

International Career Guide for Vocational School Students: Facilitating Abroad Study Guidance and Global Adaptation

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to develop a study abroad career guidebook as a guidance and counseling tool for vocational high school students to enhance their readiness for global education and career competition. Addressing challenges in existing career guidance, the guidebook bridges information gaps on requirements, application procedures, and cultural adaptation strategies. Using the Research and Development (R&D) method, it was developed in six stages, including validation by experts in guidance and counseling, Indonesian language, study abroad, and design. The results indicate that the guidebook enhances students' understanding of application procedures, scholarship opportunities, and cultural adaptation. Expert validation confirms its effectiveness as a structured and comprehensive career guidance tool. Additionally, the guidebook is expected to strengthen family and counselor involvement in career planning, equipping students with the necessary knowledge and support to compete in the global job market.

Keywords: Cultural Adaptation, International Career Guidance Media, Student Career Planning, Vocational High School, Study Abroad

INTRODUCTION

Career guidance and counseling at the Vocational High School (SMK) level are important in preparing students to face the challenges of further education and the workforce, especially in global competition. Research shows that alignment between vocational curriculum and labor market demands is needed to ensure that education remains relevant and can improve students' career opportunities (Qurniawan & Jasmina, 2021; Rosina et al., 2021). In addition, integrating technical and non-technical skills in learning programs is essential to enable students to compete effectively in the job market and take advantage of further education opportunities (Prabowo, 2021; Purnama & Wagiran, 2020). Guidance programs that combine technical and non-technical skills can create students who are better prepared to face challenges abroad (Arghode et al., 2021).

The role of counselors in designing appropriate education and career plans for vocational high school students is crucial. Studies indicate that counselors and family involvement support significantly influence students' motivation and readiness to pursue further education or appropriate careers, especially abroad (Suryadi et al., 2018; Tentama & Riskiyana, 2020). However, limited resources, low student motivation, and lack of access to relevant information are major obstacles to vocational school career guidance services (Nasution &

Yusuf, 2021). Therefore, innovative guidance strategies are needed, such as the development of career planning guidebooks, which can help students access the information and motivation they need to consider studying or a career abroad (Potts, 2015; Qurniawan & Jasmina, 2021; Rakasiwi, 2023).

Although some vocational schools have begun to provide career counseling services, preparing students to continue their studies abroad remains a significant challenge. Some of the main obstacles are limited training for counselors to provide specific information about international education and student motivation variations (Hadi et al., 2021; Putri et al., 2022). In addition, connecting students' career interests with relevant international education opportunities is often a problem (Aryani et al., 2021). In this context, developing a comprehensive career guidebook can be a potential solution to provide practical information and strategies in the international education application process (Curtis & Ledgerwood, 2018).

Overall, vocational career counseling services in vocational schools still face significant gaps, especially related to students' needs to explore further education internationally. Various strategies have been developed, but the main challenges still need to be centered on the limited personalization of guidance and the lack of learning experiences relevant to the international education context (Boer & Bordoloi, 2023; Whatley & Raby, 2020).

Career counseling services in vocational schools in Indonesia face various challenges, especially in preparing students for higher education or careers at the global level. The main challenges faced are a need for more access to relevant information, limited specific training for counselors, and variations in student motivation that hinder the effectiveness of career guidance services (Barnes et al., 2022; Curtis & Ledgerwood, 2018; Prabowo, 2021). Research shows that most vocational high school students struggle to align their personal interests with

relevant career or educational choices abroad, which impacts students' readiness to compete in the global job market (Cheong et al., 2018; Fakunle, 2021; Gao, 2023; Putri et al., 2022; Reardon et al., 2022).

In addition, the gap between the skills taught in schools and the demands of the global industry necessitate a new approach to aligning the vocational education curriculum. Several studies suggest the need for collaboration between educational institutions and industry to increase the relevance of students' skills, as well as provide deeper insights into educational pathways and self-development that are to global needs (Purnama & Wagiran, 2020; Rosina et al., 2021; Suyatno et al., 2023), so that it can help students understand international education pathways, self-development skills, and study abroad application procedures (Aljaouni et al., 2020; Suryadi et al., 2018).

Furthermore, counselors with comprehensive understanding of international education have been shown to be important in facilitating student readiness. Studies reveal that counselors trained in cross-cultural guidance and understanding of international application procedures can provide more effective support for students (Papakota, 2016; Setiawan et al., 2024). Parental support also significantly motivates students to consider abroad education opportunities, especially when career guidance programs encourage family involvement (Suryadi et al., 2020; Whatley & Raby, 2020).

In this context, developing a career guidebook can be a solution to facilitate students' access to information on further education pathways, application procedures, and other specific requirements for studying abroad (Admiraal & Kittelsen Røberg, 2023; Aljaouni et al., 2020; Curtis & Ledgerwood, 2018). This guide can be even more relevant with validation from experts, including professional counselors and practitioners with international education experience, to ensure its effectiveness in supporting career guidance in vocational

schools (Blanco & Golik, 2024; Caselius & Mäkelä, 2022).

Several solutions from the scientific literature can be implemented to overcome obstacles in career guidance in vocational schools, especially in preparing students for international study. First, research emphasizes the importance of guidance tailored to students' needs. Career planning guidebooks designed based on regional needs and career preferences can provide students with more personalized and applicable guidance (Prabowo, 2021; Qurniawan & Jasmina, 2021). This guide should include practical information such as university application procedures, document requirements, and language qualifications, often major obstacles to student success (Aljaouni et al., 2020; Putri et al., 2022).

Another suggested strategy involves counselors with a deep understanding of international education. Counselors who understand the study abroad process, including cultural aspects and emotional support, can assist students in the transition process more effectively (Papakota, 2016; Suryadi et al., 2020). The literature also underscores that family involvement is important in motivating students, especially when the career guidance process integrates elements involving the family (Gao, 2023; Setiawan et al., 2024).

Solution-Focused Brief Counseling approaches, which emphasizes the development of self-confidence and self-regulation, can also be used to prepare students for academic and social challenges in an international context (Arsari et al., 2021; Novalia, 2023). This model focuses on increasing self-confidence and self-understanding, which is essential for students to face educational and social challenges abroad (Dalimunthe et al., 2023). This integrated approach involving personal guidance, family involvement, and a solution-based short-term guidance model has great potential to improve the readiness of vocational high school students to continue their international studies and face the global educational environment.

Research reveals that the curriculum in vocational high schools is often does not align with global skill requirements, which creates a gap in students' readiness to face the international market (Rosina et al., 2021; Suryadi et al., 2020). Overcoming obstacles in career guidance in vocational high schools, especially for international study readiness, requires specific solutions based on scientific literature. Career planning guidance tailored to students' needs, such as information on registration procedures, language requirements, and administrative documents, can reduce the barriers faced by students (Aljaouni et al., 2020; Kanstrén & Suutari, 2021; Putri et al., 2022). In addition, well-structured guidance can also provide information on cultural adaptation challenges, making it easier for students to adapt to cultural differences abroad (Curtis & Ledgerwood, 2018).

Although some vocational schools have adopted this approach in career guidance services, limitations remain in providing specific information about international education and culture. This barrier makes it difficult for students to understand the context of global education more deeply (Brattin et al., 2024; Papakota, 2016), which often becomes an obstacle in students' career decisions (Nweze & Okolie, 2014). In addition, counselor involvement and parental support also greatly influence student readiness, but more specific guidance on international education is still needed (Cheong et al., 2018; Setiawan et al., 2024).

Further research shows that an experience-based approach can improve students' career readiness. However, an integrated guidance model for international experiences, especially for vocational school students, still needs to be developed (Joseph-Richard & Conroy, 2024; Suyatno et al., 2023). This gap highlights that current career guidance needs to emphasize cultural adaptation preparation and the development of essential non-technical skills in a global context.

In addition, international career pathways need to be more accessible, especially for students from low socio-economic backgrounds. Studies suggest comprehensive and accessible career guidance to encourage international career exploration among these students (Blanco & Golik, 2024; Mok et al., 2024). Overall, the literature highlights the need for guidance strategies focusing on international career readiness and developing more tailored career planning guidance for vocational high school students in Indonesia.

This study aims to develop an integrated career guidance model to improve the readiness of Indonesian vocational high school students to face international studies and global careers. Previous studies have shown that although vocational education plays an important role in meeting workforce needs, existing curricula often need to match global skill demands (Prabowo, 2021; Qurniawan & Jasmina, 2021; Werdiningsih et al., 2021). In addition, cultural adaptation skills essential for students to interact in an international environment often need to be improved in existing guidance programs (Cheong et al., 2018; Suryadi et al., 2020). Therefore, a guidance model that integrates a personal approach is needed to bridge this gap and help students face increasingly complex global challenges (Admiraal & Kittelsen Røberg, 2023; Joseph-Richard & Conroy, 2024).

The novelty of this study lies in the guidance approach, which aims to provide more practical and relevant guidance with the support of counselors who have a deep understanding of international education. Previous studies have shown that a guidance approach that prioritizes adjustment to students' needs can improve students' readiness to explore career options and further education (Aryani et al., 2021; Fernandes et al., 2023; Kanbar et al., 2024). In addition, this model integrates non-technical skills training and cultural adaptation to help students face challenges in a multicultural educational environment

(Al-Saadi et al., 2020; Blanco & Golik, 2024; Mok et al., 2024).

The scope of this research includes developing and validating a career planning guidance module suitable for vocational high school students. This module will be tested for its effectiveness in improving students' readiness for international study through a series of evaluations by experts in the field of vocational education, counselors, and industry representatives. The aim is for this module to serve as a practical guide that can be adopted by various vocational education institutions, increase students' access to information on international education, and support students in planning broader career pathways (Aljaouni et al., 2020; Burke & Ceo-DiFrancesco, 2022; Rakasiwi, 2023).

MATERIALS & METHODS

This study used the Research and Development (R&D) approach (Gall et al., 2003), which was adapted to produce certain products and test the validity of the products to be produced (Sugiyono, 2019). The product produced a study abroad career planning guidebook as a medium for career guidance and counseling services for students of Vocational High School (SMK) 2 Gorontalo. According to (Sugiyono, 2019), there are 11 steps in development research, namely: (1) potential and problems, (2) collecting information, (3) product design, (4) design validation, (5) design revision, (6) product creation, (7) product trial 1, (8) product revision 1, (9) usage trial, (10) product revision 2, (11) mass product.

However, this research is limited to 6 (six) stages: (1) potential and problems, (2) information collection, (3) product design, (4) design validation, (5) design refinement, and (6) Product creation. The subjects in this study involved one guidance and counseling expert, one abroad graduate, one Indonesian language expert, and one guidance and counseling media expert. A qualitative descriptive analysis technique was employed to process data gathered from

reviews and validations provided by guidance and counseling experts, abroad graduates, Indonesian language experts, and design experts. This analysis technique categorized information from qualitative data in the form of criticism, suggestions, and expert comments, which have been provided in descriptive form.

RESULT

Potential and Problems

Based on observations at school and interviews with guidance and counseling teachers, several problems were found: SMK graduates are typically prepared to enter the workforce immediately after graduation. However, motivation to plan to study abroad is still very rarely provided. Students often need clarification when deciding between continuing their studies to college or working directly. In addition, there needs to be more career guidance and counseling service media, especially regarding career planning related to studying abroad.

Data Collection

During this stage, the initial draft of the abroadabroad study planning guidebook was compiled by prioritizing information obtained through interviews and observations discussed in the potential and problem analysis stage. In addition, a literature review was conducted on abroad study guidebooks and information regarding scholarship acceptance and international students at related abroad universities. This step aimed to provide comprehensive descriptions and information for researchers in compiling the abroadabroad study planning guidebook for futher development.

Product Design

At this stage, the author compiled the initial design of the abroad study planning guidebook, including the design concept and content. This guidebook is designed with attractive color schemes and visual images to maintain students' interest in reading. The material is presented in a light and

interesting manner while maintaining a focus on career planning, ensuring that readers receive comprehensive information related to planning for studying abroad.

The first chapter introduces career planning in general, including important aspects that must be considered. The next sections provide information on technical preparations for studying abroad, complemented by stories from graduates who have successfully studied abroad. The final section offers information about various scholarships available for students interested in continuing their studies abroad, including detailed explanations and direct links to the official websites of the scholarship programs.

In addition, the guidebook's visual design, including the front and back covers, was designed to be as attractive as possible by highlighting cultural elements from the scholarship destination countries. The back cover also includes brief information about the author. Overall, this guidebook is designed to be visually attractive and serve as a rich source of information for students planning to study abroad.

Expert Validation

Following the completion of the product design, the author conducted an expert validation test involving several experts, namely (1) guidance and counseling experts, (2) Indonesian language experts, (3) foreign graduate experts, and (4) design experts. The steps in this validation process included:

a. Pre-validation

The author consulted with the supervising lecturer regarding the prepared guidebook. This consultation aimed to obtain input and direction for further development before the guidebook was validated by experts in their respective fields.

b. Expert validation instrument

1) The instruments prepared for expert testing in each respective field are outlined below: Guidance and Counseling Expert Instrument

The Guidance and Counseling Expert validated the guidebook in aspects of abroad study career planning, alignment with career guidance and counseling service tasks, and the clarity of the material presented.

2) Indonesian Language Expert Instrument
The Indonesian Language Expert validated the guidebook's foreword, content, title formatting, and other information to ensure compliance with proper Indonesian language rules.

3) International Graduate Practitioner Validation Instrument

The international graduate validated the suitability of the material and content of the abroad study career planning guidebook, especially regarding information on preparation and a list of abroad undergraduate scholarships, because they have a deep perspective from personal experience as abroad graduates.

4) Design Expert Instruments (guidance and counseling media)

The design expert validated the cover design, image layout, attractiveness of color and shape, and practicality of the abroad study career planning guidebook. In addition, he also assessed the suitability of the design with the material contained in the guidebook.

c. Expert validation

Following consultation with the supervisor and receiving a recommendation to conduct an expert validation test, the guidebook underwent a thorough validation by experts. This validation aimed to identify deficiencies that need to be corrected in the guidebook. Validation was carried out by reviewing four main components: material aspects, language presentation, presentation of images and design, and the relevance of content and material to career planning for abroad study.

Design Revision

Following the completion of the validation process, the next step was to revise the abroad study career planning guidebook as a

medium for career guidance and counseling services. This revision was based on the validation results to improve the guidebook product by considering the aspects evaluated through the validation instrument. Data obtained from experts during the validation process served as a reference to improve the guidebook, ensuring it met the expected quality standards. The data obtained from the expert validation results for improving this guidebook were as follows:

a. Guidance and Counseling Expert Validation Results

1) In the career planning aspect in Chapter III, it was recommended that a brief description of each aspect of the career planning be added. In addition, information regarding the requirements for abroad study and available scholarship sources needed to be included.

2) The title of Chapter III, "Initial Preparation," was changed to "Technical Preparation."

a) Indonesian Language Expert Validation Results

1) Appearance of guidance and counseling media: The design of the guidebook needs to reflect the guidance and counseling media fully. It is recommended that the appearance be adjusted to better reflect the function of the book as a guidance and counseling tool, such as adding visual elements or icons related to career planning

2) Foreword: The foreword needs to direct the expected career goals, making it difficult to identify the career goals to be achieved. It is recommended that the foreword highlight career planning goals in the context of abroad study.

3) Expectations and Realities at SMK Negeri 2 Gorontalo: The difference between the desired expectations and the reality at SMK Negeri 2 Gorontalo needs to be clearly illustrated. It is better to add a more concrete explanation or example of the current situation at the

school and how this guide is expected to help.

- 4) Website Link Color: It is recommended that website links be displayed in a color other than black to distinguish them from plain text, making it easier for readers to recognize them as active links.

b) Design Expert Validation Results

- 1) Cover Image: It is recommended that the image on the book cover be adjusted to an object that is relevant to the title, better reflecting the contents and objectives of the guide.
- 2) Replacing Animated Images: Animated images should be replaced with original images to provide a more professional and realistic impression for the target readers of this guidebook.
- 3) Image Adjustment in Each Chapter: Each chapter should feature images that are appropriate to the topics discussed in the chapter, helping readers understand the content better and maintain visual consistency.

c) International Graduate Validation Results

- 1) Addition of Important Points: It is recommended to add some additional

relevant points, such as important links and information about unique things that are only found abroad (e.g., culture shock, stereotypes, fun facts, and personal experiences). This will enrich the information and prepare readers with more realistic insights.

- 2) English Certification Explanation Link: In the section discussing the types of English certification, it is recommended to add a link that explains the differences between these types of certifications. This will help readers gain a deeper understanding of the language requirements.

Based on the data obtained from the expert validation stage regarding the guidebook product, revisions were made to the aspects assessed by the validators using the expert validation instrument. The validation results showed that several inputs and improvements were still required to perfect the final product of the guidebook. A description of the validation results is presented in Table 1, Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4, each of which includes aspects assessed by each expert.

Table 1. Results of Validation and Revision by Guidance and Counseling Experts

Validation Results		Revision
Assessment Aspects	Suggestions	
Material in chapter III	In Chapter III, briefly describe each aspect of career planning to make it easier for readers to understand the important points. In addition, it is advisable to add information about study abroad requirements and available scholarship sources. This will help readers prepare more comprehensively and provide a clearer picture of scholarship requirements and opportunities for study abroad.	The material has been revised and added to based on suggestions. Brief descriptions of each aspect of career planning, study abroad requirements, and scholarship sources are now included in Chapter III. These changes can be found in the latest version of the revised guide.
Title in Chapter III	The title of Chapter III has been changed from "Initial Preparation" to "Technical Preparation" to reflect better the focus on the technical aspects required in planning a study abroad.	The title of Chapter III has been changed as suggested from "Initial Preparation" to "Technical Preparation." This change can be seen in the revised version of the guide.

The validation and revision results in Table 1 are the validation results from the Guidance and Counseling Expert, who recorded several comments and suggestions.

The expert suggested that Chapter III cover aspects of career planning, accompanied by a brief description of each aspect. In addition, the expert recommended adding

abroad study requirements and information on abroad study scholarship sources. The expert also suggested that the title of Chapter III be changed from "Initial

Preparation" to "Technical Preparation." The author has revised and added these suggestions to the updated guidebook.

Table 2. Results of Validation and Revision by Indonesian Language Experts

Validation Results		Revision
Assessment Aspects	Suggestion	
Use of website link colors	It is recommended that website links be displayed in a color other than black to make it easier for readers to recognize them as active links.	It has been revised according to suggestions, and these changes can be seen in the website links section in Chapter IV of the updated guidebook.

In Table 2, the validation results from the Indonesian Language Expert provide several suggestions and comments, namely: (1) the writing technique on the cover of the guidebook is not yet very appropriate because it does not reflect the appearance of a guidance and counseling media; (2) the foreword is considered not to sufficiently highlight the career goals to be achieved, making it difficult for readers to identify the specific objectives of this guidebook; (3) the objectives of the guidebook do not clearly describe the desired expectations and existing realities, especially at SMK Negeri 2 Gorontalo; and (4) regarding the website links, it is suggested that they not be black to improve visibility.

The changes made based on this suggestion are changing the color of the website links to improve visibility for readers. However, some suggestions were not implemented, namely: (1) foreword: the author maintained the existing foreword because it was considered appropriate and concise, providing a brief, relevant explanation; and (2) the purpose of the guidebook: the author chose not to change the purpose section, as existing explanation was considered appropriate to the content of the material to be presented in the guidebook. These revisions have been made according to the author's considerations, and these changes can be seen in the latest version of the guidebook.

Table 3. Results of Design Expert Validation and Revision

Validation Results		Revision
Assessment Aspects	Suggestions	
Use of animation on book covers	Replacing animated images with real images is recommended to make the guide appear more professional and relevant to readers.	View before revision:  After revision: 

In Table 3, the validation results from the Design Expert provide several suggestions and comments, namely: (1) cover image: it is suggested that the image on the book cover be adjusted to an object that is relevant to the book title; (2) animated image: it is suggested that the animated image to be replaced with an original image for a more professional appearance; and (3) adjustment of images in each chapter: it is suggested that each chapter use images that are appropriate to the topic being discussed, to increase visual relevance to the material. According to input from design experts, the author has improved several points, such as

replacing animated images with original images. However, suggestions related to adjusting the image on the cover to the target object of the book title still need to be implemented. The author maintained the image on the cover because the current appearance reflects the target object without adding a photo of a particular university. This was decided because some scholarship programs are not limited to one particular university, so the author felt that displaying the culture or tourist attractions related to the country was the right and representative choice for the cover of the guidebook.

Table 4. Results of Validation and Revision of International Graduates

Validation Results		Revision
Assessment Aspects	Suggestion	
Contents of the material in the career planning guidebook	It is recommended to add some important points that can enrich the guidebook, such as: Important Links: Links to sites or sources relevant to abroad study preparation. Unique Things Abroad: Information about things often found only abroad, such as culture shock experiences, common stereotypes, interesting facts, and personal experiences.	The guidebook has been revised according to validator requests. The additions include real experiences of validators while studying for their Master's in Australia, including experiences related to culture shock, stereotypes, and interesting facts that are relevant to readers. These additions will provide deeper insights and give readers a realistic picture of studying abroad.

In Table 4, the validation results from International Graduates provide some suggestions and comments. The validator suggested that this guidebook include additional important information, such as relevant links and information about unique things only found abroad, including culture shock experiences, stereotypes, interesting facts, and personal experiences. The author has added this information to the guidebook, according to the ability to find additional sources, to make it richer and more realistic. In addition, the validator suggested adding an explanation link in the English certification section. However, the author decided not to add the link because the existing explanation was clear and simple enough to make it easy for students to understand. As a reference, the source of

material regarding English certification has been listed in the bibliography.

Product creation

After going through the validation process by experts and completing the revision of the abroad study career planning guidebook product as a medium for career guidance and counseling services, the author proceeded to the next stage, product creation. This stage aims to produce a final version of the guidebook that is ready to use, considering all suggestions and improvements implemented during the validation process.

DISCUSSION

Detailed information on application steps, scholarship types, and administrative

requirements provides students with a better understanding, especially in dealing with the challenges of language certification and document completion (Campbell & Neff, 2020; Curtis & Ledgerwood, 2018). This aligns with the literature, which highlights that limited information is a major barrier for students from developing countries in accessing international education (Al-Saadi et al., 2020; Gao, 2023; Romero-Hall, 2020). Hulukati et al. (2024) found that media such as pocket guides can enrich students' insights and motivate them to participate in further education. In addition, the study Wantu et al. (2023) supports the importance of self-management technical guidance for vocational high school students to help them adapt to complex international requirements

A textbook-based approach allows students to plan more independently, with access to practical information and alums experiences that clarify the benefits and challenges of studying abroad. Studies by Chankseliani (2018) and Ruth et al. (2018) support this advantage, showing that a real-life experience-based approach is more capable of increasing student readiness and interest in continuing education abroad than the lecture method (Akıllı et al., 2022; Lei, 2023; Pilz et al., 2016). Relevant career information is important in helping students understand the path of further education that suits their interests and talents (Ibrahim et al., 2022).

This guide has significant potential to increase the accessibility of international education, especially for students from limited economic backgrounds. With its systematic and structured guide, students can understand the preparation for studying abroad in detail, increasing readiness and reducing anxiety in facing complex administrative processes (Earnest et al., 2015; Vasojević, 2022). In addition, this guide can be adopted by schools and counselors to provide career guidance that is more focused on students' needs in facing globalization, strengthening readiness to compete for international scholarships

(Chuan & Ibsen, 2021; Si, 2023; Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia & Pilz, 2022).

This guidebook will significantly assist vocational high school students in facing cultural adaptation challenges and build psychological resilience during study abroad. It facilitates students' understanding of social norms, cultural expectations, and relevant communication skills, which have been shown to reduce anxiety and increase students' confidence in adapting (Çetin et al., 2017; Edmonds, 2010; Marx & Moss, 2011). Hulukati et al. (2019) research supports that video-based guidance media can increase students' motivation to adapt. The findings of Wantu et al. (2023), who developed a self-management module to improve students' readiness to face academic challenges, show that this type of guide is very helpful in building students' psychological resilience. These findings align with studies showing that pre-departure training can reduce adaptation barriers, especially for students less familiar with cultural differences (Gladkova, 2017; Khairina et al., 2020).

This guide has advantages compared to traditional guidance methods, which are usually limited to general information. By incorporating psychological resilience development strategies, this guide strengthens students' ability to cope with academic and social challenges in a foreign environment. Research by Chu & Zhu (2023) and Trigueros et al. (2020) supports these findings, showing that psychological resilience plays a significant role in successful cross-cultural adaptation and reducing academic stress. This guide provides a holistic approach rarely found in conventional tutoring methods (Earnest et al., 2015; Işıkgöz et al., 2023; Smith et al., 2014).

These findings underscore the importance of cultural adaptation guidance for vocational high school students in preparing themselves mentally and socially to face stress during study abroad. Psychological resilience reduces stress and supports students' social integration in the destination

country (Dresen et al., 2019; Edmonds, 2010). Overall, this guide is important for building students' adaptation skills and mental resilience, supporting self-readiness for meaningful and sustainable international education (Conner et al., 2016; Dian-jian, 2022; Jin et al., 2022).

The developed guide also improves vocational high school student's career planning skills. This guide helps students set career goals, identify the skills needed, and understand the steps to achieve their desired career. These results align with research showing that instruction-based guidance can improve vocational students' career maturity by providing relevant practical steps (Ismail et al., 2022; Prabowo et al., 2023). Fathullah et al. (2022) added that technology can also be utilized in career guidance to align students' skills with the latest industry trends. Wantu et al. (2023) findings on self-management development modules confirmed that module-based materials could support students in setting and achieving career goals more effectively. In addition, this guidance encourages students' awareness of the relationship between skills and industry demands, which is important for job readiness in the technology era (Kong, 2024; Werdiningsih et al., 2021).

Conventional guidance methods often provide only general socialization. However, in contrast to the practical approach that involves students in active planning, this guidance helps students make career decisions based on their skills, making it more informative, realistic, and adaptive to the careers students face in international studies (Lent & Brown, 2013). These findings support the argument that career planning skills based on active instruction can strengthen students' career maturity, especially in the context of vocational education that requires specific skills (Hansen et al., 2016; Li & Lindo, 2022). In this context, this guide provides an advantage by connecting students to the latest industry trends and technological needs, enabling students to face better the

global job market competition (Liu, 2023; Werdiningsih et al., 2021).

This guide offers important implications for developing vocational high school student's career planning skills, especially in improving students' readiness to face the demands of modern industry. With comprehensive support, this guide helps students thoroughly understand the career planning process, build self-confidence, and prepare themselves to adapt to dynamic job market changes (Pusriawan & Soenarto, 2019; Suryadi et al., 2020). In addition, this guide supports the involvement of parents, counselors, and teachers in students' career planning, providing more specific motivation and direction in achieving career goals (Afdal et al., 2014; Nasution et al., 2021). It guide also connects vocational education and industry needs, strengthening students' readiness to enter the workforce competitively in the era of globalization (Sulistiobudi & Kadiyono, 2023).

Parental support helps students set career goals and increases their confidence in choosing the right career path. This is consistent with research by Neuenschwander & Hofmann (2021), which states that family support plays an important role in students' career decision-making. In addition, family support also reduces students' anxiety in choosing a career, in line with the findings of Chasanah & Salim (2019), which show that students' self-efficacy in career planning increases with parental support (Rogers et al., 2016).

The role of counselors in providing relevant career information also contributes to student readiness. The role of counselors in providing information that aligns with interests and job market trends supports students' readiness to enter college or the workforce (Hulukati et al., 2024). Counselors who understand students' interests and job market needs can help students make more informed career decisions, as shown by Koçak et al. (2021). This finding is reinforced by research by Parikh-Fox et al. (2020), which shows that counselors play an important role in

improving students' readiness to enter college and the workforce. Counselor support in understanding career trends allows vocational students to understand the skills needed in the global workforce (Kuo et al., 2022; Sells et al., 2011).

The integration of family and counselor involvement in career planning has a profound impact on students' career readiness. Emotional and motivational support from the family and professional guidance from counselors help students understand career opportunities, strengthen self-confidence, and minimize confusion in making career decisions (Suryawati et al., 2021; Wong et al., 2019). This approach to career guidance is supported by research by Fouad et al. (2010), which shows that the combination of support from both parties provides students with more comprehensive guidance in overcoming career obstacles in the future. Guidance that combines the roles of family and counselors can serve as the foundation for a more effective career guidance program in vocational high schools, strengthening students' readiness to face a dynamic job market.

This study has several limitations that affect the results and their implications. First, the guidebook developed is still focused on one institution (SMK Negeri 2 Gorontalo), so the generalization of the results to other schools still needs to be improved. Second, the validation of the guide involved only a small number of experts, which could affect the variation of perspectives in assessing the development of the guidebook. Third, the study addressed only six stages of the Research and Development (R&D) process, which may not have fully refined the guide product.

Future research is recommended to expand the needs analysis to other Vocational High School Education institutions. In addition, the guide will be tested in various schools and regions in Indonesia to improve generalization and provide insights into a broader context. Research can also involve more experts and student representatives in the validation process to enrich input.

Furthermore, the development of career guides can cover all stages of R&D to ensure more optimal results. Future research is also expected to integrate digital methods in career guides, such as mobile applications or online platforms, to increase the accessibility and interactivity of the guide for students.

CONCLUSION

This study successfully developed a study abroad career guidebook as a guidance and counseling media for vocational high school students to pursue further education abroad. Validation and expert evaluations showed that the differences before and after validation gave students an understanding of the steps for studying abroad readiness, types of scholarships, administrative requirements, language certification, completeness of documents, readiness to face cultural adaptation challenges, and development of career planning skills. Through a student-based approach, this guide also reinforces the role of counselors and family support in assisting with more personalized career planning. This guidebook is expected to serve as a valuable reference that can be widely adopted in career guidance in vocational high schools, preparing students to face increasingly complex global competition and helping them achieve better international education opportunities.

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