers to self-preparation for work is more emphasized at the age of 9-13 years. According to Gottfredson (Sharf, 1992), children aged 9-13 years are at the stage of social assessment orientation, namely individuals are able to face broader work roles and are able to distinguish them more abstractly. Individuals begin to classify jobs based on social status (income, education level, lifestyle) and gender. Gottfredson's opinion is in line with Super's view (Sharf, 1992) which states that at the growth stage (0-14 years), children begin to develop basic concepts about work and careers related to their interests, potential, and values. Super emphasized that at this stage, children begin to recognize their role in society and understand the different types of jobs that exist, as well as the skills needed to perform those jobs.

Children aged 9-13 years at the level of education in Indonesia are in the category of elementary school students, especially grades 3, 4, 5 and 6. Gysbers (Hohenshill, 1973) stated that career guidance activities begin in elementary school with an emphasis on developing career awareness. Career awareness is an important thing that students must have in elementary school. According to Super, individuals at elementary school age are in the stages of career growth that start from birth to age 14. In this career development span, the career development task that must be fulfilled by individuals is career awareness. Furthermore, Zunker (Anisa, et al., 2016) stated that the emphasis of students' career development in elementary school is directed at achieving overall goals, namely achieving understanding and awareness of oneself (awareness of self or self knowledge), knowledge of various jobs that are engaged in in the world of work (knowledge of the diversity of the world of work), the relationship between school achievement and career choices), and developing a positive attitude towards work (the development of a positive attitude towards work). This is in accordance with the view of Mc Daniels & Hummel (Anisa, et al., 2016) that there are 3 stages of children's career development, namely awareness (before the age of 11 years), exploration (11 - 17 years) and preparation (17 years and above).

McDaniel (2001) further explains that career awareness involves a deeper understanding of oneself, including an understanding of talents and interests, and how these relate to career opportunities in the world of work. For elementary school students, self-awareness and exploration of potential from a young age are considered important things to do. Children's understanding of their abilities and interests, as well as an understanding of various types of work, can be used as a reference in finding a job that suits them. In this context, elementary schools play an important role in forming the foundation of career awareness, by providing opportunities for children to recognize their talents and interests in various activities and subjects.

The explanation of career development that begins early or in childhood, shows that elementary school students should have begun to recognize and know about careers, not only the types of jobs that exist but also lead to interests, talents, and values that are adopted based on the results of children's observations and imitation of their parents. The formation of career characteristics that are formed ultimately realizes career awareness in children, especially about education and work. This explanation is different from the real or factual conditions in the field. Research by Anisa et al. (2016) showed that 75% of fourth grade elementary school students at SDN Kertosono represented by 172 respondents from six schools were in the moderate category. Similar results were obtained from research by Keumala, et al. (2018) which showed that 69.92% of 53 fifth grade students were in the moderate category for career awareness. Career awareness that is still in the moderate category or not optimal in realizing their careers needs special attention for parents and schools. Because career awareness is the beginning of the development of an individual's career. Mc Daniel (2009) explains that in the early stages, individuals begin to recognize the various types of jobs that exist around them. This may start with the jobs they see in their families, society, or the media. For example, a child may be inspired to become a doctor because he often hears his parents talk about the profession or sees a doctor in the hospital. Although the category achieved by elementary school students is not too worrying because it is in the moderate category, if it is allowed to continue, it is feared that it will lead to suboptimal achievement of career development tasks. The research revealed by the researcher tried to re-explore the condition of elementary school students' career awareness reviewed from a different year, because the previous study was conducted five years ago. If the existing findings show conditions that are not much different, then the results of this study can be used as one source for developing career services that are oriented towards developing career awareness.

The impact that arises if career awareness does not develop, namely a decrease in participation rates and school graduation, is one of the impacts of low student self-awareness towards their career development. It should be understood that elementary school students' career awareness does not only focus on children's ability to make decisions related to work at an early age, but is used as a basis for career development at the next level, one of which is awareness of the relationship between work and learning at school.

Based on the phenomena and explanations that have been explained, it shows that career awareness is very important to be developed in children, especially in elementary school students. Because, career awareness can be used as a basis for students in developing their careers at the next level.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. The survey method is a quantitative research method used to obtain data that occurs in the past or present, about beliefs, opinions, characteristics, behaviors, variable relationships and to test several hypotheses about

sociological and psychological variables from samples taken from a certain population (Sugiyono, 2018).

The subjects of the study were students in grades 4, 5 and 6 of SD Negeri Tilil 032 Bandung with a population of 352 students, while the research sample was 189 students. The comparison of the number of males and females was not a significant calculation in this study, so that each respondent was considered to have the same characteristics, namely elementary school students in the upper class. The research sample was taken by *random sampling* or randomly by determining the number of samples using the Slovin technique. This technique is used so that the samples taken can truly represent the population. The formula used is as follows.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

N : number from sample

N : number from population

English: : error tolerance limit (*error tolerance*) meanwhile, determine That research to taste is has brought go out use random example.

Research Instruments

Data on elementary school students' career awareness were obtained using the elementary school students' career awareness instrument . The instrument used is *the Academic Resilience Scale* (ARS-30). This instrument was developed by Laverna M. Fadale in 1973 and adapted to the Indonesian version by researchers. Some aspects revealed from career awareness are: work knowledge, positive work attitude, basic skills, social involvement, interests, self-relationship and education, role identification, decision-making skills and attitude development developed from experience, education, association, self-understanding and human behavior.

Data analysis

The results of the instrument show the knowledge, social attitudes and familiarity of students in grades 4, 5 and 6 towards careers. Answers are scored based on the number of correct answers to each question. The correct answer refers to the answer key that has been prepared. Each correct question is given a score of 1. The form of questions given to students is in the form of multiple choice questions with one correct answer. So the correct answer is given a score of 1 and the wrong answer is given a score of 0. The score range is determined based on the high, medium, low obtained by students. Determination of high, medium, low scores uses the following categorization.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The level of career awareness of upper elementary school students, namely grades IV, V, and VI, was obtained from the results of distributing questionnaires to 187 students. The results of each class are explained in the following Figure.

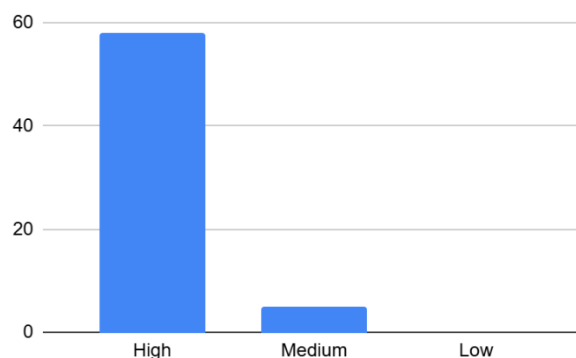


Figure 1. Career awareness of grade IV students

Figure 1 shows that most of the fourth grade elementary school students are in the high category, meaning that students have career awareness that includes: job knowledge, positive work attitudes, basic skills, social involvement, interests, self-education relationships, and role identification. In detail, there are 92% of students in the high category, and 8% of students in the medium category.

The level of career awareness based on gender consisting of 22 female students and 41 male students can be seen in the following Figure:

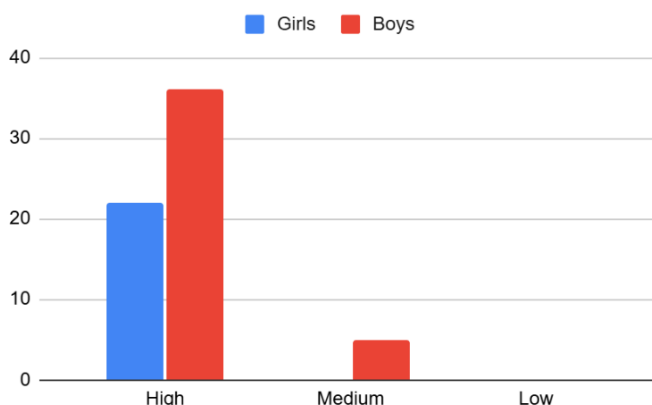


Figure 2. Career Awareness of Grade IV Elementary School Students Based on Gender

In terms of gender, Figure 2 shows that all female students are in the high category, while 88% of female students are in the high category, and 12% are in the medium category.

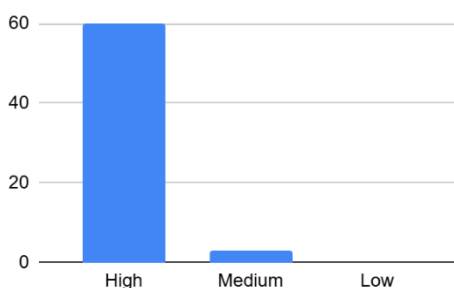


Figure 1. Career awareness of grade V students

Figure 3 shows that most of the fifth grade elementary school students are in the high category, meaning that students have career awareness that includes: job knowledge, positive work attitudes, basic skills, social involvement, interests, self-relatedness and education, and role identification. In detail, 95% of students are in the high category, and 8% are in the medium category.

The level of career awareness based on gender consisting of 37 female students and 26 male students can be seen in the following Figure:

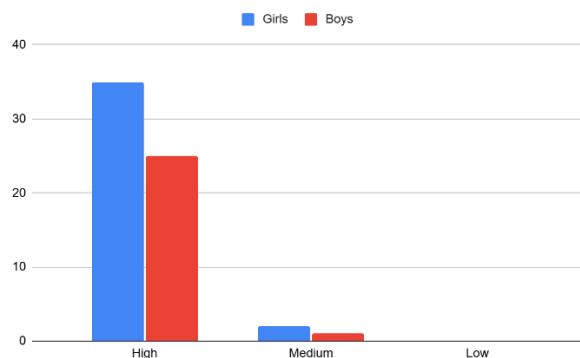


Figure 4. Career Awareness of Grade V Elementary School Students Based on Gender

In terms of gender, Figure 4 shows that 95% of female students are in the high category, and 5% are in the medium category. Meanwhile, 67% of male students are in the high category, and 3% are in the medium category.

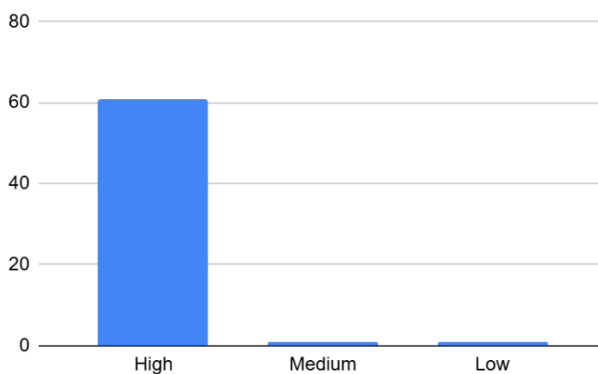


Figure 5. Career awareness of grade VI students

Figure 5 shows that most of the VI grade elementary school students are in the high category, meaning that students have career awareness that includes: job knowledge, positive work attitudes, basic skills, social involvement, interests, self-relatedness and education, and role identification. In detail, 97% of students are in the high category, 2% are in the medium category, and 2% are in the low category.

The level of career awareness based on gender consisting of 28 female students and 35 male students can be seen in the following Figure 6.

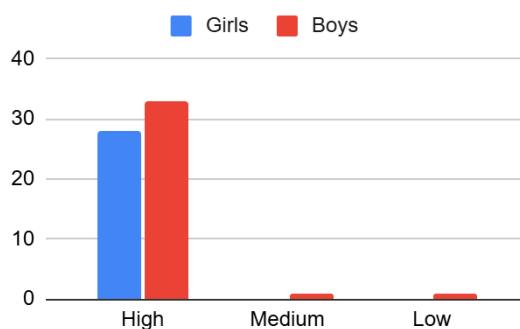


Figure 6. Career Awareness of Grade VI Elementary School Students Based on Gender

In terms of gender, Figure 6 shows that 8% of female students are in the high category, and 0% are in the medium and low category. Meanwhile, 94% of male students are in the high category, and 3% are in the medium and low category.

Discussion

The processing of career awareness questionnaire data conducted on elementary school students in grades IV, V, and VI showed that most students in all classes were in the high category, this means that upper class students have good awareness of their careers. This result is in accordance with the opinion of Gysbers and Moore (1972; Hohenshill, 1977) that students at all levels must have career awareness. Muro & Kottman (1995) stated that elementary school students' careers focus on self-awareness and career. Super's career development theory states that individuals aged 0-14 years are in the growth stage, this stage is prepared for future planning, increasing personal control over individual lives, developing awareness of the importance of school and work achievements, and acquiring competent work attitudes (Sharf, 1992). Watson & McMahon (2005) stated that by being aware of changes and using school experiences as part of obtaining information can make it easier for students to plan for the future. Likewise with the opinion of Schultheiss (2003) who explained that early experiences in childhood shape individual perceptions of their careers.

The ability of elementary school students at the upper level in terms of thinking skills refers to Piaget's cognitive theory, namely that upper elementary school children are at the concrete operational stage towards formal operations. At this stage, children can explore various information through encyclopedias or other sources of information, children not only learn new meanings for concepts, but also correct wrong meanings associated with old concepts (in Suherman, 2013).

However, the above findings differ from previous research revealed by Keumala et al., (2018) which explained that as many as 69.9% of fifth grade elementary school students were in the moderate category for *career awareness*. This condition is caused because students do not yet understand themselves, only see a profession in terms of appearance and not the tasks performed. This condition prompted Keumala et al., to develop a career learning program in order to be able to increase the career awareness of fifth grade elementary school students. Regarding career learning programs in elementary schools, several experts mention the importance of career education for elementary school students, these experts include: Hoyt, Miller, Bottoms, and O'Kelly (Hohenshill, 1973). Hoyt identified that the work awareness program in elementary schools emphasizes work values and work knowledge. Miller, Bottoms, and O'Kelly describe

career education at the elementary school level as career awareness and is included in the existing development curriculum. The career education that has been described is part of the development of students' career awareness in elementary schools. Goldhammer (1972; Hohenshill, 1977) identified career awareness as including the following components: basic skills, social involvement, environment, and interests.

The research findings that show the high career awareness of elementary school students in the upper grades can be a reference for preparing students for their next career development. In order to help elementary school students in their career development, efforts are needed from the school by providing career skills training by collaborating with visiting teachers who have a background in guidance and counseling education or can be said to be Counselors who understand the level of development of elementary school students.

A structured and developmentally sensitive approach to children is needed in developing students' career awareness at elementary school age. At this age, career awareness is still in its early stages, namely children begin to recognize various types of jobs and begin to explore their interests and talents. Here are some efforts that can be made by counselors to help develop elementary school students' career awareness:

a. Introduction to Various Jobs

At this stage, students need to be introduced to various types of jobs or professions. Counselors can use fun and interactive methods, such as role-playing or visiting workplaces (e.g., offices, hospitals, or factories). These activities allow students to see firsthand what various professions do in their daily lives. Activities that can be done include: inviting various professionals from various fields of work to speak in front of the class, such as doctors, teachers, or firefighters; conducting role-plays that depict work situations, such as being a doctor or an entrepreneur.

b. Encouraging Exploration of Interests and Talents

Counselors can provide opportunities for students to explore their interests and talents through extracurricular activities or simple career interest tests. This is important to help students understand the types of jobs that might fit their interests and abilities. Activities such as art, music, sports, or science can lead students to an understanding of careers that are relevant to their talents. Activities that are carried out include: conducting simple career interest tests for children, such as drawing tests or questions about activities they like; providing a variety of extracurricular activities that allow students to explore different areas, such as art clubs, robotics, or sports.

c. Building Social and Collaboration Skills

Career awareness includes not only understanding professions, but also developing social skills needed in the workplace. Counselors can organize activities that teach good teamwork, leadership, and communication skills, such as group projects or games that involve collaboration between students. Activities such as: organizing group projects that require students to work together to complete a task, such as creating a presentation or art project together; using group games to teach communication and problem solving.

d. Using Media for Career Learning

Counselors can utilize various media resources to help students understand various professions. Story books, videos, or even films that depict the daily lives of various professions can be used to give students a more concrete picture of the world of work. Activities carried out include: introducing story books or films that tell the story of someone's life in a particular profession; providing books that describe various types of jobs and the world of work.

e. Providing Direct Experience (*Field Trip*)

Conducting field trips to various workplaces can give students a more real-world experience of how the professional world works. This can broaden their horizons about jobs they may have never heard of before. Activities such as: conducting field trips to various workplaces, such as offices, hospitals, or local businesses, to see firsthand how work is done in the real world.

f. Discussion on Values and Career Choices

Counselors can also facilitate discussions that help students reflect on their values related to work. This is important to build awareness that work is not just about making money, but also reflects personal interests, talents, and values. Activities such as: having a class discussion about what is important in work, such as helping others, working outdoors, or creating something new.

With these efforts, counselors can help elementary school students develop a broader career awareness, provide them with an overview of various professions, and encourage them to explore interests and talents that can be the basis for choosing their future careers. Although school efforts to develop students' career awareness have been prepared or planned, if families or parents do not provide opportunities for students to explore their careers, this can certainly also hinder the development of children's careers that are considered to have met the criteria for their stages. Therefore, children's career awareness is not only the task of the school, which is related to increasing students' knowledge, attitudes, and skills in learning activities, but also the role of parents. So that between the school, parents, and elementary school children/students themselves, each has a significant contribution in producing a generation that is ready to face the future with certainty, direction, and clarity.

CONCLUSION

The development of career awareness in children, especially elementary school students, shows that understanding and awareness of careers should begin early, even at a young age. Although the term "career" is often considered relevant only to adults, research shows that individuals aged 9 to 14 years old can start to develop their career awareness. At this age, which is the age range of children in grades 4 to 6 of elementary school, individuals are at the social assessment orientation stage, where they begin to understand and classify jobs based on various factors, such as social status and gender.

The importance of career awareness can be seen from the ability of children to recognize their interests and talents and understand the relationship between education and career choices to be taken. The emphasis on developing career awareness in elementary schools should include an understanding of the diversity of jobs, as well as developing a positive attitude towards work. Thus, schools have a crucial role in providing students with the knowledge and experience to explore various professions and build their readiness in choosing a career in the future.

Although some studies show that students' career awareness is still in the moderate category, more attention is needed from parents and schools to improve this understanding. Good career awareness at an early age can contribute to increased participation in education and career development at the next level. Concrete efforts that can be made include introduction to various jobs, exploration of interests and talents, development of social skills, and use of media and direct experience in career teaching.

With a systematic and sensitive approach to the stages of child development, it is hoped that students can develop a strong career awareness, which will be the foundation for their future

planning. This also encourages them to understand that career decisions are not only focused on economic aspects but also on personal interests and values.

Overall, the study has revealed a picture of the level of career awareness in elementary school students, especially those in the upper class or also called the upper class. Each class has the same level of career awareness but its achievements vary, especially in terms of gender differences. In female students based on the samples obtained, it turns out that they have a higher level of career awareness compared to male students. This can be seen from the results of the study that there are still some male students who are in the low and medium categories.

The development of students' career awareness that is still in the low and medium categories can be assisted by school counselors by providing elementary school students with an overview of various professions, and encouraging them to explore their interests and talents that can be the basis for choosing their careers in the future. The career selection referred to in the childhood phase does not refer to the work they will do, but rather focuses on the students' perspective in assessing a job and being interested in the work they have known since early on which they have obtained from seeing and imitating conditions in their surrounding environment, especially their family, the closest of course being their own parents. For that reason, it is important to provide positive examples and experiences for children. The role of the family in shaping children's career characteristics can be the best teacher for children compared to teachers at school.

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