

The Effectiveness of Career Development Interventions for Indonesian High School Students: An Integrative Review

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Abstrak

Pengembangan karier pada siswa Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) sangat penting untuk mempersiapkan mereka menghadapi transisi menuju pendidikan tinggi dan dunia kerja. Meskipun berbagai intervensi pengembangan karier telah diterapkan di Indonesia, bukti mengenai karakteristik dan efektivitasnya masih tersebar. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mensintesis karakteristik serta mengevaluasi efektivitas intervensi pengembangan karier pada siswa SMA di Indonesia melalui pendekatan *integrative review*. Pencarian literatur dilakukan menggunakan basis data Google Scholar dan Garuda terhadap penelitian yang dipublikasikan pada periode 2021–2026. Sebanyak 22 artikel yang memenuhi kriteria inklusi dianalisis secara deskriptif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa konseling karier dan pelatihan merupakan intervensi yang paling sering diterapkan, dengan fokus utama pada efikasi diri karier dan pengambilan keputusan karier. Sebagian besar penelitian melaporkan dampak positif terhadap efikasi diri karier, pengambilan keputusan, perencanaan karier, dan kematangan karier. Efektivitas intervensi didukung oleh peningkatan pemahaman diri, akses terhadap informasi karier yang relevan, serta keterlibatan aktif siswa. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa intervensi pengembangan karier merupakan strategi yang bernilai dalam memperkuat kesiapan karier siswa dan mendukung layanan karier berbasis bukti di sekolah.

Kata Kunci: Bimbingan dan Konseling Karier, Career Development, Efektivitas Intervensi, Integrative Review, Siswa SMA

Career development among senior high school students is essential for preparing them to transition into higher education and employment. Although various career development interventions have been implemented in Indonesia, evidence regarding their characteristics and effectiveness remains fragmented. This study aimed to synthesize the characteristics and evaluate the effectiveness of career development interventions for Indonesian senior high school students through an integrative review approach. A literature search was conducted using Google Scholar and Garuda databases for studies published between 2021 and 2026. A total of 22 articles meeting the inclusion criteria were analyzed descriptively. The findings indicated that career counseling and training were the most frequently applied interventions, primarily targeting career self-efficacy and career decision-making. Most studies reported positive effects on career self-efficacy, decision-making, career planning, and career maturity. Intervention effectiveness was associated with enhanced self-understanding, access to relevant career information, and active student participation. These findings demonstrate that career development interventions are valuable strategies for strengthening students' career readiness and supporting evidence-based career services in schools.

Keywords: Career Counseling; Career Development, Effectiveness Of Interventions, Integrative Review, Senior High School Students

A. Introduction

Senior high school represents a critical stage of education that serves as a bridge between formal schooling and adulthood. During this period, students begin to face important post-graduation decisions, including pursuing higher education, enrolling in vocational training, entering the workforce, or considering other career pathways. The wide range of available options requires students to begin thinking about, planning, and preparing for their future careers at an early stage (Wang et al., 2024). Career preparation during secondary education is particularly important because the decisions made at this stage can substantially influence students' transition to higher education and employment. Therefore, senior high school students need to develop the readiness and competencies required to manage their career development effectively, enabling them to make future decisions that align with their interests, abilities, and long-term goals (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2025).

Previous research has shown that many senior high school students are not adequately prepared to plan their educational and career futures. Many continue to experience uncertainty when choosing academic pathways or career options after graduation. This challenge is often associated with limited self-understanding regarding their interests, abilities, and personal potential, as well as difficulties in evaluating the various alternatives available to them (Amaral et al., 2023). This phenomenon is not unique to Indonesia but has also become a global concern. According to the OECD, approximately two out of five adolescents do not yet have clear career plans, and career uncertainty has increased steadily in recent years (OECD, 2025). At the same time, rapid technological advancement, digitalization, automation, and evolving labor market demands have created an increasingly dynamic and complex career landscape (Guo, 2025). These developments require students to possess adequate career readiness so that they can better understand themselves, make informed career decisions, and adapt to emerging opportunities and challenges in the future world of work.

Optimal career development during senior high school plays a crucial role in supporting students' transition to higher education and employment. Students who demonstrate stronger career development are more likely to possess greater self-understanding, clearer future goals, and a better ability to connect their educational choices with their intended career aspirations (Pang et al., 2025). Such competencies also contribute to higher learning motivation, greater engagement in academic activities, and increased readiness to meet the demands of postsecondary education and employment (OECD, 2025; Perry & VanZandt, 2006). Conversely, inadequate career development may result in difficulties making career decisions, lower commitment to career choices, insufficient knowledge about oneself and available career alternatives, and heightened anxiety regarding the future (Amaral et al., 2023). In the context of an increasingly dynamic labor market, these issues represent significant challenges that warrant serious attention. Therefore, career development among senior high school students

constitutes an important area of inquiry for strengthening students' preparedness to navigate future educational and career pathways.

Given the importance of career development during adolescence, educational institutions—including schools and organizations that provide educational, guidance, and career development services—play a strategic role in preparing students for their future. Beyond providing academic instruction, educational institutions are also responsible for facilitating students' personal and career development through various relevant programs and services (Azwar et al., 2023). Such support may include career information services, guidance and counseling, career assessment, training programs, and various self-development activities designed to help students better understand their personal strengths while exploring educational and occupational opportunities (Wang et al., 2024). Through these initiatives, educational institutions are expected to foster students' career-related competencies, enabling them to plan their futures more effectively, make informed decisions, and successfully navigate the transition to higher education and the workforce.

To support students' career development, various career development interventions have been designed and implemented within educational settings. These interventions aim to help students develop self-understanding, explore career opportunities, and strengthen their abilities to plan for and make decisions regarding their future careers (Wang et al., 2024). Previous studies have reported a wide range of intervention approaches, including career counseling, group guidance, career information services, training programs, and classroom-based learning activities that facilitate career exploration (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012; Lent & Brown, 2013). As awareness of the importance of adolescent career development continues to grow, research examining these interventions has expanded considerably, including studies conducted within the context of Indonesian secondary education (Passalowongi & Badrullah, 2025).

Despite the growing body of research on career development interventions for senior high school students, the available empirical evidence remains scattered across studies employing diverse intervention approaches, outcome measures, and research findings. Consequently, current understanding of the effectiveness of career development interventions for Indonesian senior high school students remains fragmented. To date, no comprehensive synthesis has integrated the available evidence regarding the most commonly implemented intervention approaches, the targeted career-related psychological outcomes, and the reported effectiveness of these interventions. Such a synthesis is essential for informing the development of evidence-based career programs and services. Therefore, this study aims to identify and synthesize the characteristics of career development interventions implemented for Indonesian senior high school students and to evaluate their reported effectiveness across existing empirical studies. The findings of this integrative review are expected to provide a systematic overview of career development intervention practices for Indonesian senior high school students and serve as an empirical foundation for improving the effectiveness of future career services.

B. Methodologi

This study employed an integrative review methodology to synthesize empirical evidence on the effectiveness of career development interventions for senior high school students in Indonesia. An integrative review was considered appropriate because it enables the integration of findings from empirical studies employing diverse research designs, intervention approaches, and outcome measures, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of career development interventions (Whittemore & Knafl, 2005).

The review process followed the integrative review framework proposed by Whittemore and Knafl (2005), which consists of five stages: problem identification, literature search, data evaluation, data analysis, and presentation of findings. These stages were applied to ensure a systematic synthesis of the available evidence and to provide a comprehensive overview of the characteristics and effectiveness of career development interventions for senior high school students in Indonesia.

The literature search was conducted in April 2026 using the Google Scholar and Garuda databases. These databases were selected because they provide broad coverage of Indonesian scholarly publications relevant to education and guidance and counseling. The search strategy employed combinations of keywords in both Indonesian and English, including *intervensi karier* (career intervention), *program karier* (career program), *career intervention*, *career program*,

and *senior high school students*. The initial search yielded 155 records, comprising 120 articles from Google Scholar and 35 articles from Garuda.

Studies were included in the review if they met the following inclusion criteria: (1) the study was conducted in Indonesia; (2) the participants were senior high school students; (3) the study examined an intervention or program aimed at promoting students' career development; (4) the study employed an experimental, quasi-experimental, or pre-experimental design; (5) the article was published between 2021 and 2026; and (6) the full text of the article was available. Studies that failed to meet one or more of these criteria were excluded from the review.

The study selection process was conducted in several stages, including identification of records, removal of duplicate articles, screening of titles and abstracts, and full-text review to determine eligibility based on the predefined inclusion criteria. Of the 155 records initially identified, 22 studies met all eligibility criteria and were included in the final review.

Data from the included studies were extracted using a standardized data extraction form. The extracted information included the authors, year of publication, sample characteristics, research design, type of intervention, career-related outcomes assessed, and the main findings of each study. The extracted data were then analyzed descriptively by categorizing the studies according to intervention characteristics, targeted career-related psychological outcomes, and reported intervention effectiveness. Finally, the synthesized findings were presented narratively and summarized in tables to facilitate the identification of patterns, similarities, and differences across the included studies.

C. Results & Discussion

Results

A total of 22 studies met the inclusion criteria and were included in this review. All studies were conducted in Indonesia between 2021 and 2026 and involved senior high school students as participants. The synthesis revealed considerable variation in the characteristics of the interventions, the targeted career-related psychological outcomes, and the reported effectiveness of the interventions. The findings are presented according to (1) study and intervention characteristics, (2) the distribution of targeted career-related psychological outcomes, and (3) the effectiveness of career development interventions.

Study and Intervention Characteristics

Table 1. Characteristics of Career Development Interventions for Senior High School Students

Intervention Category		Intervention Type	Number of Studies
Career counseling	Career	Life Design, Cognitive Information Processing (CIP), Solution-Focused Counseling, Solution-Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC)	2
	Training	Goal Setting, PLANS, Self-Efficacy Training, Career Planning Education	
Group guidance	Group	Problem-Based Learning, Problem Solving, Role Playing, Cinema Education	
Career information services	Career information	Discovery Learning, Carrd Website, Digital Media-Based Classroom Guidance	
Creative media techniques	Creative and	Career Monopoly Game, Mind Mapping, Interest and Aptitude Assessment	
Other interventions	Other	Career Decision-Making Course, English Communication Simulation Based on Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)	
Total			2

Most studies employed a pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design, followed by quasi-experimental and true experimental designs. Based on the synthesis, career development

interventions were classified into six major categories: career counseling, training, group guidance, career information services, creative media and techniques, and other intervention approaches.

Career counseling and training were the most frequently implemented interventions, each reported in five studies. The counseling approaches included Life Design, Cognitive Information Processing (CIP), Solution-Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC), and solution-focused counseling. The training category comprised goal-setting training, PLANS, self-efficacy training, and career planning education. In addition, four studies implemented group guidance interventions, three employed career information services, and three utilized creative media and techniques. The remaining two studies examined alternative intervention approaches, including a Career Decision-Making Course and an English communication simulation based on Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). These findings indicate that career development intervention research in Indonesia has primarily focused on counseling- and training-based approaches as the main strategies for supporting career development among senior high school students (Aprial & Irman, 2022; Ardhana & Ardiyanti, 2024; Bantam & Syah, 2022; Madjid et al., 2022; Prasetya et al., 2022; Wahani et al., 2025; Wahyuningsih et al., 2026).

Distribution of Targeted Career-Related Psychological Outcomes

Table 2. Distribution of Targeted Career-Related Psychological Outcomes

Career-Related Psychological Outcome	N umber of Studies
Career self-efficacy and career decision-making	8
Career planning	4
Career maturity	3
Career knowledge/understanding	2
Other career outcomes (career adaptability, career exploration, career readiness, career indecision)	5
Total	22

The synthesis indicated that career development intervention studies targeted a variety of career-related psychological outcomes. The most frequently examined outcomes were career self-efficacy and career decision-making, which were investigated in eight studies. These outcomes included career decision self-efficacy (CDSE), career self-efficacy, and career decision-making ability.

Four studies focused on improving career planning, whereas three evaluated career maturity as the primary outcome. Other outcomes, including career adaptability, career exploration, career readiness, career indecision, and career knowledge and understanding, were examined less frequently. Overall, these findings suggest that career development intervention research in Indonesia has predominantly focused on strengthening students' confidence in their career-related abilities and enhancing their capacity to make career decisions (Aprial & Irman, 2022; Ardhana & Ardiyanti, 2024; Bagaskara & Maryam, 2025; Bantam & Syah, 2022; Madjid et al., 2022; Nurlianawati & Widyatmoko, 2025; Ohoiwirin et al., 2025; Wahani et al., 2025).

Effectiveness of Career Development Interventions

Table 3. Effectiveness of Career Development Interventions

Outcome Category	Number of Studies	Percent age
Effective	19	86.4%
Not significant	3	13.6%
Total	22	100%

Most studies reported that the interventions were effective in improving students' career-related outcomes. Of the 22 studies included in this review, 19 (86.4%) reported statistically significant improvements in the targeted outcomes, whereas three studies (13.6%) found no significant effects. Effective interventions included interest and aptitude assessment, Life Design, role playing, problem-based learning, Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)-based interventions, goal-setting training, Cognitive Information Processing (CIP), Solution-Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC), the Career Monopoly Game, the Carrd website, mind mapping, discovery learning, and problem-solving approaches (Aprial & Irman, 2022; Azwania et al.,

2025; Bantam & Syah, 2022; Gemilang et al., 2024; Handayani et al., 2025; Madjid et al., 2022; Malihah et al., 2026; Ningrum & Setiawati, 2025; Ohoiwirin et al., 2025; Prasetya et al., 2022; Rahayu et al., 2026; Wahyuningsih et al., 2026; Yuliana et al., 2026).

Nevertheless, intervention effectiveness was not consistent across all studies. Three studies reported that the interventions did not produce statistically significant improvements. Specifically, PLANS training did not improve career maturity (Wahani et al., 2025), Cinema Education implemented through group guidance failed to enhance career self-efficacy (Febriyanti & Naqiyah, 2026), and an English communication simulation based on Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) did not significantly improve either career self-efficacy or students' work readiness (Dewi & Ursula, 2026). Overall, the synthesized evidence suggests that career development interventions for Indonesian senior high school students are generally effective in enhancing a range of career-related psychological outcomes, particularly career self-efficacy, career decision-making, career planning, and career maturity.

Discussion

This review aimed to identify the characteristics of career development interventions and evaluate their effectiveness for senior high school students in Indonesia. Overall, the synthesized evidence indicates that career development interventions implemented between 2021 and 2026 were generally effective in improving a range of career-related psychological outcomes, particularly career self-efficacy, career decision-making, career planning, and career maturity. The findings also revealed that career counseling and training were the most frequently implemented intervention approaches among the reviewed studies. These results suggest that career development among senior high school students depends not only on the provision of career information but also on structured processes that help students develop self-understanding, strengthen confidence in their abilities, and acquire the skills necessary to plan their future careers. Accordingly, this discussion focuses on the patterns of interventions identified, the mechanisms underlying their effectiveness, and the factors influencing the success of career development interventions for senior high school students.

The synthesis demonstrated that career counseling and training were the two most commonly employed approaches in career development interventions for Indonesian senior high school students. The predominance of these approaches suggests that career development continues to be viewed as a process requiring structured guidance to help students understand their personal characteristics, explore educational and occupational alternatives, and make more informed career decisions. Interventions such as Life Design, Cognitive Information Processing (CIP), Solution-Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC), self-efficacy training, and goal-setting training are fundamentally designed to strengthen individuals' capacity to manage their own career development (Aprial & Irman, 2022; Bantam & Syah, 2022; Nurlianawati & Widyatmoko, 2025; Prasetya et al., 2022; Wahyuningsih et al., 2026). These findings are consistent with the international literature, which suggests that effective career interventions have shifted beyond merely providing information about the labor market to facilitating self-reflection, career identity development, and the capacity to adapt to changing work environments (Lent & Brown, 2020; Savickas, 2013). Recent reviews of Career Construction Theory likewise indicate that individual counseling, group counseling, workshops, and technology-based interventions are increasingly utilized to enhance students' career adaptability and career readiness (Wang & Li, 2024).

Another important finding is that career self-efficacy and career decision-making were the most frequently targeted outcomes. This pattern appears to reflect the strong influence of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) in the design of career interventions. According to SCCT, individuals' beliefs in their capabilities play a central role in shaping career choices, goals, and career-related behaviors (Lent et al., 1994). Several studies included in this review demonstrated that improvements in career self-efficacy enhanced students' confidence in selecting educational pathways and occupations that aligned with their interests and abilities. Positive outcomes were consistently observed in interventions involving self-efficacy training, solution-focused counseling, Solution-Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC), role playing, and goal-setting training, all of which contributed to greater confidence and improved career decision-making (Bantam & Syah, 2022; Madjid et al., 2022; Nurlianawati & Widyatmoko, 2025; Ohoiwirin et al., 2025; Sinta & Silvia, 2025; Wahyuningsih et al., 2026).

The synthesis also suggests that the effectiveness of career interventions was generally supported by three primary mechanisms. First, interventions promoted greater self-understanding by encouraging students to explore their interests, abilities, values, and personal

potential. This mechanism was evident in interventions involving interest and aptitude assessments, Life Design, PLANS, Discovery Learning, and Career Decision-Making Courses, all of which helped students gain deeper insight into themselves before making career decisions. Second, interventions increased students' access to information regarding careers and postsecondary educational opportunities, thereby providing a stronger foundation for informed decision-making. Third, interventions actively engaged students in learning through discussions, reflection, simulations, problem-solving activities, games, and other exploratory experiences. The combination of these three mechanisms enabled students not only to receive career information passively but also to actively construct their own understanding of career development (Adam et al., 2026; Ardhana & Ardiyanti, 2024; Handayani et al., 2025; Malihah et al., 2026; Prasetya et al., 2022; Yudiana et al., 2021).

The findings further indicate that participatory interventions tended to produce more consistent improvements than interventions focused primarily on information delivery. Approaches such as role playing, Problem-Based Learning, problem solving, Discovery Learning, mind mapping, and Career Decision-Making Courses encouraged students to think critically, reflect on their potential and career aspirations, evaluate alternative career options, and develop their own action plans. Active engagement in the learning process enabled students to acquire more meaningful learning experiences, allowing career information to be internalized not only cognitively but also through reflection and direct experience (Liu et al., 2026). This finding is consistent with the constructivist perspective, which proposes that knowledge and skills develop more effectively when learners actively construct their understanding through authentic learning experiences. Within the context of career development, participatory approaches are also consistent with Career Construction Theory, which emphasizes self-reflection, experiential exploration, and meaning-making as essential foundations for developing career readiness and adaptability (Savickas, 2013). Therefore, the effectiveness of career development interventions appears to depend not only on the content delivered but also on the extent to which students are actively involved in career exploration and decision-making processes.

Although most studies reported positive outcomes, not all interventions produced statistically significant improvements. PLANS training, Cinema Education, and an English communication simulation based on Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) are examples of interventions that did not demonstrate significant effects. Based on the synthesis of the discussions presented in these studies, the lack of significant findings appears to be attributable primarily to implementation-related factors rather than conceptual weaknesses of the interventions themselves. Factors identified across these studies included small sample sizes, relatively short intervention durations, limitations of the measurement instruments, low levels of participant engagement, and limited opportunities for students to experience mastery experiences during the intervention process. According to SCCT, mastery experiences constitute the primary source of self-efficacy development; consequently, interventions that fail to provide such experiences are less likely to produce substantial improvements (Lent et al., 1994). These findings suggest that the effectiveness of career development interventions depends not only on the type of intervention implemented but also on the quality of implementation, intervention intensity, and participant characteristics (Dewi & Ursula, 2026; Febriyanti & Naqiyah, 2026; Wahani et al., 2025).

Overall, the findings of this review indicate that career development interventions have considerable potential to enhance multiple career-related psychological outcomes among Indonesian senior high school students, particularly career self-efficacy, career decision-making, career planning, career maturity, and career exploration. These findings imply that school guidance and counseling services should develop career programs that extend beyond the provision of career information by incorporating active learning experiences, opportunities for self-exploration, and activities that strengthen students' confidence in their ability to plan and manage their future careers.

This review has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the literature search was limited to two databases, Google Scholar and Garuda, raising the possibility that relevant studies indexed in other databases were not identified. Second, the review included only studies conducted among Indonesian senior high school students between 2021 and 2026; therefore, the findings cannot be readily generalized to other educational levels or cultural contexts. Third, most of the included studies employed pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest designs, resulting in variation in the overall strength of the available evidence regarding intervention effectiveness. Finally, substantial heterogeneity

existed across studies in terms of intervention types, implementation duration, sample sizes, and measurement instruments, making direct comparisons difficult. Accordingly, the findings of this review should be interpreted as providing an overview of current trends and the reported effectiveness of career development interventions for Indonesian senior high school students rather than as definitive evidence of intervention effectiveness.

D. Conclusions

This integrative review of 22 studies on career development interventions for Indonesian senior high school students published between 2021 and 2026 found that career counseling and training were the most frequently implemented intervention approaches. The most commonly targeted outcomes were career self-efficacy, career decision-making, career planning, and career maturity. Overall, the majority of the reviewed studies reported that the interventions were effective in improving various career-related psychological outcomes among students. The synthesized evidence suggests that intervention effectiveness is supported by enhanced self-understanding, strengthened self-efficacy, the provision of relevant career information, and students' active engagement in the learning process. These findings highlight the potential of career development interventions as an effective strategy for promoting career readiness among senior high school students while providing an empirical foundation for the development of evidence-based career services in schools.

Future research should develop and evaluate interventions that address more contemporary career constructs, such as career adaptability, career exploration, career readiness, and employability, using more rigorous research designs and follow-up assessments to examine the sustainability of intervention effects over time. From a practical perspective, school counselors and educational institutions should design career development programs that are active, participatory, and student-centered by integrating self-exploration, career information, and authentic learning experiences to optimally support students' career development.

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