

ISLAMIC BASED DECISION MAKING STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS CAREER CHOICES

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Abstrak: Banyak siswa, terutama di tingkat SMK, sering menghadapi kesulitan dalam membuat keputusan karier yang tepat. Kurangnya informasi yang memadai, keterbatasan dukungan sosial, dan kurangnya pengalaman praktis menjadi tantangan utama. Masalah ini seringkali menyebabkan kebingungan dalam memilih jalur karier yang sesuai dengan potensi dan minat siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi strategi pengambilan keputusan karier di kalangan siswa kelas XII di SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan. Dengan meningkatnya tantangan dalam pemilihan karier, penting bagi siswa untuk memiliki akses kepada keterampilan, informasi, dan dukungan sosial yang memadai. Melalui metode observasi dan wawancara, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi delapan tipe strategi pengambilan keputusan, yang dibagi menjadi kategori efektif dan tidak efektif. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa praktik langsung seperti magang dan kunjungan industri secara signifikan meningkatkan motivasi serta pemahaman siswa tentang pilihan karier yang ada. Selain itu, dukungan bimbingan karier terbukti krusial dalam membantu siswa membuat keputusan yang sesuai dengan potensi dan aspirasi mereka. Implikasi dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran berbasis pengalaman dan dukungan bimbingan yang berkelanjutan dapat secara signifikan memperbaiki keputusan karier siswa, mengurangi kebingungan, dan meningkatkan kesiapan mereka untuk menghadapi tantangan dunia profesional.

Kata Kunci: Pengambilan Keputusan, Karier Siswa, Nilai Keislaman

Abstract: Many students, especially at the vocational high school level, often face difficulties in making the right career decisions. Lack of adequate information, limited social support, and lack of practical experience are the main challenges. These issues often lead to confusion in choosing a career path that aligns with students' potential and interests. This study aims to explore career decision-making strategies among 12th-grade students at Apipsu Pharmacy Vocational High School in Medan. With the increasing challenges in career selection, it is important for students to have access to adequate skills, information, and social support. Through observation and interviews, this study identified eight types of decision-making strategies, which were divided into effective and ineffective categories. The results showed that hands-on practices such as internships and industrial visits significantly increased students' motivation and understanding of available career options. Additionally, career guidance support was found to be crucial in helping students make decisions aligned with their potential and aspirations. The implications of this study suggest that experience-based learning and continuous career guidance support can significantly improve students' career decisions, reduce confusion, and enhance their readiness to face professional challenges.

Keywords: Decision Making, Student Career, Islamic Values

INTRODUCTION

Career decision making is an important process for students because it allows them to determine career choices based on their potential, which is the basis for choosing a major or study program in college. This process supports self-development in academic aspects, values, and attitudes in accordance with career goals, and helps them obtain career positions that suit their lives. Career decisions should be thought through carefully, without interference from others (Rashid, 2023).

Making good career decisions is complex, as it involves in-depth consideration of various factors. In order to find career choices that match individual interests and potential, strategies such as career counseling are very effective. Career counseling, which is conducted collaboratively between professional counselors and individuals, aims to help individuals understand themselves, recognize the world of work, plan for the future, and make appropriate choices according to job circumstances and requirements.

High school students are at a critical stage between two very decisive choices, namely choosing to continue to college or directly enter the world of work. The career decision in question is a decision that is taken wisely, full of analysis, and with careful consideration. Maturity in career selection includes understanding and ability to make appropriate plans, consistent attitude towards responsibility, and awareness of all internal factors that must be considered in making career decisions (Amirudin et al., 2023)

Career planning is an important process that involves self-understanding, examining career possibilities and their impact, and reflecting on career options. This process includes making professional choices, goal building, and plans related to work, education, and advancement relevant to the world of work. Career guidance also plays an important role, especially for individuals facing job instability or job changes. In this context, guidance from experienced professional counselors is necessary to provide clear and comprehensive direction. With the right support, students and other individuals can be better prepared to face challenges in their career decision-making (Ernawati, 2019).

Good career planning can have an impact on students' decision-making abilities. Career decision making is the process of selecting and setting career goals from a number of available options based on an understanding of one's own potential and information about careers. One way for students not to choose the wrong major is to make the right career planning, which considers their preferred field of specialization. Adolescents who experience career indecision should have access to specialized skills, competencies, and social support systems to help them in making the right decisions (Ayu, 2022)

Not all students can undergo career planning well because they face various obstacles in the career selection process. Many students experience confusion in choosing the right major and determining the appropriate job, which can cause them to be unemployed after graduation. Inability to

make career decisions is often due to lack of preparedness, lack of information about career processes and opportunities, and inconsistent information about themselves and career options.

Students are often caught up in academic demands and jobs that do not match their interests, and lack an understanding of the realities of the world of work after completing secondary education. A greater focus on final exam scores and busy class schedules can add to students' confusion about future career choices.

Limited career guidance and hard-to-access information also contribute to the difficulties they face in determining the right career path (Fikriyani & Herdi, 2021).

Information on the alumni data of SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan in recent years, there are clear indications of challenges in career decision-making among students. The data shows that the proportion of alumni who continue their studies to universities with majors that are linear with their educational background is still lower than the alumni who enter the workforce in non-linear fields.

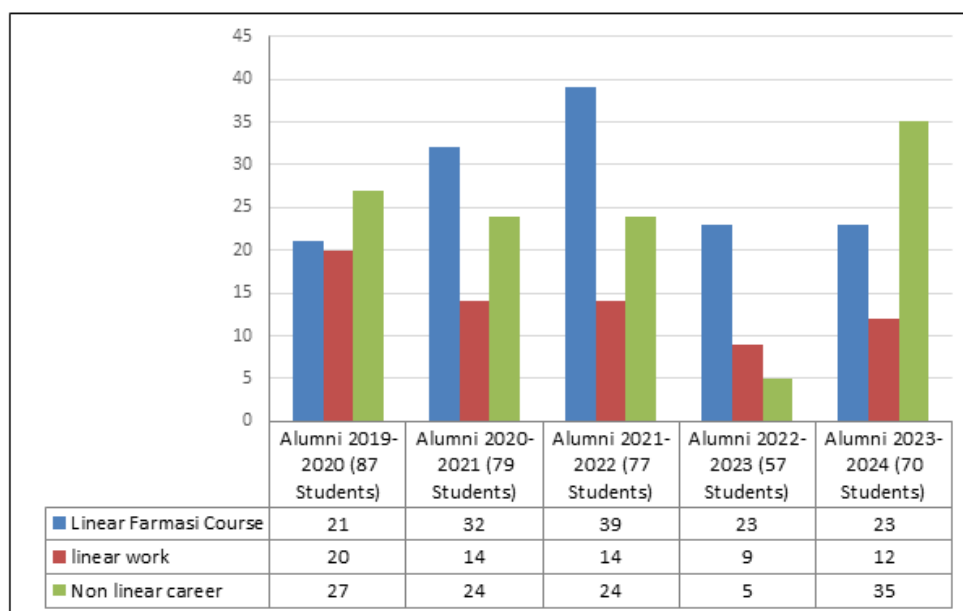


Figure 1: Career Development Data of Vocational School of Pharmacy alumni 2019-2024

The annual alumni data shows that although there are a number of alumni who choose to continue their education in a field that is in line with their background, there are still many alumni who are forced to work in inappropriate fields. This reflects that the number of job openings in the field of pharmacy is not sufficient to accommodate all graduates, which results in suboptimal decisions in their career choices.

Based on the information, there are weaknesses that indicate that the graduates

of Apipsu Medan Vocational School of Pharmacy alumni are not adequate between the fields of work taken by the graduates of Apipsu Medan Vocational School of Pharmacy with their educational background in pharmacy. Based on data collected from the alumni of SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan in recent years, it appears that most of the graduates are not working in fields that are linear with their education. This is a serious problem because it indicates that the career decision-making and career planning process

in schools is not optimal. Career selection and decision-making among students of SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan, there are a number of problems that need attention. Students often face difficulties in properly recognizing their interests and talents, which can lead to a mismatch between career choices and their potential. Furthermore, many students experience obstacles in the career decision-making process, either due to a lack of relevant information about available options or the influence of social environments such as family and friends that can confuse them.

This study aims to explore strategies that can assist students in making informed career decisions, so that graduates of SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan can be better prepared for the world of work and choose careers that match their interests and potential.

Research related to career decision-making shows that good career planning can help students make more informed decisions. Rasyid et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of self-development through clear career planning, while Azzahra et al. (2025) described the influence of external and internal factors in high school students' career decision making. Arjanggi and Suprihatin (2023) showed the difficulties of low-achieving students in choosing the right career path, while Akmal (2019) highlighted the factors that cause career indecision in students, such as social support and self-understanding.

The distinction of this study lies in its focus on career decision-making among students of SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan, with particular attention to the mismatch

between the pharmacy educational background and the jobs that alumni undertake, which are often non-linear. This study aims to explore the factors causing such a mismatch and identify effective strategies that can help students choose a career path that matches their interests and potential, as well as face challenges in their career decision-making.

METHOD

The type of research used in this study is qualitative research with a descriptive approach. Qualitative research aims to obtain a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study, by producing descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and behaviors that can be observed. In accordance with the research objectives, this method focuses on scientific search, investigation, and experimentation to gain new understanding and improve scientific and technological levels (Bogdan & Taylor, 2021; S. Margono, 2021). This research does not prioritize statistical calculations, but rather the collection of empirical data in the form of words, writings, and observed behavior of the research subjects.

This research was conducted at SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan, which was chosen as the research location because of its relevance to the object under study, namely career decision making in class XII students. This school has an educational background that focuses on the pharmaceutical field, which provides an interesting perspective on the mismatch between education and work undertaken by alumni.

The main source of data primary in this research is informants consisting of class XII students at SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan. Secondary data sources were obtained from journals, books, and documentation relevant to the study, including literature related to career decision-making and career planning.

Data collection was conducted using observation, interview, and documentation study techniques. Observations were made to observe students' career decision-making strategies. Interviews were conducted to explore in-depth information regarding the experiences and decision-making processes carried out by students. Documentation studies were conducted by collecting secondary data from written sources that support the understanding of career decision making at Apipsu Medan Pharmacy Vocational School.

The collected data will be analyzed using the Miles and Huberman data analysis technique which includes three main stages: data collection, data reduction, and data presentation. This process aims to organize the existing data into a more structured and easily understood.

Data validity was guaranteed by using triangulation and member check. Triangulation is done by comparing data from various sources and data collection techniques (observation, interview, and documentation). Member check was conducted by requesting feedback from informants about the interview results and research findings to ensure the accuracy and validity of the information obtained.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Student Career Planning

Entering the final stage of education in SMK, especially for grade XII students, decisions related to career selection become one of the most significant aspects and can affect the direction of their education and work in the future. This decision-making process is crucial because students are not only required to master academic materials relevant to the field of pharmacy, but must also be able to design career development strategies that are in accordance with their potential, interests, and personal values. At SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan, the career planning process involves several programs designed to support the development of practical skills and industry-related knowledge. These programs include internships, prakrin (field work practice), pema (academic education and development), and industry visits. The following table presents an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with each of these programs, which are integral to helping students prepare to choose the right career. This analysis provides a comprehensive picture of the challenges and potentials that students face in their career decision-making process.

In addition to these programs, guidance counseling plays a pivotal role in the career decision-making process. Career counselors at SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan assist students by providing personalized advice, helping them assess their strengths and weaknesses, and exploring potential career paths. This support enables students to make more informed decisions, aligning their career choices with their aspirations and the demands of the job market.

Table 1. SWOT Analysis of Student Career Planning Basis

No	Aspect	Internship	Field Work Practice	Academic Education and Building	Industry Visit
1	Strengths	Improve practical skills and working knowledge and Expand students' professional network.	Facilitates the application of theory into practice. Allows students to engage in daily working procedures.	Develops soft skills such as leadership and cooperation. Increases students' motivation and interest in the field of study.	Provides first-hand insight into the industrial world. Encourages students to prepare for a real career.
2	Weaknesses	The quality of internships varies depending on the provider company	Inconsistent guidance can reduce effectiveness.	Need more support from the industry for sustainability.	Not all visits allow for effective interaction with professionals.
3	Opportunities	Increase employment opportunities for skilled graduates.	Gain hands-on experience that builds confidence.	Opportunity to secure future job offers.	Networking opportunities and up-to-date industry information.
4	Threats	Policy changes from the company or related agencies can be disruptive.	Potential demotivation if the pre-training experience is not satisfactory.	Limited resources to support the program on a regular basis.	Students may not get practical information that supports their career.

Internships provide a valuable opportunity for students to bridge the gap between theory learned in school and practice in the world of work, particularly in the pharmaceutical industry which demands qualified technical skills and a deep understanding of products. This experience not only allows students to develop practical skills by applying their knowledge in real work situations, but is also instrumental in boosting their confidence. When students experience a professional environment, they feel more confident in their abilities and knowledge, which is crucial for making the right career decisions in the future. In addition, internships open the door to expanding professional networks, where interactions with professionals in the

pharmaceutical industry allow students to build relationships that could potentially open up future employment opportunities. Thus, internships are not only a learning experience, but also a valuable investment in students' career development (Windika, 2022)

The internship program at SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan showed that 80% of grade XII students involved in internships in pharmacy and pharmacists felt an increase in knowledge and skills related to the jobs they will enter. They reported that the experience in relevant companies was helpful in understanding the real practices in the industry.

Field Work Practice provides a golden opportunity for students to dive

directly into the world of work, allowing them to apply theory in real practice and comprehensively understand various aspects of work in the pharmaceutical industry. Through Prakrin, students not only improve essential technical and interpersonal skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, but also learn to manage time, face challenges, and adapt to new environments, all of which contribute to the enhancement of their emotional and professional maturity. Thus, Prakrin becomes more than just an extracurricular activity, but rather a valuable investment in the development of students' competencies and character. In addition, the policies and practices implemented by educational institutions also focus on the importance of maintaining the work environment and instilling the values of sustainability. This not only helps students understand future choices but also internalize sustainability principles that will influence their decisions in the future, demonstrating the commitment of educational institutions in shaping a generation that is aware of environmental responsibility (Firdaus & Anriani, 2022).

Prakrin conducted by students at SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan revealed from the results of observations and interviews and data from alumni at SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan that 87% of students felt more prepared to work in the pharmaceutical industry after taking the prakrin. The evaluation showed that the preceptorship helped students understand important operational standards and work ethics.

Education that focuses on practical skills development has proven to be highly

effective in preparing students for a career in the pharmaceutical industry, with this approach providing the necessary tools to achieve success in the world of work. One of the key aspects that students acquire is communication and collaboration skills, where practical skills-based education trains students to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, and to work well in teams. These skills are essential in the workplace, as collaboration and good communication are key to success. In addition, this education also contributes to the improvement of students' theoretical knowledge; by applying theoretical concepts in practice, they gain a deeper understanding of the scientific and managerial aspects in pharmacy, which in turn enhances their competitiveness in an increasingly competitive job market. This process not only enriches their knowledge, but also boosts students' self-confidence. With the ability to master practical skills that match the demands of the world of work, students feel more confident in determining a career path that suits their interests and abilities, and this confidence becomes an important asset that will support them to achieve success in the pharmaceutical industry (Sultan & Tirtayasa, 2024)

The Pema program at SMK Farmasi Apipsu has proven to be effective in preparing students to enter the workforce, with 85% of students reporting that the education they received has provided much-needed additional skills. The program includes a variety of materials designed to enhance students' knowledge and practical skills, such as training in drug compounding

techniques, understanding of industry regulations and standards, and effective communication skills.

Industry visits are activities designed to give students a first-hand insight into the world of work, with the aim of enriching their understanding of actual professional practices in the relevant industry. In this activity, students are invited to directly observe operational processes where they can see how field activities collaborate with teams and interact with coworkers. This activity also includes question and answer sessions with professionals, allowing students to gain insight into the challenges and responsibilities faced in the field. Through this experience, students are expected to apply the theoretical knowledge gained at school, strengthen their motivation to pursue a career in their field of interest, and increase their understanding of the skills required to succeed in the pharmaceutical industry. These industrial visits are important to build connections between the theories taught in the classroom and the reality of the world of work, so that students are better prepared to enter the job market after graduation (Cahya, 2023).

Evaluation results from industrial visits conducted by students of SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan showed that 90% of students felt more excited and motivated to choose a career in pharmacy after experiencing first-hand the processes and operations in pharmaceutical companies, hospitals, and pharmacies. The visit was designed to provide students with an in-depth insight into professional practices in the field, as well as help them understand the

various career paths available in the pharmaceutical sector.

Based on the percentage of SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan's report book, the industrial visit took the top spot with 90% of students feeling more motivated and excited to pursue a career in pharmacy after participating in this activity. This shows that the hands-on experience of seeing the processes and operations in pharmaceutical companies, hospitals and pharmacies has a significant impact in increasing students' interest and motivation. Thus, it can be concluded that industrial visits are the most desirable areas and have a major impact in increasing students' interest and motivation for a career in the pharmaceutical industry, followed by Prakrin, Pema, and internships.

Career decision-making from students themselves

Career decision-making is an important skill for students, especially for grade XII students at SMK Farmasi APIPSU Medan who are facing career choices that will affect their future. A deep understanding of decision-making strategies is crucial to guide students in determining an appropriate career path. Decision-making strategies were divided into two groups: first, four ineffective strategies (delaying, fatalistic, compliant, paralytic) that tend to impede progress and cause confusion; second, four more effective strategies (intuitive, impulsive, agonizing, planful) that help students better evaluate career choices. Based on the data filled in by students, it is hoped that a picture can be obtained of how these strategies affect their career decisions,

so that students can be more prepared and confident in determining their steps towards success. The following is the data on the results of students' choices related to their career decision-making strategies.

Through the data that has been obtained from all XII grade students of SMK Apipsu Farmasi Medan, it is expected to understand the various decision-making strategies that influence students' career selection process. With a deep understanding of these strategies, students are expected to be more prepared and confident in facing the choices they have to make, as well as making the decisions taken as the first step towards future success. The following is a description of the various career decision-making strategies applied by students, based on the eight types of decision-making, along with the results of observations and interviews with research informants.

1. Decision Based on Delaying

Most students do not tend to procrastinate in making career decisions. This suggests that uncertainty or fear of consequences may not affect them significantly. According to Procrastination theory (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016), procrastination is often related to fear of failure or uncertainty about the future. Research by (Ferrari, 2001) also revealed that career decision delays are common among adolescents who do not have a clear understanding of their interests and talents.

During interviews with some students, it was seen that most students prefer to make decisions about their careers immediately, although there are some who find it difficult to choose between the

options. Most of the students we interviewed said that they felt it was better to choose now rather than wait too long for fear of missing out on opportunities. However, there were a few students who revealed that they sometimes hesitated and needed more information regarding their career options.

2. Belief that Fate Determines Careers (Fatalistic)

Some students believe that fate will determine their careers, and therefore do not feel the need to think too hard in choosing a career. This view may arise due to the belief that external factors such as fate are more influential than personal effort. External Locus of Control Theory (Rotter, 1996) suggests that individuals with external locus of control tend to be less proactive in career decision-making. Research by Ng, Sorensen, & Eby (2006) also confirmed that individuals with this view are more passive in making career-related decisions.

In interviews with students, it was found that some students expressed the belief that their career decisions were strongly influenced by fate or destiny. Some students admitted to believing that they just need to go with the flow of life and not force themselves to plan in detail. However, there were also those who felt that although fate plays a role, personal effort is still needed to achieve career goals.

3. Dependence on Others in Decision Making (Compliant)

Many students are more likely to follow their parents' or teachers' decisions in choosing a career, which could be due to a lack of self-confidence or a fear of taking responsibility for personal decisions.

Bowlby's (1969) theory reveals that adolescents often rely on authority figures to feel more secure in decision-making. Kracke's (2002) research also states that adolescents who have a close relationship with their parents tend to rely more on them in choosing a career.

When conducting interviews with several students, it was found that many of them entrusted their career decisions to their parents and teachers. Most of the students felt more comfortable following the advice of more experienced people, and this indicates a lack of confidence in making their own decisions. One student revealed, I feel more secure if my parents support my choice. If they agree, I feel like it's the right decision.

4. Fear and Anxiety in Decision Making (Paralytic)

Some students exhibit significant anxiety and fear when it comes to making career decisions. This anxiety may arise due to uncertainty or fear of making the wrong decision. Janis & Mann (1977) argue that anxiety often arises when individuals feel unprepared or do not have enough information. Germeijs & Verschueren (2006) also highlighted that anxiety in career decision making is more common among students who do not yet have a clear career plan.

During the interviews, some students revealed that they felt very anxious and afraid of making the wrong decision regarding their career. One student said, "I am afraid that if I choose the wrong career, I will regret it later." This indicates a sense of

insecurity and uncertainty in choosing a career path.

5. Intuitive Decisions

Some students felt that decisions made based on feelings were more appropriate. This shows trust in intuition or personal feelings rather than rational analysis. According to Kahneman (2011), spontaneous decisions are often based on intuition rather than rational consideration. However, Betsch (2008) states that career decisions based on feelings can be less effective and more prone to regret in the future.

In interviews, some students admitted to choosing a career based on what they felt would suit them best. Some students said that they prioritized what they liked and felt was more appropriate, without much in-depth analysis of the options available. One student said, I chose because I felt it was the best for me, even though I don't know for sure what the future holds.

6. Spontaneous Decision Without Thinking of Consequences (Impulsive)

Some students were more likely to disagree with career decisions that were made spontaneously without considering the consequences. A desire to avoid a complicated decision-making process or a lack of rational consideration could be to blame. Impulsivity theory (Eysenck, 1993) explains that impulsive individuals often make decisions without considering the long-term impact. Steel (2007) also found that impulsive decisions in careers often lead to dissatisfaction later in life.

Some of the students we interviewed revealed that they sometimes make

impulsive career decisions without really considering the consequences. Although they tend not to want to think too long, there are some students who feel that a quick decision gives them a sense of relief. "Sometimes I choose right away, so I don't think too much," said one student.

7. Confusion and Overthinking in Decision Making (Agonizing)

Some students felt confused and caught up in too much deliberation in choosing a career, possibly due to the large number of options or the lack of clear information about each option. Sutrisno (2015) proposed the Overchoice theory which states that a large number of choices can cause confusion and difficulty in decision making. Pratama (2017) also point out that too many career choices can cause students to feel overwhelmed and delay decision making.

In interviews, some students revealed that they felt confused when they had to choose from the various career options available. One student said, There are many choices, and I don't know which one to choose. I am confused between the various options. This indicates that there are difficulties in decision-making due to too many options to consider.

8. Careful Planning in Career Decision Making

Careful planning in career decision-making is essential as it helps individuals to identify options that best suit their goals and aspirations. Most students demonstrated a high awareness of the importance of careful career planning. Good planning helps reduce confusion and anxiety in decision-making

and increases the chances of achieving career goals. Ayu's (2022) findings emphasize that understanding the importance of planning increases individual confidence in making better and more effective decisions.

Some of the students interviewed revealed that they prefer to plan their careers thoroughly before making decisions. They feel more confident if their decisions are based on clear planning. One student said, I am calmer when I have a clear plan for my career.

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that students' career decision-making characteristics are closely related to the programs provided by SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan. Students with a planful nature tend to plan their careers well, and the internship and preceptorship programs provide them with practical experience to realize these plans. In addition, students with a compliant attitude can more easily follow structured training and adhere to the rules in the internship program, which greatly supports their success in adapting to the industrial world.

However, students with impulsive and intuitive characters may face challenges in making long-term decisions. Programs that involve feedback from mentors during the internship can help them slow down the decision-making process and consider more strategic steps. Students with "delaying" and "paralytic" characteristics need more support in terms of developing confidence and better decision-making skills, so that they do not get stuck in uncertainty.

Fatalistic students also need more support in finding a career path that suits

their interests and talents. In-practice guidance programs and academic education can provide new perspectives and motivate them to try harder. Students with agonizing tendencies can benefit from hands-on experience through internship programs to reduce anxiety and clarify their career goals.

By understanding these various characteristics, SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan can tailor programs such as internships, preceptorships, PEMA, and industry visits to help students develop relevant skills, guide them in better decision-making, and prepare them for a brighter future.

CONCLUSIONS

This study emphasizes the importance of career decision-making strategies in grade XII students at SMK Farmasi Apipsu Medan. A good decision-making process allows students to choose a career that suits their interests and potential, and prepares them for the challenges in the world of work. There are eight types of decision-making strategies, which are divided into two categories: effective and ineffective. Practical experiences such as internships and industrial visits contribute significantly to students' motivation and understanding of their career choices. The results suggest that career guidance support is essential for students to make informed decisions that are in line with their personal aspirations. By understanding and applying appropriate strategies, students are expected to go through the career selection process with more confidence. In addition, integrating hands-on experience into the educational curriculum will further enhance

students' readiness to enter the workforce. The involvement of parents and communities in providing information and support can also enrich students' career choices. Through this comprehensive approach, it is hoped that students can achieve success in choosing and developing the careers they envision. This is an important step in shaping a better future for them as well as a positive contribution to society.

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