

The Relationship between Assertive Skills and Career Maturity in High School Students

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the relationship between assertiveness skills and career maturity of high school students. This research method uses a quantitative approach with a correlational research type. The research subjects were students in grades X and XI in a high school environment. Sampling was carried out using a simple random sampling technique with a sample size of 258 students. The research instruments used were assertiveness skills scales and career maturity scales that have been tested for validity and reliability. Data analysis used simple linear regression analysis with the help of the SPSS Version 25 program. The results of the simple regression analysis showed a calculated t value $> t$ table, namely $21.421 > 1.969$ and a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, which means there is a positive and significant relationship between assertiveness skills and career maturity. High assertiveness skills have been shown to have a positive impact on students' career maturity levels. This study provides implications that guidance and counseling interventions that focus on increasing assertiveness can help students make more mature career decisions that are in accordance with their potential and interests.

Keywords: *Assertiveness, Career Maturity, High School Students*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan ketrampilan asertif dengan kematangan karier siswa SMA. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan tipe penelitian korelasional. Subjek penelitian adalah siswa kelas X dan XI di lingkungan Sekolah Menengah Atas. Pengambilan sampel dilakukan menggunakan teknik simple random sampling dengan jumlah sampel 258 siswa. Instrumen penelitian yang digunakan adalah skala ketrampilan asertif dan skala kematangan karier yang telah diuji validitas dan reliabilitasnya. Analisis data menggunakan analisis regresi linier sederhana dengan bantuan program SPSS Versi 25. Hasil analisis regresi sederhana menunjukkan nilai t hitung $> t$ tabel, yaitu $21,421 > 1,969$ dan nilai signifikansi $0,000 < 0,05$, yang berarti terdapat hubungan positif dan signifikan antara ketrampilan asertif dengan kematangan karier. Ketrampilan asertif yang tinggi terbukti memiliki dampak positif terhadap tingkat kematangan karier siswa. Studi ini memberikan implikasi bahwa intervensi bimbingan dan konseling yang berfokus pada peningkatan asertif dapat membantu siswa membuat keputusan karir yang lebih matang yang sesuai dengan potensi dan minat mereka.

Kata kunci: *Asertif, Kematangan Karier, Siswa SMA*

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INTRODUCTION

Careers play a crucial role in human life, especially for high school students who are in a crucial phase of future planning. A career is a long-term professional journey encompassing a series of positions an individual takes, from education to work experience, developing over time (Super &

Super, 1982). Careers can be a means of self-actualization, fulfilling economic needs, and establishing a personal identity (Hidayah et al., 2023). Careers support a more meaningful and productive individual life. Therefore, career selection and planning should begin in high school (Umam, 2021).

High school students are in the adolescent phase, facing various developmental tasks, one of which is achieving economic independence (Havighurst, 1953). Adolescents are expected to make realistic and responsible career decisions. This aligns with Super's (1980) theory of career development, which states that during the exploration stage (ages 15–24), individuals begin to explore various career options through information seeking, considering interests, self-worth, opportunities, and making non-binding decisions. However, determining career choices is a challenge for high school students. A common challenge is confusion about career direction, related to future education and employment options (Kusumawati, 2020).

Career maturity is a crucial aspect of the career planning process. Career maturity refers to an individual's success in completing career development tasks according to their stage of career development (Super, 1985). Career maturity encompasses four aspects: career planning, career exploration, career information, and decision-making (Super, 1985). Students need career maturity to be able to plan their future with more direction. However, in practice, some high school students are unable to complete their career development tasks, indicating a low level of career maturity. Common problems include uncertainty in choosing a study program, low motivation to seek information, and not yet deciding on further education (Rhero, 2021). Research by Agustin (2022) shows that 80% of students are confused about planning their future, and 25% are unsure of their next steps after graduation.

Students' low career maturity is caused by a lack of awareness of their own potential, unclear major choices, doubts about their abilities, a lack of career information and parental support, and confusion about choosing a school even though they already know their major of interest (Rhero, 2021). Low career maturity can hinder career success by triggering doubts about choosing education and future employment (Febrianti & Sarajar, 2024). Career immaturity also impacts cases in higher education, such as changing majors or dropping out due to feeling unsuitable (Umami et al., 2022). Therefore, it is crucial for students to have the ability to prepare for their careers more thoroughly. Students with high career maturity tend to be better prepared to make decisions, plan for the future, and utilize information to achieve career goals (Krisphianti & Nurwulansari, 2022).

Based on the results of interviews conducted on September 25, 2024 with 12 students at SMA Negeri 3 Klaten, it was found that there were various levels of readiness in planning a career, 25% of students already had an idea of the career plan they would pursue. However, it was found that there were students who still felt doubtful and confused about making choices after graduating from high school, 16.7% of students did not know their interests and talents, 8.3% of students felt confused about making choices after graduating from high school whether to continue college or work, 8.3% of students did not want to continue college but felt confused about where to work because they did not have a plan, 8.3% of students were afraid that their plans after graduating from school would not be appropriate, 16.7% of students felt doubtful that they would not be able to study in the desired direction, were afraid that the job would not match what they expected to choose, already knew their interests but were still unsure about the major they would choose and 8.3% of students experienced differences of opinion about careers between their own desires and their parents' desires. In addition, there are 8.3% of students who experience a misalignment between their interests and their desired direction, so they feel afraid of not being able to enter the desired direction, afraid of failure and afraid of not meeting expectations.

Career maturity is supported by two factors: internal factors (factors from within oneself) in the form of intelligence, interests, talents, and individual attitudes, while external factors (factors from outside or environmental influences) include family socioeconomic status, family support and expectations, friendships, and the sociocultural environment (Chandra & Wae, 2023). One internal factor or factor originating from within an individual that can support career maturity is an individual's attitude in the form of assertiveness. In addition, referring to the opinion of Super (1985), one aspect that influences an individual's career maturity is the ability to make decisions. Making decisions regarding a career for an individual is important and is closely related to assertiveness and openness. Therefore, to support career maturity, an individual requires assertiveness.

Assertiveness helps students increase self-confidence, understand themselves better, and strengthen their ability to make appropriate decisions in various situations (Sari et al., 2023). Assertiveness can help students achieve career maturity. Individuals who are assertive will find it easier to make career-related decisions without feeling anxious about the decisions they make, can think realistically about the consequences of their decisions, believe in their abilities, are able to resolve differences of opinion with others, and dare to ask others for career-related information. Therefore, it is important for a student to have assertiveness skills to achieve career maturity. This is supported by the results of research conducted by Sudirman & Endriani (2021) which shows a relationship between assertive behavior and students' career planning. Students who have assertive behavior are able to understand themselves and can improve their career planning according to their abilities so that the desired goals can be achieved. Assertiveness also plays an important role in building positive relationships with others and can improve interpersonal communication skills, thereby opening up opportunities to acquire new, previously unknown knowledge that can support achievements in academic and non-academic fields and provide benefits in social relationships (Oktaviana & Wiryosutomo, 2022).

Career maturity is characterized by the ability to understand, plan, and make appropriate career decisions (Prilyanti & Supriyantini, 2021). Super (1985) states that decision-making is one indicator of career maturity. Career decision-making is closely related to openness and assertiveness. Furthermore, career maturity is influenced by internal factors including intelligence, interests, talents, and individual attitudes, as well as external factors including socioeconomic status, family support, friendships, and the sociocultural environment (Chandra & Wae, 2023). One factor supporting career maturity is an individual's attitude, namely assertiveness. Assertiveness is an individual's ability to act decisively, honestly, and positively in expressing feelings and needs, without anxiety and without disregarding the rights of others (Alberti & Emmons, 2017). Assertiveness skills include 5 aspects, namely acting according to one's own wishes, expressing needs and feelings honestly and comfortably, defending oneself, stating opinions and not ignoring the rights of others (Alberti & Emmons, 2017). Students who have assertiveness skills.

METHOD

The research method used in this study is a quantitative approach. Quantitative research is used to examine a specific population or sample through data collection using instruments, which are then analyzed statistically to describe a condition and test predetermined hypotheses (Sugiyono, 2018). The type of research used is correlational quantitative research. This type of correlational research was chosen because this study aims to determine the relationship or contribution of assertiveness skills to career maturity.

The subjects in this study were 258 students in grades 10 and 11 at SMA Negeri 3 Klaten. The researchers used simple random sampling and the Slovin formula to determine the sample size. This technique was chosen because each student had an equal opportunity to be selected as a sample in the study, ensuring that the research results were more representative of the population.

The instruments in this study consisted of two scales: the assertiveness scale and the career maturity scale. Both scales were developed by the researcher, with the assertiveness scale based on the theory of Alberti and Emmons (2017). Validity and reliability tests revealed 41 items as valid with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.928. Meanwhile, the career maturity scale was based on Super's theory (1985). Validity and reliability tests revealed 37 items as valid with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.933. Data analysis was conducted using simple linear regression analysis to determine the contribution of assertiveness skills to students' career maturity. Prior to the simple linear regression analysis, the data were first tested using classical assumption tests, namely the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test to determine whether the data were normally distributed and the ANOVA (Linearity Test) to ensure a linear relationship between the two variables. The analysis process was conducted using SPSS version 25 software.

The reliability test used in this study uses Cronbach's Alpha analysis with the help of the SPSS version 25 application. The testing criteria are if the Cronbach's alpha value is more than (> 0.60), then the research instrument is said to be reliable. The instrument is said to be reliable if the reliability coefficient is between 0 and 1.00, where the scale will be more reliable if the coefficient is closer to

1.00. The technique used to test normality is the one sample Kolmogrov-Smirnov method using SPSS software version 25. Data is considered to be normally distributed if the significance value obtained is greater than 0.05 (> 0.05). The criteria used in the linearity test are: if the significance value in the deviation from linearity section is greater than 0.05, then the relationship between the variables is said to be linear. Conversely, if the significance value in the deviation from linearity section is less than 0.05, then the relationship between the variables is nonlinear.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis of the assertiveness variable yielded a maximum score of 164, a minimum score of 77, a mean score of 123.03, and a standard deviation of 18.261. The data analyzed using descriptive statistics were then grouped into intervals based on the scores obtained. In general, students' assertiveness was classified into three categories: low, medium, and high. Details of these categories are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Categorization of Assertive Skills

| Kategori | Interval | Frekuensi | Persentase |
|----------|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Rendah | $X < 104,77$ | 37 | 14% |
| Sedang | $104,77 \leq X < 141,29$ | 173 | 67% |
| Tinggi | $X > 141,29$ | 48 | 19% |

The assertiveness ability categorization table presented above shows that 37 students (14%) had low assertiveness, while 173 students (67%) had moderate assertiveness, and 48 students (19%) had high assertiveness. Based on these data, it can be concluded that the majority of students at SMA Negeri 3 Klaten have moderate assertiveness. Therefore, it can be concluded that students generally have fairly good assertiveness.

Meanwhile, for the career maturity variable, the maximum score was 148, the minimum score was 73, the average score (mean) was 118.91, and the standard deviation was 16.570. The data, which had been analyzed using descriptive statistics, were then grouped into intervals based on the scores obtained. In general, students' career maturity was classified into three categories: low, moderate, and high. The details of these categories are presented in the following table:

Table 2. Career Maturity Categorization

| Kategori | Interval | Frekuensi | Persentase |
|----------|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Rendah | $X < 102,33$ | 46 | 18% |
| Sedang | $102,33 \leq X < 135,49$ | 165 | 64% |
| Tinggi | $X > 135,49$ | 47 | 18% |

From the career maturity categorization table presented above, it can be seen that 46 students have career maturity skills in the low category with a percentage of 18%, while 165 students are in the medium category with a percentage of 64% and 47 students show high career maturity with a percentage of 18%. Based on these data, it can be concluded that the majority of students at SMA Negeri 3 Klatem have a moderate level of career maturity. Thus, it can be concluded that in general, students at SMA Negeri 3 Klatem have a good level of career maturity.

Classical Assumption Test

The normality test in this study was conducted using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on the residual values. The analysis results showed a significance value of 0.200 (> 0.05), thus concluding that the residual data for the assertiveness and career maturity variables are normally distributed.

Table 2. Normality Test Results

| Nilai Residual | Kolmogrov-Sminorv | Sig | Keterangan |
|---|-------------------|------|------------|
| Kemampuan asertif dan kematangan karier | 0,200 | 0,05 | Normal |

Based on the results of the linearity test, a significance value of 0.789 (>0.05) was obtained for the Deviation from Linearity. It can be concluded that there is a linear relationship between the career maturity and assertiveness variables. Therefore, it meets the linearity assumption and is suitable for further analysis using regression analysis.

Table 3. Linearity Test Results

| Variabel | Deviation from Linearity | Sig | Keterangan |
|---|--------------------------|------|------------|
| Kemampuan asertif dan kematangan karier | 0,789 | 0,05 | Linear |

Simple Regression Analysis

The results of the simple regression analysis indicate that assertiveness significantly influences career maturity, as indicated by a calculated t -value (21.421) $>$ t -table (1.969) and a significance value of 0.000 (<0.05). Therefore, it can be concluded that assertiveness contributes to career maturity in students at SMA Negeri 3 Klaten. This means that the higher a student's assertiveness, the higher their level of career maturity.

Table 4. Simple Regression Analysis Results

| Variabel | t | Sig | Keterangan |
|---|--------|-------|------------|
| Kemampuan asertif dan kematangan karier | 21,421 | 0,000 | Signifikan |

Based on the coefficient of determination results in Table 6, the R-square value was 0.642, indicating that the assertiveness variable contributed 64.2% to the career maturity variable. The remaining 35.8% was influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

Results of the Coefficient of Determination

Table 5. Results of the Coefficient of Determination

| Model Summary | | |
|---|----------|------------|
| Model | R Square | Kontribusi |
| Kemampuan Asertif Dan Kematangan Karier | 0,642 | 64,2% |

Discussion

The research results indicate that the assertiveness skills of students at SMA Negeri 3 Klaten are in the moderate category. Referring to the theory of Alberti and Emmons (2017), it is shown that most students at SMA Negeri 3 Klaten are able to act assertively, honestly, and positively in expressing their feelings and needs, without anxiety and without disregarding the rights of others, only under certain circumstances. Assertiveness is an important interpersonal skill for every individual. Research by Sulistiawati, Razak, & Alwi (2024) indicates that individuals with assertive skills are better able to face challenges and communicate effectively.

Furthermore, the career maturity of students at SMA Negeri 3 Klaten is also in the moderate category. This finding indicates that most students at SMA Negeri 3 Klaten have good career maturity. This aligns with Super's (1985) theory, which states that individuals with moderate to high career maturity are able to plan their careers, explore careers, utilize information about the world of work, and make career decisions. Research by Wahyuningsih, Nugroho, and Donosuka (2023) shows a significant relationship between career maturity and decision-making; individuals with career maturity are more likely to make career decisions.

A simple regression analysis showed that assertiveness significantly influences the career maturity of students at SMA Negeri 3 Klaten. This indicates that the higher a student's assertiveness, the higher their level of career maturity. These findings suggest that assertiveness plays a crucial role in students' career decision-making process (Alberti & Emmons, 2017).

Students with assertiveness tend to be better able to reach their full potential, make decisions, plan life goals, and build positive social relationships (Hasanah et al., 2022; Muliati, 2021). Conversely, students with low levels of assertiveness are more likely to experience miscommunication, delays in decision-making, and disrupted group dynamics, creating a less conducive environment (Hasanah et al., 2022). This results in low career maturity, which then hinders career success by triggering doubts about choosing future education and employment (Febrianti & Sarajar, 2024). According to Albert Bandura's social learning theory, individual behavior develops through observation, modeling, and reinforcement from the social environment. Support from parents, teachers, and peers serves as reinforcement that increases self-efficacy in assertive communication.

These findings align with previous research by Sudirman & Endriani (2021), which demonstrated a relationship between assertive behavior and career planning. Assertive students are better able to understand themselves and plan careers according to their abilities. Similar results were also found by Sharma and Chauhan (2025), who demonstrated a correlation between assertiveness and career adaptation and self-efficacy in career decision-making. Furthermore, assertiveness also supports positive relationships with others and improves interpersonal communication, contributing to academic, non-academic, and social achievement (Oktaviana & Wiryosutomo, 2022). Students with assertive skills are better able to explore career options and make decisions that align with their potential and interests.

Schools, particularly guidance and counseling teachers, are expected to emphasize the importance of developing assertive skills and providing career guidance services. It is hoped that by strengthening assertiveness skills and providing career guidance services, students can plan and prepare for their future in a more mature, focused, and responsible manner. This is crucial for maximizing students' potential and enhancing their readiness to face future career challenges (Sukanta et al., 2024).

This study used a correlational quantitative design, so it did not control for mediator or moderator variables such as self-efficacy, social support, or socioeconomic status. Furthermore, data collection was conducted at a single point in time (cross-sectional), thus preventing changes in assertiveness and career maturity over time.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis and research discussion, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between assertiveness skills and the career maturity of high school students. This indicates that the higher a student's assertiveness skills, the higher their career maturity. Conversely, students with low assertiveness skills tend to exhibit lower levels of career maturity. Assertiveness skills enable students to express their opinions, needs, and personal goals clearly and responsibly, thus enabling them to engage in career exploration, decision-making, and independent future planning. Therefore, assertiveness skills serve as a psychological factor supporting the development of career maturity in high school students. These findings suggest that guidance and counseling services in schools need to integrate assertiveness skills development as part of student career planning and development programs. Structured and systematic interventions to improve assertiveness skills are expected to assist students in achieving optimal career maturity.

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