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Vocational High School Student Problems: Investigating School Climate and Career Decision-Making Difficulty

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Abstract

Implementing the Independent Curriculum launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia seeks to strengthen the quality of Indonesian education and prepare students to learn the material needed so that the world of work can directly absorb it. Vocational High School (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan/ SMK) is a secondary school that prepares students to be ready for work. Vocational students need to prepare provisions for the world of work. They must be able to make career decisions in line with the stage of career development, which is the exploration stage, to have a more directed career. This study examined the difficulties of career decision-making in vocational students and the role of school climate that will influence students' career decisions. The study was conducted on several vocational schools in Pangandaran Regency, one of the West Java areas with a high open unemployment rate. The respondents were class XII students with a sample of 180 people. The theoretical concepts used in this study are the School Climate (NSCC, 2015) and the Career Decision-Making Difficulties (Gati et al., 1996). The research design used is a non-experimental approach using linear regression analysis methods. The data collection technique is through online and written questionnaires with stratified and cluster sampling techniques. The results showed a positively significant influence of the school climate on the difficulty of making career decisions by 15.2%. That is, the more positive the perspective of grade 12 Vocational High School students on the school climate, the lower the level of difficulty in making career decisions, and vice versa.

Keywords

Vocational Students' Problems; School Climate; Career Decision-Making Difficulties; Vocational High School Students

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1. INTRODUCTION

We are entering the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and demographic bonus opportunities that make the demand for the availability of quality human resources even higher. The Industrial Revolution 4.0, designated by the World Economic Forum (WEF), is a revolution centered around the Cyber-Physical System (CPS). This system encompasses three domains: the digital, physical, and biological. The scenario above has significantly impacted all facets of human existence, emphasizing the paramount need for high-quality human capital in contemporary nation-building endeavors. One viable avenue to attain this objective is using the educational process.

SMK, or vocational high school, is an educational institution that plays a crucial role in developing human resources that possess the necessary abilities, skills, and expertise (Utomo, 2021b). This enables graduates to enhance their performance when joining the professional realm effectively. The primary objective of vocational education is to enhance students' capacity to cultivate their skills in alignment with advancements in science, technology, and art (Lestari Moerdijat, 2020). Additionally, it aims to provide students with the necessary preparation to enter the labor market and foster professional dispositions (Puri & Wicaksono, 2023). The efficacy of a vocational school is not solely contingent upon a high student completion rate but also hinges upon the extent to which graduates can secure gainful employment opportunities (Hartanto & Haryani, 2020). Various governmental initiatives have been implemented to cultivate competent human capital, including guiding at the vocational education level. This is achieved through revitalizing the Vocational High Schools (Utomo, 2021a).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 1974) (Fomby & Cherlin, 2011), students at the vocational level are categorized as adolescents, typically ranging from 12 to 18 years of age. Adolescence is a crucial developmental phase characterized by pursuing self-identity and biological changes. Although individuals in this stage have commenced their transition into adulthood, they are not yet equipped psychologically to bear the weighty obligations typically assigned to adults (M. McDonald, 2004). On the contrary, students enrolled in Vocational High Schools education possess a need to develop the ability to formulate strategic plans and make informed professional choices (Wang et al., 2023). One of the key aspects of adolescent development involves the process of profession selection and preparation. Profession selection refers to the decision-making process undertaken by teenagers as they transition into a new phase of their lives (Fris et al., 2022). Professional decision-making is a personal framework for navigating career choices at various stages of personal growth (Sutiman et al., 2022). This aligns with the government's objective of preparing Vocational High school graduates to cater to the needs of junior high school and equivalent school graduates who seek expedited entry into the workforce (Istia'dah et al., 2018).

Career is a word derived from the Dutch carrier, which means development and progress in one's work (Bassot, 2021). Career refers to an individual's collective experiences in work and other areas, both within and outside an organization, that create distinct patterns throughout their lifetime (M. McDonald, 2004). When considering Donald Super's career development stages, Vocational High school students fall into the exploration stage (K. S. McDonald & Hite, 2023). This stage involves acquiring career decision-making skills and gathering pertinent information to make informed career choices. It also entails recognizing one's interests and abilities and being able to align them with potential job opportunities. Additionally, it involves identifying fields and occupations that align with one's interests and abilities (Istia'dah et al., 2018).

Career decision-making is a process where individuals realize a need to make career decisions, can realize them, and can make correct decisions with the right process that best suits their individual goals (Gati et al., 2000). Individuals can make career decisions appropriately if they correlate their abilities (potential, interests, and talents) by objectively looking at the quality of careers that are required (Sharf, 2014). Meanwhile, individuals who cannot apply the above will be classified as having difficulty making career decisions (K. S. McDonald & Hite, 2023). Career decision-making difficulties (CDMD) are

frequently used in research to describe individuals' challenges while making professional choices (Chuang et al., 2020). It is often synonymous with career indecisions or career indecisiveness. "career indecision" is commonly used to describe individuals' difficulties when making career decisions (Gati et al., 1996). The consequence of challenges in making career decisions is (1) the opportunity for individuals to leave decisions to others and refrain from being able to decide for themselves, (2) failure to get optimal career choices due to delayed decision-making, and (3) being temporarily unemployed (Gati et al., 2000).

The following phenomena have proven exposure to the impact of difficulties in making career decisions, including involving students or vocational graduates (Armstrong, 1994). The first impact, until now, is precisely in determining their career choices. Most students only choose based on following the wishes of friends or parents without being armed with a lot of information and direction first (Osipow & Gati, 1998). Research conducted by Ramlee & Norhazizi (Rogers & Creed, 2011) states that not all students have systematic and rational thinking in making career decisions, resulting in students often changing their career decisions without a clear plan and adequate information. In adolescence, the involvement of social relationships will be deeper and emotionally more intimate than in childhood (Machluf et al., 2014). This becomes the forerunner in determining career decisions based only on following friends, not on one's desires or abilities.

The second impact is the emergence of problems among workers in today's world of work competition, namely, workers who like to move from one job to another and are often referred to as 'fleas' or grasshoppers (Chuang et al., 2020). We face increasing difficulty in finding a job, especially amid this pandemic. Several reasons that encourage a worker to experience this grasshopper phenomenon include incompatibility with work, incompatibility with superiors or colleagues, feeling incompatible with the desired salary, family support, and other job vacancy information from friends (Shen, 2022).

The third impact is that vocational graduates still dominate a large percentage of the unemployment rate in Indonesia. Based on data obtained from the Central Statistics Agency, it was recorded that the Open Unemployment Rate in Indonesia in August 2022 amounted to 7.05 million people (Rizaty, 2021). When viewed by age group, the open unemployment rate in February 2023 was dominated by young people (15-24 years old), which was 18.62% (BPS, 2023). Meanwhile, based on his educational background, Vocational High School graduates dominate the open unemployment rate at 10.42%. Meanwhile, high school graduates ranked second, 7.92%. Diploma I/II/III 5.99%, universities 5.67%, junior high schools 4.75%, and elementary schools 2.41%.

Furthermore, the area with the highest Open Unemployment Rate in Indonesia is West Java, which is 7.99%. Vocational High school graduates still dominate the Open Unemployment Rate in West Java compared to other education levels, which is 14.53% (Infobanknews, 2023). This data aligns with the Basic Education Data of the Ministry of Education and Culture, which states that the absorption rate of vocational school work is higher than that of regular high school. However, according to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Moerdijat (2020), the average employment only absorbs around 40% of vocational graduates (Rizaty, 2021).

Based on the observation of current occurrences, it is crucial to make early preparations for professional decisions. Additionally, a study found that up to 50% of students face difficulty making decisions (Creed et al., 2007). One contributing aspect is the abundance of educational options, diverse work opportunities, and the necessity of understanding the essential life values and goals required for choosing a career (Bassot, 2021). Furthermore, the lack of extensive research and exposure to diverse job role models sometimes leads to the formation of stereotypes and rigid patterns in students' thoughts, constraining their interests and aspirations in specific career fields (Patton et al., 2004). Students often choose professions based on the limited knowledge they have available. Having precise and reliable knowledge about the job market and one's abilities is crucial in shaping adolescents' views on career

options. This enables adolescents to align their career choices with their potential (Kowske et al., 2010).

In terms of making career decisions, the school also has a considerable contribution. A school is a place for students to develop abilities, skills, knowledge, and learning experiences that are useful for life, such as careers that students will take in the future (Brioux & Oubrayrie-Roussel, 2019). Part of the time students spend in school, especially the study hours of Vocational High students, lasts for at least 8 hours in one day. Within a week, students go to school from Monday to Friday. Thus, the role of the school should be to make students comfortable and motivate them to achieve their desires (Theme, 2018). Therefore, students are exposed to more education-related activities and careers in school. Thus, school conditions also affect student behavior. This is in line with the findings of previous studies that say that school climate can be understood as a determining factor of school atmosphere and student behavior at school (Al-Khamisy & Gosk, 2016).

School climate, as defined by the National School Climate Council (NSCC), refers to school life's overall quality and nature. It encompasses various aspects such as the experiences of individuals within the school, the prevailing norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning activities, and organizational structures (American Educational Research Association. et al., 2014), (NSCC, 2015). School climate can be analyzed based on three indices: student-student relationship, student-teacher relationship, and educational atmosphere (Gosk et al., 2017). Meanwhile, climate attributes are compared with indices of plans for the future, such as desired level of education, future job and workplace position, family life, ways of spending leisure, and developing hobbies (Al-Khamisy & Gosk, 2016). Based on the National School Climate Center (2007), there are several aspects or dimensions of student assessment of school climate: safety, learning and teaching, interpersonal relationships, and physical environment (NSCC, 2015).

A previous study shows that the influence of school climate on future life planning affects student life planning (Molinari & Grazia, 2023). Good relationships between students show this: a sense of peer support, spending time together, and learning together can influence the level of higher education plans. In other words, if the school climate is positive, it is hoped that students will feel comfortable and get guidance, direction, and support from the school in making career decisions (Lombardi et al., 2019). Meanwhile, a positive school climate is shown by good relations between school residents, the ability of school residents to overcome failure, learning methods that support student learning, clarity of regulations, and comfortable school environment conditions (Long et al., 2021).

However, each school has a different climate, such as the way of approach to the learning and teaching system, especially by teachers to students, is different. One of them can be seen from the accreditation data of Vocational High Schools schools in Pangandaran Regency by the National Accreditation Board for Schools/Madrasah, which shows that the accreditation level of each Vocational High School in Pangandaran Regency still varies, ranging from A to C. So, based on all the explanations above and previous studies, this study aims to test whether school climate influences the difficulty of making career decisions in grade Vocational High School students XII in Pangandaran Regency.

2. METHODS

The research approach used in this study is a non-experimental quantitative approach. The respondents of this study were 180 grade 12 vocational students in Pangandaran Regency (100 women and 80 men) who had career choices other than marriage after graduating from vocational high schools. The sampling techniques used are cluster and stratified sampling. The data collection process was carried out partly using an online questionnaire in the form of a Google form and partly using a paper questionnaire distributed to students. This study used two measuring instruments, namely the Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI; National School Climate Center, 2015) (NSCC, 2015) and the Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire (Gati et al., 2000). The CSCI tool measures

students' perceptions of the school climate, consisting of 22 questions validated through expert judgment. Based on the results of the validity test through SPSS, the author found that this measuring instrument can be declared convincing or valid.

Furthermore, the author calculated the reliability of the measuring instrument and obtained that this measuring instrument has a high-reliability value (Cronbach alpha / α = 0.928). The measurement scale used is the Likert scale, where each question item has five answer choices, namely 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; and 5 = strongly agree. Meanwhile, the CDDQ measuring tool is used to measure the level of difficulty of students in making career decisions with 34 questions. Based on the results of the validity test through SPSS, the author found that this measuring instrument can be declared convincing or valid, except for item number 2, which is declared invalid. Furthermore, the author calculated the reliability of the measuring instrument and obtained that this measuring instrument has a high-reliability value (Cronbach alpha / α = 0.930). The measurement scale used is the Likert scale, where each question item has an answer range of 1-9, indicating that 1 - does not correspond to 9 = very appropriate. Then, data processing is carried out using the SPSS program, and the analysis technique used is simple linear regression or simple regression test.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Result

In this study, 180 participants were class XII students in Pangandaran Regency. This picture of participant demographic data shows that based on gender, most participants were female, with 100 people (55.6%), and the rest were men, as many as 80 people (44.4%). Then, based on age, most of the participants aged 17 years were 154 people (85.6%), while the least were 16 years old and 19 years old, as many as four people each (2.2%). In addition, most participants were Sundanese, as many as 176 people (97.8%), and the rest were Javanese, as many as four (2.2%).

Class XII Vocational High students' perception of the school climate can be summarized as follows: The average value (mean) of the school climate variable is 80.46, with a standard deviation value (std. deviation) of 13.64. The minimum value recorded is 42, while the maximum value is 109. The variable consists of two categories: good and negative climates. Among the participants, the majority (99.4%) reported having a positive school climate, corresponding to 179 individuals. In addition, a picture of school climate variables is obtained based on categories or aspects of security, learning, interpersonal relationships, and the institution's physical environment. Most participants in each aspect had a positive climate, namely in the security aspect as many as 142 people (78.9%), the learning aspect as many as 142 people (78.9%), the interpersonal relationship aspect as many as 143 people (79.4%), and the physical environment aspect as many as 130 people (72.2%).

Furthermore, regarding the description of the level of difficulty in making career decisions in class XII Vocational High school students, the variable difficulty making career decisions has an average value (mean) of 5.21 and a standard deviation value (std. deviation) of 0.96 with a minimum value of 3.11 and a maximum of 7.53. In this variable, there are three categories: negligible, moderate, and salient, where most participants are in the moderate difficulty category, which is as many as 147 people (81.7%). In addition, a description of the variables of difficulty in making career decisions has been obtained based on its dimensions consisting of lack of readiness, lack of information, and inconsistent information. Most participants in each dimension were in the moderate difficulty category, namely lack of readiness of as many as 148 people (82.2%), lack of information of as many as 138 people (76.7%), and inconsistent information of as many as 135 people (75.0 %).

Table 1. School Climate Difference Test Results and Career Decision-Making Difficulty Based on Demographic Data

Demographic Data	School Climate		Career Decision-Making Difficulty	
	Mean (SD)	p-value	Mean (SD)	p-value
Gender		0.200		0.104
Man	81.66 (12.54)		5.29 (1.04)	
Woman	79.49 (14.46)		5.15 (0.89)	
Age		0.017		0.026
16 years old	89.25 (6.94)		6.09 (0.84)	
17 years old	79.25 (13.59)		5.14 (0.95)	
18 years old	85.67 (12.71)		5.70 (0.94)	
19 years old	94.74 (10.72)		4.92 (0.68)	
Tribe		0.423		0.035
Sunda	80.35 (13.73)		5.19 (0.96)	
Jawa	85.00 (9.41)		6.04 (0.23)	

Table 1 above tests differences in school climate and career decision-making difficulty in participants based on demographic data showing significant differences in school climate based on participants' ages ($p = 0.017$, $p \leq 0.05$). However, there were no significant differences based on the sex and ethnicity of the participants ($p > 0.5$). Meanwhile, in the variable career decision-making difficulty, there were differences based on the age ($p = 0.026$, $p \leq 0.05$) and tribe ($p = 0.035$, $p \leq 0.05$) participants.

Before conducting a hypothesis test, the author conducts a normality test, linearity test, and heteroscedasticity test to ensure that the data obtained can be tested by regression analysis. The results of the normality test conducted on the data of Career Decision-Making Difficulty as the dependent variable in this study were normally distributed with p of 0.055 ($p > 0.05$). That is, a simple linear regression analysis can be performed to examine the influence of school climate on Career Decision-Making Difficulty. Furthermore, the results of the linearity test showed a deviation from linearity of $p < 0.001$. This means there is a significant linear relationship between school climate variables and variables of Career Decision-Making Difficulty, so the relationship between variables can be explained using linear models. Then, the results of the heteroscedasticity test addressed in Figure 1 below show that the data points do not clump together at one point but are spread out above and below. In addition, the data points are not patterned and do not form wavy patterns, widening then narrowing and widening again. Therefore, it can be concluded that heteroscedasticity symptoms do not occur, and a good and ideal regression model can be fulfilled.

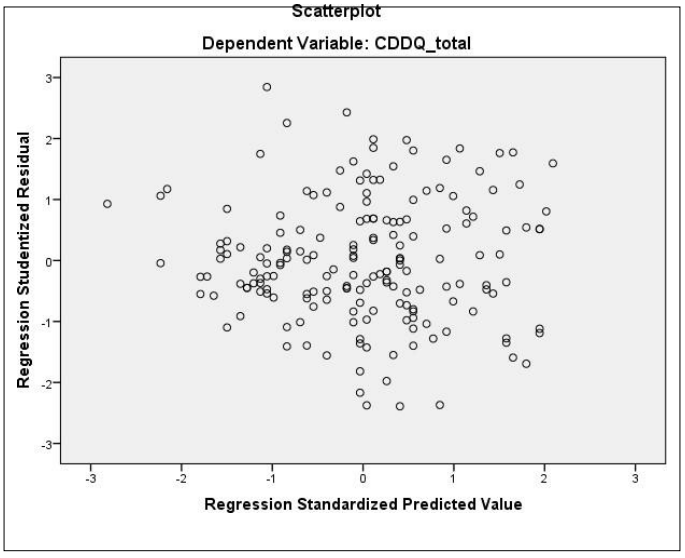

Figure 1. School Climate Heteroscedasticity Test Results and Career Decision-Making Difficulty with Scatterplot

Table 2. Regression Test Results of the Effect of School Climate on Career Decision-Making Difficulty

Variable	B	SE	r	R^2	P-value
School Climate	0,881	0,156	0,390	0,152	<0.001

Table 2 shows that the results of statistical tests using simple linear regression at 95% confidence degree show that there is a significant influence of school climate on Career Decision-Making Difficulty with a p<0.001 value with a beta coefficient of 0.881 with a correlation coefficient of 0.390 with low criteria based on Guilford and an R^2 value of 0.152 which shows that the difficulty of making career decisions is influenced by school climate by 15.2% in this study.

Table 3. Regression Test Results of the Effect of School Climate Dimensions on Career Decision-Making Difficulty

Variable	B	SE	r	R^2	P value
School Climate	0.881	0.156	0.390	0.152	<0.001
Security	0.008	0.002	0.343	0.118	<0.001
Learning	0.006	0.001	0.334	0.111	<0.001
Interpersonal Relationships	0.005	0.001	0.300	0.090	<0.001
Physical Environment	0.007	0.002	0.289	0.083	<0.001

Table 3 shows that the results of statistical tests using simple linear regression at 95% confidence degree show that there is a significant influence of school climate on the difficulty of making career decisions with a p<0.001 value with a beta coefficient of 0.881 and a correlation coefficient of 0.390 with low criteria based on Guilford and an R^2 value of 0.152 which shows that the difficulty of making career decisions is influenced by school climate by 15.2% in this study. Table 3 also shows a significant influence on the difficulty of making career decisions on every aspect of school climate: safety, learning, interpersonal relationships, and the physical environment.

A meaningful security aspect with a p<0.001 value and a beta coefficient of 0.008 with a correlation coefficient of 0.343 low criteria was based on Guilford and an R^2 value of 0.118 which showed that Career Decision-Making Difficulty was influenced by the security aspect by 11.8%. In the learning aspect, there is a significant influence, namely the p<0.001 value and the beta coefficient of 0.006 with a correlation coefficient of 0.334, low criteria based on Guilford, and an R^2 value of 0.111, which shows that the difficulty of making career decisions is influenced by the learning aspect by 11.1%. In addition, aspects of interpersonal relationships have a significant influence, namely with a value of p < 0.001 and a beta coefficient of 0.005 with a correlation coefficient of 0.300, low criteria based on Guilford, and an R^2 value of 0.090, which shows that aspects of interpersonal relationships influence the difficulty of making career decisions by 9.0%. Finally, in the aspect of the physical environment, there is a significant influence with a value of p < 0.001 and a beta coefficient of 0.007 with a correlation coefficient of 0.289 and an R^2 value of 0.083 which shows that the difficulty of making career decisions is influenced by aspects of the physical environment by 8.3%.

Discussion

According to the data above, the educational environment substantially impacts the degree of challenge associated with career choices. The correlation between students' perception of their school climate and the ease of making career decisions is inverse; as students evaluate their school climate more positively, the difficulty in making career decisions decreases. These results show that vocational school students perceive their school climate positively and ultimately influence their ability to make career decisions. When viewed based on students' perceptions of the school climate, they stated that their school climate was good or positive. However, the results of Career Decision-Making Difficulty in vocational students in vocational high school students at Pangandaran Regency still show difficulties at the moderate level.

The findings of this study are regarding the impact of school climate on prospective life planning. It's similar to a previous study, demonstrating that school climate influences students' life planning (Brioux & Oubrayrie-Roussel, 2019). In addition, other research also explained that school is a means for students to develop abilities, skills, knowledge, and learning experiences that are useful for the provision of life, such as careers that students will take in the future (Mills et al., 2020). Based on the results of the study, it was found that security was most influenced by aspects of school safety and climate, which was 11.8%, then continued with the learning aspect by 11.1%, the interpersonal relationship aspect by 9%, and the physical environment aspect by 8.3%.

The first aspect of school climate that relates to and influences Career Decision-Making Difficulty is security. Safety represents students' assessment of the school's efforts to create a physically and emotionally safe environment (NSCC, 2015). In other words, this aspect is a view or assessment of students related to the safety of the school environment to support themselves in planning and deciding future career choices. This aspect has two subaspects: rules and norms and the sensation of physical and social-emotional security (Wong et al., 2021). The sub-aspects of rules and norms include explicit guidelines on physical violence, student health and well-being, verbal abuse, harassment, and taunting.

Additionally, these rules and established norms for adult intervention should be clearly and consistently enforced. The sub-aspect of a sense of physical security pertains to the perception of children feeling protected from potential physical hazards while at school. The subaspect of social-emotional security refers to the sense of safety and well-being that students experience, specifically about protection from verbal abuse, scorn, and exclusion (Thapa et al., 2013). The regression analysis of aspects of school climate with Career Decision-Making Difficulty showed that the welfare aspect positively significantly influenced students' Career Decision-Making Difficulty, which was 11.8%.

Learning and teaching are the second aspect of the school climate that deals with Career Decision-Making difficulties. This aspect of learning represents students' assessment of the teacher's ability to educate students to be engaged in teaching and learning activities (NSCC, 2015). In other words, this aspect is a student's view and assessment of the ability of the teaching team or teacher to educate and guide students during teaching and learning activities at school, especially in supporting students in making planning and making career decisions (Molinari & Grazia, 2023). This aspect has two subaspects, specifically support for learning and social and civic learning. The Support for learning subaspect is exemplified through the implementation of teaching practices that provide support, such as offering encouragement and constructive feedback, providing various opportunities to showcase knowledge and skills, fostering an environment that encourages risk-taking and independent thinking, creating a conducive atmosphere for dialogue and questioning; presenting academic challenges; and offering individualized attention. The social and civic learning subaspect focuses on fostering the growth of social and community knowledge, skills, and attitudes. This includes promoting effective listening, conflict resolution, self-reflection, emotional control, empathy, personal responsibility, and ethical decision-making (Lombardi et al., 2019).

The regression analysis results of aspects of school climate with difficulty making career decisions showed that learning and teaching positively significantly influenced students' difficulties in making career decisions, which was 11.1%. The positive influence of learning and teaching shows that the teaching and learning activities carried out by teachers or teaching teams get a positive view and assessment from students. Overall, Vocational High School students feel the teaching team or teachers can build a positive learning atmosphere or climate to support their learning performance. Lectures, class discussions, assignments, quizzes, and exams conducted teaching and learning applied by Vocational High school teachers in Pangandaran. This is also in line with previous research, which states that aspects of teaching and learning are important things that influence students in making plans (Nishimura et al., 2020). Thus, the competence of vocational teachers must indeed be maintained and even improved.

President the Republic of Indonesia, has issued Presidential Instruction Number 9 of 2016 to enhance the proficiency of vocational teachers. This instruction focuses on revitalizing vocational schools to increase the quality and competitiveness of Indonesian human resources. The Presidential Instruction mandates the Ministry of Education and Culture to enhance the quantity and proficiency of Educators and Education Personnel in Vocational High Schools. According to Article 10A of PP Number 19 of 2017, which amends Government Regulation Number 74 of 2008 regarding Teachers, individuals with special skills that educational institutions require can be appointed as teachers, regardless of whether they have met the academic qualifications of S1/DIV or possess an Educator Certificate. For vocational high schools, the regulation is implemented by recruiting subject matter experts as guest teachers. This can serve as a viable solution to address the scarcity of instructors in vocational schools. In addition, based on the level of difficulty of Vocational High school students in Pangandaran Regency, most at the average level are in the career decision-making difficulty category. That is. Indeed, students still need direction, guidance, and support from teachers as parties in the school area to help them plan and make career decisions. According to previous research, the most support teachers can give is emotional support, such as caring, fair treatment, and encouraging themselves to always develop, compared to other supports (Long et al., 2021). In addition, it is also explained that students are more inclined to seek guidance from teachers than counselors due to the perceived advantages and the tight bond between them (Zynuddin et al., 2023).

The third aspect of school climate that deals with difficulties in making career decisions is interpersonal relationships. The interpersonal relationship in question is the views and assessments of students on the relationships established between school members regarding mutual respect, mutual support, and care to build feelings of belonging (NSCC, 2015). This aspect can be divided into three subaspects: respect for diversity, social support for adults, and social support for students. The subcomponent of valuing diversity entails cultivating mutual respect for individual distinctions, such as gender, color, culture, and so forth, among all school community members, including students and adults. This expectation extends to fostering an overall atmosphere of tolerance. The social support-adult subaspect refers to the presence of nurturing and compassionate connections between adults and students. This includes having high expectations for student achievement, being receptive to students' needs, taking the time to understand them as individuals, and showing genuine concern for any challenges they may face. The social support-students subaspect refers to a beneficial pattern of peer connections that support students (Lombardi et al., 2019). This includes friendships for socializing, addressing problems, offering academic assistance, and aiding new students. The regression analysis revealed a substantial positive link between interpersonal relationships and students' difficulties in making career decisions. Specifically, interpersonal relationships accounted for 9% of the variance in students' career selection difficulties.

Interpersonal connections in the context of Vocational High school students are shaped by interactions between students, their peers, and their teachers (Dreer, 2022). According to Steinberg, Dornbusch, & and Brown's (1992) research cited in (Kołodziejczyk & Ulatowska, 2017), parents play a significant role in influencing career choices. In contrast, friends have a greater impact on an individual's everyday behavior. This is because most of a student's time is spent with their classmates, who become a secondary source of support after parents, as opposed to teachers. Student and teacher connections impact the capacity to engage in future planning (Thapa et al., 2013). The teachers' attitudes and behaviors at school can significantly impact students' motivation, attitudes, expectations, and academic results. These factors, in turn, can influence students' future planning.

The physical environment is the fourth aspect of the school climate that deals with difficulties in making career decisions. That is, the physical environment in question is the views and assessments of students on the efforts of Vocational High Schools in providing facilities in the form of facilities and infrastructure as well as resources that support student activities at school (Kołodziejczyk & Ulatowska, 2017). The feature in question can be divided into two subaspects: school connectedness/engagement

and physical surroundings. School connectedness/engagement refers to the good sense of belonging and active involvement in school life among students, staff, and family. The subaspects of physical surroundings include cleanliness, organization, and the appeal of facilities, along with sufficient resources and supplies. The regression analysis results of aspects of school climate with difficulty making career decisions showed that the physical environment positively influenced students' difficulties in making career decisions, which was 8.3%.

Based on data from BPS (2019), it was revealed that, in general, the percentage of classrooms with good conditions in private schools is greater than in public schools, except at the vocational level, which shows that 51.26% of public vocational classrooms are in good condition and 46.74% of private vocational classrooms are in good condition (*Statistik Indonesia 2019*, n.d.). This is one of the aspirations and hopes of Vocational High Schools students to improve the quality of existing facilities and infrastructure in Vocational High Schools. Moreover, Vocational High Schools should have more practical activities than giving theory.

In this study, several limitations or limitations have a possible impact on the interpretation of research results, namely in conducting data collection techniques. Some respondents use Google Forms online, and some use questionnaires in paper form directly. This means respondents who fill out using Google forms are not monitored or not accompanied directly by researchers in the process.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion of research conducted on Class XII Vocational High Schools students in Pangandaran Regency, it was concluded that the school climate has a positive effect on Career Decision-Making Difficulty, which means that the more positive students' perceptions of the school climate, the lower the level of Career Decision-Making Difficulty. Then, the role of the school climate dimension that most contribute to Career Decision-Making Difficulty is the security aspect, the learning aspect, the interpersonal relationship aspect, and the physical environment aspect. Furthermore, the picture of the perception of most Vocational High Schools class XII students in Pangandaran Regency towards the school climate is positive, including each aspect that is perceived positively by students in the order of positive assessment from high to low as follows: aspects of interpersonal relationships, aspects of security, and aspects of learning, then aspects of the physical environment. However, there still needs improvement so that school climate conditions from various dimensions can be improved and facilitate students in the teaching and learning process at school, especially in the physical environment, a supporting facility, and infrastructure for academic activities. Meanwhile, the difficulty level in making career decisions in class XII Vocational High school students is included in the average category. This means that there is still a need for effort and assistance so that vocational students can make career plans so that they can make career decisions in the future. Practical suggestions can be made to improve the quality of research, namely adding samples to get an overview of other regions so that they can be more generalized about the condition of vocational students in Indonesia. From the side of vocational school organizers, it is necessary to improve the school climate to make it easier for students to make career decisions, especially regarding physical dimensions. Physical environment, such as increasing programs or facilities that accommodate students to explore their interests and talents while providing information to broaden their horizons of information about future careers and provide direction and assistance to students in planning to decide career choices.

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