

Comparative Study of Career Adaptability of Grade XI Students of Senior High School and Madrasah Aliyah in Wajo Regency

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the differences in the level of career adaptability between Senior High School (SMA) and Madrasah Aliyah (MA) students in Wajo Regency. Career adaptability is an important aspect in preparing students to face the challenges of an increasingly dynamic world of work, including the ability to adjust to career changes and take advantage of existing opportunities. Given the different background characteristics of the educational environment, this study examines whether there are significant differences in the level of career adaptability of students from the two types of schools. The method used in this study is a quantitative approach with the Mann-Whitney test as a data analysis technique. The results showed that the difference in career adaptability between SMA and MA students was not statistically significant, with a p value of 0.536 ($p > 0.05$) with the *mean rank* of career adaptability of SMA students being 60.43, while MA students were 56.57. This shows that although high school and middle school students come from different educational backgrounds, their levels of career adaptability are relatively similar. This finding provides an interesting insight into the homogeneity of career adaptability levels in two types of educational institutions that have been considered to have fundamental differences in terms of curriculum. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of a holistic and equitable career guidance approach in all types of schools, both senior high schools and senior high schools, to prepare students for a career future that is likely to change due to rapid developments in the modern era. This study makes a significant contribution to the career guidance literature by opening up further discussion on the factors that influence similar levels of career adaptability among students. Thus, the results of this study are expected to serve as a foothold for the development of more effective career guidance policies and programs in various educational institutions.

Keywords: Career Adaptability, Senior High School, Madrasah Aliyah

Introduction

In the dynamic era of globalization, adaptability to career change is very important, especially for young people entering the workforce. Industry shifts, technological developments, and economic uncertainty require individuals to have high career adaptability (Nabilah and Indianti 2019). Adaptability is key for young people in facing the challenges of the modern era of uncertainty and rapid change. Individuals with high adaptability

are better able to cope with change, develop new skills, and take advantage of career opportunities (Dewi and Rosidah 2020). Adaptability helps young people plan for the future with more flexibility, overcome obstacles and stay relevant in a competitive job market. Without this ability, individuals risk falling behind and missing opportunities to optimize their career potential.

Career adaptability refers to a person's ability to respond to changes in the work environment, develop new skills, and utilize opportunities

effectively (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Career adaptability for students at the senior secondary level is a crucial ability to have. This ability is not only related to choosing the right career, but also serves as a foundation for facing future challenges and obstacles (Nurmasari 2024). In addition, adaptability helps young people build confidence in career decision-making and reduces anxiety in the face of job uncertainty. In addition, career adaptability improves mental well-being, as adaptive individuals are better able to manage stress and pressure during career transitions (Rossier et al., 2017). Thus, equipping students with career adaptability skills is essential for future success and life balance. Career adaptability is influenced by internal factors such as gender, personality, self-efficacy, career decision-making, age, and socioeconomic status, as well as external factors such as family closeness, parenting patterns, work experience, and educational experience (Yousefi et al., 2011). Therefore, one of the factors that influence career adaptability is the experience of attending school or college in a particular situation, so experiences at school play an important role in improving students' career adaptability.

Schools as formal educational institutions play an important role in developing student competencies, including career adaptability, which is increasingly needed to face the challenges of the modern world of work (Irwanto et al., 2023). Formal education at the secondary level is in the form of Senior High School (SMA), Madrasah Aliyah (MA), Vocational High School (SMK) and Madrasah Aliyah Kejuruan (MAK) or other equivalent forms. (Law of the Republic of Indonesia No.2 Th. 2003). The curriculum of SMA and MA in Indonesia has a duration of three years with an allocation of around 38-39 hours per week. The main difference lies in the portion of religious education: SMA allocates two hours (5.26%), while MA provides 14 hours (36.84%) per week, emphasizing greater Islamic religious education (Kurniawan 2021). The difference in class hour allocation between SMA and MA affects students' career adaptability skills. MA emphasizes religious education that strengthens moral and ethical values in career decision-making, while SMA with

its academic approach provides broader exposure to various fields of knowledge and practical skills, important for flexibility and readiness for the world of work.

Previous research by (Mardiyati and Yuniawati 2015) showed that students who attended SMK had higher career adaptability than the career adaptability of students who attended SMA. Then research conducted by (Husna et al., 2018) Student career adaptability requires the attention of guidance and counseling teachers because needs vary at each level of education. The purpose of the study was to explore the differences in career adaptability between Madrasah Aliyah (MA) and Senior High School (SMA) students, as well as to provide insight into the contribution of each type of school in preparing students for the world of work. MA and SMA have similar curricula, so it is important to examine how both schools shape students' character and readiness. The results of the study are expected to be the basis for developing more effective career guidance programs.

Materials and Methods

This study used a quantitative method with a comparative design conducted in two schools, namely SMA and MA in Wajo Regency. The research sample consisted of 116 students, divided equally between 58 SMA students and 58 MA students, who were selected through random sampling technique. The purpose of selecting this sample was to obtain an accurate representation of the student population in both types of schools. The instrument used to measure career adaptability from the development of *Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS)* from (Savickas and Porfeli 2012) which has been developed by (Prasetya et al., 2022). This scale measures four main dimensions of career adaptability: *concern*, control, curiosity, and confidence. This instrument has been tested for validity and reliability in the Indonesian educational context, making it suitable for use in this study.

Data collection procedures were carried out by distributing questionnaires to students in their respective schools under the direct supervision of

researchers to ensure consistency of filling. After the data was collected, data analysis was carried out using the Mann-Whitney U test because the data obtained did not meet the assumption of normal distribution. Mann-Whitney U test is often also used to analyze research data that is planned to use the t-test of independent but it turns out that some of the assumptions for using the t-test are not met. (Anwar 2009). The basis for decision making is by comparing z_{count} with Z_{tabel} with the provisions: H_0 accepted = $z_{count} < Z_{tabel}$; H_0 rejected $z_{count} \geq Z_{tabel}$. In addition, the probability number is also used with the provisions: probability $>$ real level (α) = H_0 accepted; Probability \leq real level (α) = H_0 rejected. This test is used to compare whether there is a significant difference in the level of career adaptability between SMA and MA students.

Results and Discussion

Results

The results of the comparative study on the career adaptability of high school and MA students can be explained in the following tables:

Table 1. Descriptive Table

| Descriptives | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| | | | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Adaptabilitas Karier SMA | Mean | | 216,64 | 3,214 |
| | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean | Lower Bound | 210,20 | |
| | | Upper Bound | 223,07 | |
| | 5% Trimmed Mean | | 216,16 | |
| | Median | | 212,50 | |
| | Variance | | 599,182 | |
| | Std. Deviation | | 24,478 | |
| | Minimum | | 173 | |
| | Maximum | | 282 | |
| | Range | | 109 | |
| | Interquartile Range | | 39 | |
| | Skewness | | 0,324 | 0,314 |
| | Kurtosis | | -0,315 | 0,618 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Adaptabilitas Karier MA | Mean | | 215,29 | 3,372 |
| | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean | Lower Bound | 208,54 | |
| | | Upper Bound | 222,04 | |
| | 5% Trimmed Mean | | 214,29 | |
| | Median | | 208,00 | |
| | Variance | | 659,334 | |
| | Std. Deviation | | 25,677 | |
| | Minimum | | 176 | |
| | Maximum | | 276 | |
| | Range | | 100 | |
| | Interquartile Range | | 31 | |
| | Skewness | | 0,787 | 0,314 |
| | Kurtosis | | -0,227 | 0,618 |

Based on the descriptive table above, a comparison of the level of career adaptability between SMA and MA students in Wajo Regency can be seen. From the table, information is obtained that the average (mean) career adaptability of high school students is 216.64 with a standard error of 3.214, while the average career adaptability of MA students is slightly lower, namely 215.29 with a standard error of 3.372. This shows that on average, high school students have a slightly higher level of career adaptability than MA students, although this difference is small.

Analysis of differences in career adaptability of SMA and MA students uses quantitative comparative analysis with hypothesis testing. The hypothesis formulation is as follows:

H_0 : There is no significant difference between the career adaptability of high school and MA students.

H_a : There is a significant difference between the career adaptability of high school and MA students.

The significance level used in this study is 5%. To determine the type of analysis in testing the differences in career adaptability of high school and MA students, the prerequisite test of normal distribution of both data groups was carried out. The normality test used to determine the

appropriate test for sample data is the Saphiro-Wilk normality test. The results of the normality test are as follows.

Table 2. Normality Test Results

| Tests of Normality | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|----|-------|
| | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
| | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Adaptabilitas Karier SMA | 0,954 | 58 | 0,029 |
| Adaptabilitas Karier MA | 0,920 | 58 | 0,001 |

The significance value of the Saphiro-Wilk normality test for high school students' career adaptability obtained a significance value of 0.029. Since this value is smaller than 0.05, the data for the high school group is not normally distributed. For MA students' career adaptability, the significance value is 0.001 which is smaller than 0.05. This means that the data for the MA group is also not normally distributed. Therefore, the data analysis that will be used is the Mann-Whitney U-Test to test the hypothesis of two independent samples. This technique is often also used to analyze research data that is planned to use the t-test of independence but it turns out that the assumptions for using the t-test are not met, namely both data must be normally distributed. (Anwar 2009). These two data are not normally distributed so that the assumptions for using the t-test of independent are not fulfilled so that the mann-whitney u-test is used in testing differences in career adaptability of high school and MA students in Wajo Regency.

Mann-Whitney U Test analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 26. The results of the analysis can be seen in the following table:

Table 3. Table of Ranks in Mann-Whitney Test

| Ranks | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|-----|-----------|--------------|
| Kelas | | N | Mean Rank | Sum of Ranks |
| Adaptabilitas Karier SMA | SM A | 58 | 60,43 | 3505,00 |
| | MA | 58 | 56,57 | 3281,00 |
| | Total | 116 | | |

The table above shows the Mean Rank of each group. In the high school student group, the mean

rank is 60.43, while in the MA student group, the mean rank is 56.57. This shows that the average rank of career adaptability of high school students is slightly higher than that of MA students.

Table 4. Mann-Whitney Test Results

| Test Statistics ^a | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| | Adaptabilitas Karier |
| Mann-Whitney U | 1570,000 |
| Wilcoxon W | 3281,000 |
| Z | -0,619 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,536 |

The table above is a reference to see the statistical significance of the difference between the means of these two groups. The Mann-Whitney U value is 1570.000, with a Wilcoxon W value of 3281.000, and a Z value of -0.619. The Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value obtained is 0.536. Since this value is greater than the critical limit of 0.05, there is no statistically significant difference between the career adaptability levels of SMA and MA students. Thus, Ho is accepted which means there is no significant difference in career adaptability between the two groups.

Discussion

The results of the analysis showed no significant difference in the level of career adaptability between SMA and MA students. This could be due to the educational system applied in both institutions having similarities in the guidance and counseling approach, especially related to the development of career adaptability. According to Hirschi (2009) that social support, including contextual support from the school environment, plays an important role in improving students' career adaptability. The guidance approaches in both types of schools seem to provide similar contextual support, which helps students develop skills to deal with career uncertainty and environmental changes. As the results of interviews with guidance and counseling teachers in both schools show, career guidance and counseling services are provided through information services about the importance of

choosing a career in their transition period and have not used specific career guidance approaches. The environment can influence and facilitate the development of students' career adaptability. As the results of research (Muslikah et al. 2022) that guidance and counseling services can facilitate students as a preventive effort or prevention of future career problems, one of which is with psychoeducational services through *peer support*. Therefore, institutions, in this case schools, can provide support to guidance and counseling services in providing effective career guidance services, one of which is by helping and actively involving students to build their own careers.

The results of the study showing no significant difference in the level of career adaptability between senior high school and senior high school students provide important implications for guidance and counseling practitioners in schools to evaluate and improve existing career guidance approaches. The empirical fact that current career guidance services have not actively involved students in navigating their careers, it is important for schools to develop more interactive and participatory programs so that students can be more involved in the process of dealing with their career changes and transitions. Research results (Wibowo and Yuwono 2021) provide implications for schools or agencies to consider providing guidance that involves active student participation as a strategy in increasing students' career adaptability. Through guidance services that involve active student participation, it will help students form new understandings about careers and build career confidence. Therefore, the development of guidance programs that are more responsive to students' needs is crucial to facilitate the development of better career adaptability skills among students.

Previous research from (Hakiki 2021) which stated that there were no differences in career adaptability based on demographic factors of school origin supported the results of this study. The findings suggest that other factors, such as the guidance and counseling approach implemented at school, may have more influence on students' level of career adaptability than the type of school itself. This is in line with Savickas' theory of career

adaptability, which emphasizes the importance of the interaction between internal and external factors in shaping individual adaptability to a dynamic work environment. Research from (Mardiyati and Yuniawati 2015) shows that there are significant differences in the career adaptability of high school and vocational school students due to the vocational education curriculum which directs from the beginning to a certain career direction compared to high school where career direction is carried out when entering grade XI. Vocational students are also accustomed to being exposed to field work practice so that they have higher career adaptability than high school students. Schools through career guidance services by SMA and MA guidance and counseling teachers can provide career guidance services that are more concrete and carried out from the beginning so that students can be trained to be faced with dynamic career situations.

This study has several limitations that need to be considered. First, the population used only includes students in Wajo Regency so the results may not be generalizable to the whole of Indonesia. Secondly, this study only used a quantitative approach, so it could not explore more deeply the psychological or motivational factors that might affect students' career adaptability. Third, because the data used comes from measurement through questionnaires, there is a possibility of response bias caused by students' subjective perceptions of their career adaptability. Future research is expected to expand the coverage area and involve more variables, such as socio-economic background, to see its influence on career adaptability. The use of mixed research methods (quantitative and qualitative) will also be very useful to get a more comprehensive picture of the factors that influence students' career adaptability. The findings can also be used as material for evaluating and developing guidance and counseling programs in schools, especially in improving students' career adaptability.

Researchers recommend that guidance and counseling teachers in schools pay special attention to differences in student career adaptability in each school, this is useful for helping students improve career adaptability by providing focused and

specialized interventions according to student needs regarding career adaptability in order to achieve optimal career maturity. Therefore, the results of this study can be a reference for the development of career guidance programs in schools.

Conclusions

The results of the analysis of this study showed no significant difference in the level of career adaptability between senior high school and senior high school students. This finding provides a clearer picture of how these two types of schools contribute to shaping students' career adaptability. Despite the structural and curricular differences between SMA and MA, other factors such as similar career guidance approaches in both types of schools have created similarities in students' career adaptability. This is in line with career adaptability theory which emphasizes the importance of the interaction between internal and external factors in shaping individual adaptability to a dynamic work environment. This study recommends that guidance and counseling teachers focus on developing career guidance programs that are responsive to the needs of students, especially in SMA and MA. In addition, the results of this study also support the findings of previous research showing that there are no differences in career adaptability based on demographic factors of school origin, indicating that career adaptability can be more influenced by internal factors such as self-ability and career interests, as well as external factors such as social support and career information. The results of this study may provide practical implications for educational institutions to revise career guidance programs to be more responsive to students' needs to improve their overall career adaptability.

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