



Hope and Future Orientation: A Phenomenological Study of Vocational High School Students' Psychological Dynamics in Yogyakarta

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Abstract: This study aims to describe the psychological dynamics of vocational high school (SMK) students in constructing hope and future orientation. A qualitative approach with a phenomenological design was employed to explore the lived experiences of students conducted in a vocational high school setting in Yogyakarta City, Indonesia. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with eleventh-grade students and limited participatory observation, and were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The findings indicate that students' hope is not understood as an abstract projection of the future, but rather as a concrete life goal oriented toward economic independence and readiness to assume adult roles. Students' future orientation develops dynamically through processes of internal conflict, adaptation, self-acceptance, and the formation of alternative planning strategies. The results also reveal anxiety related to work readiness due to limited practical training and inadequate learning facilities. Nevertheless, students demonstrate psychological resilience by maintaining hope and engaging in adaptive efforts to face the future. This study recommends that policymakers evaluate the zoning system and improve practice facilities, and that educational counselors provide early career orientation services.

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Introduction

Psychological dynamics refers to the internal mental processes of individuals that continuously move, change, and interrelate cognition (perceptual aspects), affection (emotional aspects), and behavior (the will to act) in dealing with conflicts and stimuli. These processes are reflected in how individuals think, feel, and behave in everyday life, such as how a person views the world, responds emotionally, or resolves internal problems (Walgito, 2010). According to Alfred Adler, individuals begin life with physical weaknesses that



activate feelings of inferiority, which motivate people to strive for superiority or success (Alwisol, 2014). Adler also viewed individuals as unique personalities who shape their own character through three interrelated and continuous aspects: affection, cognition, and behavior, which together explain psychological phenomena (Alwisol, 2014). Psychological dynamics can also be defined as a psychological system that emphasizes causal relationships leading to particular behaviors. In the process of achieving success or attaining goals, individuals utilize these three aspects as sources of energy that drive human development and change, manifested in observable behavior in everyday life.

This study highlights the psychological dynamics related to hope and future orientation among vocational high school students in Yogyakarta. Vocational High Schools, commonly abbreviated as SMK, are educational institutions aimed at preparing students to become productive workers and to create employment opportunities for themselves and others (Sugianti et al., 2023). Many students feel uncertain when making decisions about their future, such as career paths and college majors, due to a lack of understanding of available options and employment opportunities. As a result, their readiness to enter the workforce tends to be low (Raharja & Budiani, 2025).

Vocational high school students are also vulnerable to experiencing high levels of anxiety about their future due to limited family social support. However, such future-related anxiety can be reduced by increasing family social support (Awalia et al., 2023). Although family social support can influence the reduction of future anxiety among vocational students, there are other systemic factors, namely gaps, inequalities, mismatches, or discrepancies between educational programs covering skills and knowledge and the needs and demands of industry. These misalignments contribute to the high unemployment rate among vocational school graduates (Hidayah et al., 2025).

Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2024 showed that vocational high school graduates accounted for the highest unemployment rate in Indonesia, at 9.01%. This BPS figure is far above the national average of 4.91% (Marita & Izzati, 2017; Sugianti et al., 2023). Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) for the province of Yogyakarta in 2025 showed that 4.31% of vocational high school graduates were unemployed, and Yogyakarta City ranked highest in the open unemployment rate (TPT) released in August 2025 at 5.72% compared to other districts. According to BPS, the influencing factor for this situation is the increasingly tight competition in the job market, requiring job seekers to have adequate expertise and skills, as well as mastery of technology (Azis, et al., 2024).

Generally, students of Vocational High Schools (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan/SMK) are between 15 and 18 years old. From a developmental psychology perspective, SMK students are in adolescence, a phase characterized by various physical, cognitive, social, and emotional changes. Adolescence is commonly defined as a period of “growing into adulthood,” during which individuals engage in psychological exploration to discover their identity. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), adolescents are individuals aged 10 to 19 years. Meanwhile, Rosyida defines adolescence as a transitional period from childhood to adulthood, ranging from 10 to 24 years of age 10 to 24 (Rosyida, 2020). According to the Regulation of the Minister of Health No. 25 of 2014, adolescents are individuals aged 10 to 18 years (Raharja & Budiani, 2025).

Adolescence is a period full of dynamics, one of which involves facing various developmental tasks related to identity formation, including the task of beginning to plan one's future maturely. However, empirical conditions indicate that not all vocational high school students are able to fulfill these developmental tasks in forming their identity, particularly in terms of future planning and selecting a career that aligns with their potential.



Statistical data show that many adolescents continue to experience uncertainty in planning their lives. UNICEF and GALLUP (2021) reported that 67% of adolescents worldwide feel worried about their future, and only 45% feel prepared to face these challenges (UNICEF, 2021). This high level of concern may be an indicator of weak future orientation, especially when it is not accompanied by realistic planning and decision-making skills (Santrock, 2012). Developmental tasks in adolescence can be examined through theories of human development proposed by prominent psychologists such as Sigmund Freud, Jean Piaget, Carl Rogers, Erik Erikson, and B.F. Skinner.

This study refers to Erik Erikson's (1968) theory of human development, which proposes a life-span model consisting of eight stages. Each developmental stage must be experienced and resolved to achieve healthy personality growth. Each stage involves a core conflict or psychosocial crisis: stage 1 (ages 0–1) trust vs. mistrust; stage 2 (ages 1–3) autonomy vs. shame and doubt; stage 3 (ages 3–6) initiative vs. guilt; stage 4 (ages 7–11) industry or competence vs. inferiority; stage 5 (ages 12–18) identity vs. role confusion; stage 6 (ages 19–29) intimacy vs. isolation; stage 7 (ages 30–64) generativity vs. stagnation; and stage 8 (age 65 and above) ego integrity vs. despair (Erikson, 1968).

Based on Erikson's eight stages of development, vocational high school students aged 15 to 18, as a research subject, fall within the fifth stage of Erikson's developmental theory, in which individuals confront the crisis of identity versus role confusion. In the context of vocational high school students, this challenge becomes more complex because students are required not only to understand their personal identity but also to make concrete decisions regarding hope and future orientation, such as career paths and post-graduation education.

Hope is defined by Snyder (1994) as an individual's ability to set goals and plan the steps needed to achieve them, even in the face of internal obstacles such as lack of skills and low self-confidence, as well as external obstacles such as limited resources and minimal social support (Snyder, 1994). Empirical research shows that high levels of hope in adolescents function as a primary driver in setting higher goals and striving to achieve them (Khetarpal et al., 2022; Snyder, 2002; Snyder et al., 1996). Kashiwabara et al. (2022) found that hope has a significant direct effect on future orientation without being mediated by other variables (Kashiwabara et al., 2022). However, previous studies have often been conducted on general populations, such as students in general education or university students (Widyastuti & Leylasari, 2023), with relatively few focusing on adolescents from vocational high school backgrounds. Empirical research shows that hope has a greater influence than religiosity in shaping students' future orientation, because hope includes two important aspects that religiosity does not have, namely the ability to strategically plan in creating a path to that dream (pathways) and motivating oneself through the willingness to use that path (agency). (Fatkhayah et al., 2024; HIMPSI, 2022).

Future orientation refers to an individual's perspective on the future, encompassing hope, beliefs, aspirations, plans, and fears related to future life, including career (Seginer, 2009). It refers to an individual's subjective image of their short-term and long-term future (Bozzato, 2024). Individuals are then able to evaluate goal attainment and realize the plans they have formed. This concept plays a crucial role in shaping life goals and strategies for future achievement. Individuals with a strong future orientation tend to be more directed and better prepared to face the transition from education to the workforce (Stefani, 2022).

In developmental psychology, the concept of future orientation refers to an individual's ability to project themselves into the future, set goals, and design the actions required to achieve them (Nurmi, 1991; Winurini, 2021). Without a clear future orientation, vocational high school students are more likely to experience confusion in determining their



life direction and are more susceptible to impulsive decisions that provide immediate gratification, such as risky behaviors or substance abuse (Chen & Vazsonyi, 2011). Moreover, weak future orientation can affect mental health, increasing the risk of depression and anxiety and reducing psychological well-being (Seginer & Lilach, 2004).

According to Nurmi (1991), future orientation reflects an individual's ability to formulate long-term plans, which is part of human cognitive functioning (Nurmi, 1991). A strong future orientation not only provides adolescents with clear direction in navigating life's dynamics but also lays the foundation for a meaningful life (Kelesovs, 2023). For example, adolescents with a strong future orientation tend to focus more on long-term goals, such as higher education, professional careers, or social contributions, compared to those who lack a clear vision of the future (Carey et al., 2023).

Studies show that hope and future orientation are vital for adolescents in planning goals and transitioning to adulthood. Yet most research relies on quantitative methods, overlooking the internal dynamics of vocational students, how cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects interact under pressures like unemployment, industry education mismatches, and future anxiety. Prior studies also focus on general or university populations, neglecting vocational students who must make early career decisions. This gap highlights the need for qualitative research to uncover their lived experiences, addressing issues of identity confusion, uncertainty, and weak psychological readiness.

The novelty of this study lies in its phenomenological design, which explores vocational students' subjective experiences of hope and future orientation during Erikson's identity versus role confusion stage. Rather than treating them as separate constructs or predictors, this study reveals their intertwined and dynamic psychological nature within specific social and developmental contexts (Barnett, 2014). The purpose of this study is to describe in depth the psychological dynamics of vocational high school students regarding hope and future orientation, based on their lived experiences. The expected contribution of this study is to enrich the development of adolescent developmental psychology theory in the context of vocational education and to provide an empirical basis for teachers, school counselors, and policymakers in designing guidance services and psychological interventions that are more contextual, preventive, and oriented toward the real needs of vocational high school students.

Research Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design (Eini, et al., 2024), as it aims to explore and deeply understand the psychological dynamics of vocational high school students in interpreting hope and in shaping their future orientation. The phenomenological approach was chosen to capture the essence of students' lived experiences as they are perceived, understood, and interpreted by the research participants themselves. The study was conducted at Vocational High School "X" in the city of Yogyakarta from October 29 to November 6, 2025. This site was purposively selected based on the characteristics of vocational high school students in undergoing a developmental transition from late adolescence to early adulthood who face demands related to work readiness and future planning.

The research agenda included a preparation phase (obtaining permission, developing interview guidelines, and conducting preliminary observations), a data collection phase, and a data analysis and validation phase. Primary data were obtained from vocational high school students through in-depth interviews with five eleventh-grade students and limited participatory observation of students' psychological dynamics within the school context.



Informants were selected purposively based on criteria such as active SMK student status in the Financial Accounting and Office Management and Business Services departments, as well as their willingness to share their experiences, hopes, and perspectives on the future. Secondary data sources included school documents and scientific literature relevant to the concepts of hope and future orientation. The main research instrument was the researcher (human instrument), supported by semi-structured interview guidelines, observation sheets, audio recording devices, and field notes to capture emotional nuances and subjective meanings that emerged during data collection.

Data analysis was carried out simultaneously and continuously using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which included data transcription, comprehensive reading of the data, the process of horizontalization (identifying significant statements), clustering these statements into essential themes, and constructing both textural descriptions (what was experienced) and structural descriptions (how the experiences were interpreted) (Alhail, et al., 2025). Subsequently, the researcher synthesized the essence of students' collective experiences related to hope and future orientation. To ensure data trustworthiness, source and technique triangulation were applied. In addition, the researcher engaged in reflexivity to minimize interpretive bias, thereby ensuring the findings demonstrate adequate credibility, dependability, and confirmability in accordance with the characteristics of phenomenological research.

Results and Discussion

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of the Psychological Dynamics of Hope and Future Orientation among Students at Vocational High School 'X' in Yogyakarta

The findings reveal internal conflicts among the five students at Vocational High School "X" in Yogyakarta, mainly a sense of being in the wrong major. This mismatch between personal interests and chosen fields reduced motivation and was reinforced by the stigma that vocational schools are for those who failed to enter general senior high schools. How students cope with these conflicts, along with the dynamics of hope and future orientation, is reflected in the IPA analysis results in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of Coding and Thematic Analysis Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

Data Citation	Psychological Meaning (Coding)	Initial Theme	Superordinate Theme
"Actually, I initially wanted to go to a general senior high school (SMA), but because I didn't pass the zoning system, there wasn't much I could do. My parents also insisted that I had to attend a public school, so I ended up enrolling in this vocational high school. I kind of feel unsatisfied with what I'm learning." [DP-W002-CI, October 29, 2025]	Anxiety and feelings of annoyance with the reality of failing at a public high school.	Conflict of feelings and thoughts	Psychological conflict
"...I lost in the zoning process when I registered at a public high school, so in the end, I applied to a public vocational school, and then I was accepted. Then I entered the accounting department. Actually, no one was interested, but yeah... this is the closest I can get to doing it." [DP-W004-VI, October 29, 2025]	Feeling disappointed, because I was not selected for high school and finally registered at a state vocational school by choosing a major that was still possible to pursue.	Hope does not match reality	
"The entrance systems for high	The entrance systems for high	PPDB system	



school and vocational high school are different. Prospective students cannot apply to both high school and vocational high school simultaneously during the first stage; they must choose one first. If they are excluded from high school, they can try switching to vocational high school in the next stage. The vocational high school entrance exam has more categories and can be tailored to interests and talents." [DS-Arsip-005, November 1, 2025]		school and vocational school are different and not held simultaneously. Furthermore, vocational school exams have more categories. Therefore, students who failed their high school studies can still enroll in vocational school.	
"The future is a goal... to be able to earn money without involving parents." [DP-W015-CI, November 6, 2025]	Financial independence as a future goal.	Hope becomes independent	Hope for independent life
"The future is a reflection of our next activities... focus on our own lives." [DP-W023-KN, November 6, 2025]	The future is perceived as the adult phase.	Preparation for adult roles	
"The future is the ultimate goal, tomorrow we live the real life." [DP-W024-ZA, November 6, 2025]	The future is considered as the reality of life.	Awareness of post-school life	
"I want to go to high school because I want to study law... but my parents want me to go to vocational school." [DP-W037-CI, November 6, 2025]	Differences between personal desires and family decisions.	Orientation is still influenced by family	The conflict between choice and self-acceptance in the future orientation process
"At first I was sad about entering vocational school... but after a while I started enjoying it." [DP-W039-AD November 6, 2025]	Emotional adaptation to circumstances.	Phase of accepting reality	
"Lots of practice but not enough facilities... still a metaphor." [DP-W044-VI, November 6, 2025]	Competency readiness concerns.	Dissatisfaction with skills readiness	Anxiety and uncertainty about the future due to lack of practical skills
"Afraid of PKL because the practice is less realistic." [DP-W059-ZA, November 6, 2025]	Fear of facing the world of work.	Doubt your abilities	
"My initial goal was to go to high school... but because of grades and zoning, I ended up going to vocational school." [DP-W061-KN, November 6, 2025]	Educational path as a compromise of circumstances.	The future is influenced by the selection system	Educational choices are not always based on future orientation, but on circumstances
"Don't want to be stuck... there's always the next life so just enjoy it." [DP-W068-AD, November 6, 2025]	Positive coping strategies.	Resilience & acceptance	Adaptation, resilience, and growing hope

The analysis reveals that the psychological dynamics of hope and future orientation among students at Vocational High School "X" in Yogyakarta unfold through a complex

process. It begins with internal conflict, followed by a renewed search for life goals, and continues with adjustments to educational choices that may not fully match their initial expectations. Students' strongest hopes focus on financial independence and readiness for adult roles such as working, marriage, family building, and living independently without parental support. The future is viewed as a transitional phase from adolescence to adulthood, requiring responsibility and self-management, as presented in Figures 1 and 2 below.

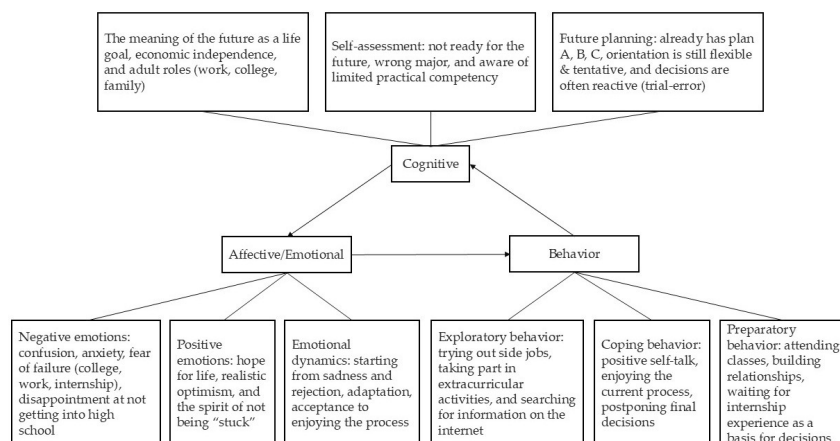


Figure 1. Psychological Dynamics: Cognitive, Affective/Emotional, and Behavioral Aspects

Figure 1 illustrates the psychological interaction of cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects in students' future orientation. The process starts with cognitive perceptions of life goals and self-assessment, which trigger emotional responses such as anxiety or realistic expectations. These emotions lead to actions like career exploration and coping strategies, whose outcomes provide feedback for further planning. Consequently, school counselors should design interventions that strengthen thinking, validate emotions, and foster positive behaviors to build student resilience in facing workforce challenges.

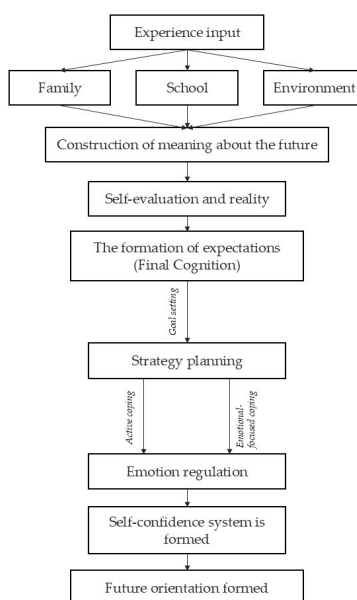


Figure 2. Hope and Future Orientation as Psychological Drivers of Students at Vocational High School "X" in Yogyakarta City

Figure 2 shows that future orientation develops through the integration of students' family, school, and community experiences, which are shaped into meaning through self-evaluation. This cognition produces expectations that drive goal setting and strategy planning, requiring emotional regulation and coping skills. Successfully managing this process builds confidence, allowing future orientation to grow steadily. For counselors, the implication is to provide guidance that aligns support from family, emotional regulation training, and achievement strategies to strengthen students' career confidence.

Based on Figures 1 and 2, which depict the psychological dynamics, students use hope and future orientation as driving forces to overcome the experienced internal conflicts. This process involves six stages of psychological dynamics: (1) experiencing an internal conflict situation, (2) denial, (3) adaptation and the beginning of reconstructing the future, (4) acceptance (self-evaluation and acceptance of reality), (5) enjoying the process (the formation of a new hope system, new belief system, and new future orientation system), and (6) a strong desire to achieve independence.

The findings show that students' journey toward their goals is not entirely smooth. All five entered vocational school due to external factors, such as zoning, scores, parental influence, or poor planning, rather than personal choice. This led to disappointment and confusion, but over time, they adapted and accepted their situation. Such acceptance reflects psychological resilience, as students continue to nurture hope despite less-than-ideal circumstances.

The main challenge students face is concern about work-readiness, stemming from theory-heavy learning, limited practice, and inadequate facilities. This creates anxiety about internships and employment, as they feel unprepared for vocational demands. Yet some remain motivated, seeking extra activities and experiences, showing that hope persists despite uncertainty. Overall, their psychological journey moves from forced choices and confusion toward adaptation, acceptance, and hope, though skill gaps and readiness challenges continue to overshadow their future orientation.

Discussion

Meaning of Hope

The analysis shows that for students at Vocational High School "X" in Yogyakarta, hope is understood as a concrete, contextual, and action-oriented construct tied to economic independence and adult social roles. However, their expectations often depend on external validation and school facilities rather than internal agency, creating a gap with Snyder's Hope Theory. As a result, their pathways appear fragile, shaped more by structural limitations than by autonomous, proactive resilience. These findings align with late-adolescent developmental psychology perspectives, which view hope as a cognitive and affective framework for constructing identity and life direction (Danley, 2025). They are also consistent with modern literature that conceptualizes hope as a cognitive and motivational construct oriented toward concrete goals and tangible achievement (goal-directed thinking), not merely as future wishes but as involving both agency and pathways for attaining those goals, as articulated in Snyder's Hope Theory (Rand & Touza, 2018; Snyder et al., 1991). Contemporary research further shows that hope is not only associated with aspirations but is also strongly correlated with vocational identity and students' engagement in planning their career paths. The relationship is evidenced by the influence of hope on vocational identity and academic performance via student engagement as a mediator (Zeng et al., 2022).

Students' hope also functions as a self-regulatory mechanism in confronting the structural realities of vocational education, which do not always align with their initial choices. Although some students entered vocational school due to limited options, they



demonstrate a constructive process of adaptation by reformulating their hopes in more realistic and flexible ways. The use of alternative planning strategies (plans A, B, and C) reflects the function of hope as an anticipatory system that enables individuals to persist amid uncertainty, as described in Snyder's hope theory, which emphasizes agency and pathways thinking (Marques et al., 2014).

Furthermore, the meaning of hope is inseparable from perceptions of competency readiness. Students recognize that future success requires relevant practical skills rather than merely formal graduation. Criticism of the limited practical experience and anxiety regarding workplace practice (PKL) indicates that hope also serves as an evaluative lens on the learning system. Thus, hope is not only motivational in nature but also reflective and critical of the educational environment.

Overall, hope functions as a psychological foundation that integrates aspirations, self-evaluation, and future planning. Hope enables students to negotiate structural constraints alongside their personal goals and fosters a resilient attitude that helps them to construct a meaningful and adaptive future orientation. These findings affirm that hope is a key variable in shaping vocational students' future orientation, particularly during the transition from education to the world of work.

Meaning of Future Orientation

Future orientation among students at Vocational High School "X" in Yogyakarta is understood as a psychological construct that reflects the developmental transition from adolescence to early adulthood, as indicated by increasing demands for independence, responsibility, and life planning. This finding is consistent with developmental perspectives that view future orientation as an integration of life goals, personal identity, and readiness to assume adult roles, including economic independence and social responsibility (Mazibuko & Tlale, 2014). Among some female students, future orientation is also influenced by the internalization of traditional gender roles, indicating that the meaning of the future is inseparable from social and cultural contexts (Çimen & Serin, 2021).

Students' future orientation does not develop in a fully autonomous space but is shaped by structural experiences during schooling, including the process of entering vocational education, which, in many cases, is not their primary choice. The mismatch between students' majors and their personal interests has implications for the formation of future goals that are not aligned with the competencies they are currently pursuing. This condition underscores that future orientation is dynamic and adaptive rather than deterministic, and is influenced by learning experiences, exposure to the world of work through internships or workplace practice (PKL), and ongoing reflection on available opportunities (Eini et al., 2022).

The presence of long-term planning with multiple alternatives indicates students' capacity for anticipatory thinking and cognitive flexibility in dealing with future uncertainty. At the same time, the emergence of anxiety related to competency readiness, limited facilities, and opportunities for further education or employment reflects a gap between aspirations and perceived available resources. Anticipatory efforts through skill development, the pursuit of experience, and family support strengthen the role of psychosocial protective factors in sustaining future orientation (Saleh et al., 2024).

Thus, the future orientation of vocational high school students can be understood as a psychological process encompassing hope, anxiety, and adaptive strategies for navigating the demands of structural realities. This orientation is not merely a depiction of end goals, but a self-regulatory mechanism that continues to develop through the interaction between the individual, the educational context, and social support.



The future orientation in these findings has been criticized for being more of a form of "state compromise" than idealistic self-projection. The theoretical gap is evident when juxtaposing these findings with Nurmi's (1991) concept of long-term self-projection, which holds that future orientation should be built on careful planning. In fact, the future orientation of vocational school students in Yogyakarta is dynamic because they are forced to adapt to the mistakes of major selection and the zoning system, which hinders their initial interest. As a result, the emerging future orientation is an adaptive coping strategy to achieve short-term independence, which may overlook the development of a broader and meaningful career identity in the long term.

Overview of Psychological Dynamics

The psychological dynamics of vocational students' hope and future orientation emerge through the interaction of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes. Students view the future as tied to financial independence, adult roles, and career success, yet most entered vocational school by external factors rather than choice. This situation prompts ongoing cognitive appraisal, where they reconstruct hope by weighing realistic opportunities, competency limits, and learning experiences. This is reflected in the emergence of flexible orientations through the formulation of alternative plans (A, B, and C), which demonstrates the ability to think prospectively while also adapting to future uncertainty (Li et al., 2024).

From an affective/emotional perspective, the dynamics are characterized by ambivalence between hope and anxiety. Hope functions as a source of optimism and motivation, while anxiety arises from concerns about skill readiness, access to further education, and family expectations. The discrepancy between personal interests and the demands of their academic major reinforces feelings of doubt and low self-confidence, particularly in anticipation of transitional experiences such as workplace practice (PKL). However, emotional support from family serves as a protective factor that reduces anxiety and strengthens emotion regulation, enabling students to sustain their confidence in the future (Li et al., 2024).

The findings reveal strong ambivalence between expectations and anxiety, reflecting students' mental unpreparedness for the transition to work. Negative emotions, especially anxiety about limited practice, hinder cognitive and behavioral development. This extends Erikson's stage of Identity versus Role Confusion, as students aged 15–18 remain uncertain due to mismatches between industry demands and school facilities. Thus, the educational environment has not fully supported the healthy resolution of their psychosocial conflicts.

Behaviorally, hope and future orientation appear in strategies such as independent study, tutoring, gaining experience, networking, and communication skill development. These actions show agency and empowerment, as students actively prepare despite limitations. Thus, their future orientation evolves as a dynamic process shaped by cognitive evaluation, emotional regulation, and adaptive responses to educational and social realities (Nurmi, 1989). The environment does not passively determine students' futures but shapes them through agency and empowerment, reflected in actions like independent study and networking. Future orientation is thus a dynamic process requiring emotional regulation and continuous cognitive evaluation. Career success depends on students' ability to transform adaptive strategies into concrete behaviors that overcome structural limitations.

Conclusion

The study concludes that hope and future orientation among vocational students are not static traits but dynamic, resilience-driven processes constructed in response to systemic challenges in vocational education. Students at Vocational High School "X" in Yogyakarta

interpret hope and future orientation as driving forces that involve cognitive, affective/emotional, and behavioral aspects. Students' hope is closely associated with the desire to become independent individuals, to be able to work, and to live an adult life successfully. However, their future orientation is not fully formed through careful planning from the outset; rather, it develops through experiences, self-adjustment, and the educational realities they encounter. In addition, another finding regarding the limited availability of practical training and learning facilities raises concerns about students' work-readiness at Vocational High School "X" in Yogyakarta. The psychological dynamics of hope and future orientation can grow along with increasing self-acceptance, motivation to learn, enjoyment of the process, and a strong desire to achieve independence.

Recommendation

Future research is recommended to involve a more diverse range of participants across majors, genders, and regions, so that the dynamics of vocational students' hope and future orientation can be better understood. In addition, the use of longitudinal or mixed-methods designs is important to trace changes in students' psychological dynamics from their time in school through their transition into the world of work. In addition, recommendations were also given to stakeholders in vocational schools, including the role of school principals in updating practice facilities and expanding industrial cooperation to reduce student anxiety. At the same time, teachers are expected to integrate learning motivation to help students who feel they are in the wrong major become more confident through practice-based learning methods. On the other hand, counselors or BK teachers need to provide contextual career-guidance services and psychological-resilience interventions to help students develop flexible future strategies, while involving parents in providing social support, which is crucial for students' mental development.

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