



Volume 9 (1) (2026): 34-50

The Indonesian Journal of Social Studies

Available at <https://journal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/jpips/index>

IMPLEMENTATION OF CAREER SERVICES FOR STUDENTS AT SMP PEMBANGUNAN LABORATORIUM UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG

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Abstract

This study aimed to describe the implementation of career services at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium Universitas Negeri Padang based on three aspects: service planning, service implementation, and service evaluation. This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design. The participants were 95 ninth-grade students selected using a total sampling technique. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages. The findings showed that students' perceptions of career service planning were predominantly high (43.16%) and very high (41.05%). For service implementation, 50.53% of students rated it as high and 32.63% as very high. Meanwhile, service evaluation was rated high by 42.11% of students and very high by 38.95%. Overall, the findings indicate that students generally perceived career service implementation positively across the three aspects. However, these results represent students' perceptions and should not be interpreted as direct evidence of service effectiveness or improvements in students' career readiness. The findings may serve as descriptive input for reviewing and improving career service programs in schools.

Keywords: Career services, Career planning, Junior high school students, Career guidance, Career development

How to Cite: Tanaka, Dea Try., Putri, Besti Nora Dwi., Candra, Yasrial. (2026). IMPLEMENTATION OF CAREER SERVICES FOR STUDENTS AT SMP PEMBANGUNAN LABORATORIUM UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG. *The Indonesian Journal of Social Studies*, 9(1): 34-50 .

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e-ISSN 2615-5966 (Online)

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INTRODUCTION

Career development is a gradual and ongoing process that begins during the educational period and encompasses self-awareness, exploration of available options, goal setting, and decision-making regarding education and employment. At the junior high school level, this process is particularly important because students begin to face decisions regarding further education that may influence the direction of their academic and career development. Therefore, career services at the junior high school level should not be limited to introducing students to different occupations, but should also assist them in understanding their interests, abilities, potential, values, and various educational and career alternatives that are appropriate for them. (Kleine et al., 2021) demonstrated that career exploration is an important component of students' career development, while (Artosandi et al., 2025) emphasized the importance of developing vocational interest exploration among junior high school students. This is further supported by (Suwidagdhho & Purwanta, 2022), who developed a career exploration instrument for junior high school students, as well as (Abdillah et al., 2025), who highlighted the importance of alignment between students' choice of educational specialization and their individual potential. At this stage, students need adequate support to connect their understanding of themselves with realistic educational and career choices. (Dodd et al., 2022) found that career guidance can contribute to improving students' career readiness. Therefore, career services need to be systematically organized so that students not only obtain relevant information but also develop the ability to explore alternatives, establish goals, and prepare themselves for subsequent educational transitions.

The implementation of career services is increasingly important because students differ in their levels of readiness, self-understanding, and decision-making abilities. Difficulties in choosing further education, limited access to information, insufficient understanding of interests and abilities, and unclear future goals may hinder the career development process. (Mata-Correas et al., 2025) reported that career indecision and difficulties in career decision-making are among the issues encountered by students at the secondary school level. In this context, guidance and counseling teachers play an important role in providing assistance that corresponds to students' developmental needs. (Parola et al., 2024) showed that teacher support is associated with adolescents' career development, while (Zhao et al., 2024) found that autonomy support from teachers and parents is related to the development of students' career adaptability at the secondary school level. (Söner & Gültekin, 2025) also demonstrated that parental support and the congruence between adolescents' and parents' perspectives contribute to the development of career-related self-efficacy. Various forms of services have been developed to support students, including career guidance workshops that can improve career self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and career goals (Jemini Gashi et al., 2023); trait-and-factor counseling to improve career decision-making skills (Simon Wudy et al., 2025); and trait-and-factor counseling to enhance career planning skills among junior high school students (Saputra et al., 2025). (Sedyawati & Muslihati, 2025) also demonstrated the potential of group guidance using modeling techniques to optimize

career planning among junior high school students, while (Suryahadikusumah et al., 2025) developed a transferable skills-based module to enhance career readiness. Technological developments have further expanded the alternatives for delivering career services through multimedia (Yüzen & Perkmén, 2022), career information platforms based on Google Sites (Fahmi et al., 2025), mobile career counseling applications (Masi et al., 2025), and augmented reality-based career card game media (Alfikriah et al., 2025).

Although research on career guidance has developed through various models, media, instruments, and interventions, many previous studies have primarily focused on developing or examining the effectiveness of particular approaches. For example, (Artosandi et al., 2025) focused on developing a vocational interest instrument, (Jemini Gashi et al., 2023) examined the effectiveness of a career guidance workshop, (Simon Wudy et al., 2025) developed a trait-and-factor counseling guide, and (Masi et al., 2025) examined the use of a mobile application for career decision-making. Meanwhile, there is still a need for studies that describe how career services are implemented in actual school settings, particularly when examined comprehensively from the stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation. In the delivery of guidance and counseling services related to career development, these three aspects constitute an interconnected process: planning provides the basis for identifying needs and developing programs, implementation involves putting the program into practice through various forms of service, and evaluation is used to determine the extent to which objectives have been achieved while providing a basis for improving subsequent services (Nora Dwi Putri & Nofridayati, 2022). Research on the implementation of career services at the junior high school level has also indicated that such services are intended to help students become familiar with the world of work, plan for further education, and make choices based on their interests and potential. However, their implementation may still encounter challenges related to time, facilities, infrastructure, and the development of comprehensive programs. These conditions highlight the importance of empirically mapping the implementation of career services as a basis for strengthening school-level programs. This issue is particularly relevant at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium Universitas Negeri Padang. Based on initial observations conducted from August to November 2025, some students were still found to experience confusion in determining their educational pathways, had limited understanding of their own potential, and lacked clear career plans. An interview with a guidance and counseling teacher on February 13, 2026, indicated that career services had been provided through information on further education, introductions to majors and senior high schools or equivalent institutions, and classroom guidance on career planning. Nevertheless, some students continued to experience difficulties in determining their educational pathways, had limited understanding of their interests and abilities, and lacked clear career plans. Limited time and the participation of some students also presented challenges to optimizing the delivery of these services.

Based on these conditions, this study is important to obtain an empirical description of the implementation of career services at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium

Universitas Negeri Padang. The study is not intended to examine the effectiveness of a particular model or the effect of a specific intervention; rather, it aims to describe the actual conditions of career service implementation based on students' perceptions. The study focuses on three main aspects: service planning, service implementation, and service evaluation. The selection of ninth-grade students was based on the consideration that they are preparing for further education and therefore require assistance in understanding their potential, interests, abilities, and educational and career options. This study employs a quantitative descriptive approach to obtain an objective description of the implementation of career services without providing any treatment to the research participants. Accordingly, this study aims to describe the implementation of career services for students at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium Universitas Negeri Padang in terms of service planning, service implementation, and service evaluation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Career Service Planning

Career service planning is a systematic process of determining the objectives, needs, materials, methods, and service activities intended to assist students in preparing for their career development. At the junior high school level, career service planning needs to be aligned with students' developmental stages, as they begin to recognize their potential and explore various educational and career options. The exploration of interests and potential is an important component of career development among junior high school students (Artosandi et al., 2025; Suwidagdho & Purwanta, 2022), while career readiness is an important consideration in the development of service programs (Dodd et al., 2022; Nora Dwi Putri & Nofridayati, 2022). Therefore, career service planning encompasses the identification of students' needs, the establishment of objectives, the development of materials, the selection of appropriate methods and media, and the determination of activities that help students understand themselves and determine their educational and career pathways.

Career Service Implementation

Career service implementation refers to the process of providing assistance to students through guidance and counseling activities aimed at developing self-understanding, career exploration, planning, and decision-making skills. Career services can be delivered through classroom-based guidance, group and individual services, information provision, exploratory activities, and the use of various media. Career guidance is intended to help students develop career self-efficacy, establish goals, and enhance their decision-making skills (Jemini Gashi et al., 2023; Simon Wudy et al., 2025). The implementation of career services can also incorporate technology and instructional media to increase student engagement (Masi et al., 2025; Yüzen & Perkmen, 2022). Therefore, career service implementation involves the delivery of guidance activities in a structured and interactive manner that is aligned with students' career development needs.

Career Service Evaluation

The evaluation of career services is a process of assessing the implementation and achievement of service objectives in order to monitor students' development and determine improvements for subsequent programs. Evaluation of career services may focus on the development of career readiness, career maturity, career exploration, career planning, and decision-making skills. Career readiness is one of the aspects that can be used to assess the outcomes of career services for students (Dodd et al., 2022; Wang & Wang, 2025), while the development of career maturity is associated with motivation and self-regulation (Lee & Joo, 2022). Evaluation may also consider students' adaptability in career decision-making (Ebner & Paul, 2023). Therefore, the evaluation of career services should not only examine whether the activities have been implemented, but also assess the extent to which the objectives have been achieved and students have developed, providing a basis for the improvement and further development of subsequent services.

Conceptual Framework of Career Service Implementation

This study conceptualizes career service implementation through three interconnected aspects: service planning, service implementation, and service evaluation. These aspects provide a framework for describing how career services are prepared, delivered, and assessed within the school context. Service planning involves identifying students' needs, establishing service objectives, preparing materials, and selecting appropriate methods and media. Service implementation refers to the delivery of career guidance activities intended to support students' self-understanding, career exploration, and preparation for further education. Service evaluation involves assessing the implementation of services and identifying areas that require improvement in subsequent programs (Dodd et al., 2022; Nora Dwi Putri & Nofridayati, 2022) .

Conceptually, these three aspects are related to one another. Planning provides the basis for organizing relevant career services, implementation translates the planned activities into actual services for students, and evaluation provides information for reviewing service delivery and improving future programs. Therefore, examining these aspects collectively provides a descriptive overview of career service implementation at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium Universitas Negeri Padang. In this study, the three aspects serve as analytical dimensions for organizing and interpreting questionnaire responses. The framework is intended to describe students' perceptions of career service implementation and does not establish causal relationships or independently measure the effectiveness of the services.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design to describe the implementation of career services at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium Universitas Negeri Padang across three aspects: service planning, service implementation, and service evaluation. The study population consisted of 95 ninth-grade students, all of whom were included as respondents through a total sampling technique. Ninth-grade students were selected because career services are particularly relevant to

their preparation for decisions regarding further education. Data collection was conducted from May to July 2026 after permission to conduct the research had been obtained from the school authorities. Data were collected using a questionnaire developed by the researcher to describe students' perceptions of career service implementation. The questionnaire covered three aspects: planning, which included identifying students' needs, formulating service objectives, selecting relevant materials, and preparing service programs; implementation, which focused on helping students understand their potential, interests, and abilities, obtain information about further education, and develop career plans; and evaluation, which concerned assessing service implementation, achievement of service objectives, student feedback, and follow-up actions to improve subsequent programs.

The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale to record students' responses to statements concerning career service implementation. The initial instrument consisted of 37 items, and item validity was examined using Pearson item-total correlation. Based on the validity assessment, 31 items were retained for the final analysis. The instrument's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.871, which indicated acceptable internal consistency. The final questionnaire, consisting of 31 valid items, was administered to the 95 participating students. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and percentages. Each respondent's total score was calculated by summing the scores of the valid items. Positively worded items were scored from 1 to 5, while negatively worded items were reverse-scored where applicable to ensure consistent interpretation. The analysis was conducted for the overall instrument and separately for the three aspects of career service implementation.

To describe students' perceptions of career service implementation, respondents' scores were classified into five categories: very high, high, moderate, low, and very low. Categorization was based on the theoretical minimum and maximum scores and the number of categories. The minimum possible score was calculated by multiplying the number of valid items by the minimum item score, while the maximum possible score was calculated by multiplying the number of valid items by the maximum item score. The interval width was determined by dividing the difference between the maximum and minimum scores by five. For the overall instrument, which consisted of 31 valid items scored from 1 to 5, the minimum possible score was 31 and the maximum was 155. The interval width was 24.8 points, which was rounded to establish the score categories used in the analysis: 31–55 (very low), 56–80 (low), 81–105 (moderate), 106–130 (high), and 131–155 (very high). The same categorization procedure was applied separately to each aspect based on the number of valid items assigned to it. Frequencies and percentages were then calculated for each category to provide a descriptive account of students' perceptions of career service implementation at the school.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study involved 95 ninth-grade students at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium UNP. Data were obtained through a questionnaire on the implementation of career services,

consisting of three aspects: service planning, service implementation, and service evaluation. The research instrument consisted of 31 valid items. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages to determine the overall level of career service implementation and the level of implementation across each aspect.

Overall Implementation of Career Services

The results regarding the overall implementation of career services are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Career Service Implementation

Score Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
131–155	Very High	35	36.84%
106–130	High	43	45.26%
81–105	Moderate	15	15.79%
56–80	Low	2	2.11%
31–55	Very Low	0	0.00%
Total		95	100%

Based on Table 1, 43 students (45.26%) were categorized as having a high level of career service implementation, 35 students (36.84%) were in the very high category, 15 students (15.79%) were in the moderate category, and 2 students (2.11%) were in the low category. No students were classified in the very low category. Thus, the overall implementation of career services at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium UNP was categorized as high, with the largest proportion of students (45.26%) falling within this category.

These findings indicate that career services have been implemented relatively well and have become part of the school's efforts to help students gain experiences and information related to educational and career development. This finding is consistent with the importance of career services at the secondary school level in supporting career orientation, career exploration, and students' readiness to determine their educational and career pathways (Abdillah et al., 2025; Artosandi et al., 2025; Kleine et al., 2021; McCowan et al., 2025). (Kleine et al., 2021) demonstrated that career exploration is an important component of career development because it helps students understand various alternatives and relate them to their personal characteristics. (Artosandi et al., 2025) also emphasized the importance of developing vocational interests to support career exploration among junior high school students, while (Suwidagdho & Purwanta, 2022) developed a career exploration instrument to assist students in identifying career alternatives based on their personal characteristics.

The high level of career service implementation is particularly relevant to ninth-grade students, who are preparing to make decisions regarding further education. Career services are needed not only to provide information about occupations but also to help students understand their potential, identify educational options, and prepare for decisions concerning their educational and career pathways. (Abdillah et al., 2025)

demonstrated the importance of aligning educational choices with students' potential at the junior high school level, (Elias et al., 2023) identified awareness of educational program options and career planning as important components of career services for secondary school students. Nevertheless, 15.79% of students were classified in the moderate category and 2.11% in the low category. This indicates that the implementation of career services has not been experienced uniformly by all students. This finding is consistent with (Mata-Correas et al., 2025), who reported that *career indecision* and *career indecisiveness* remain issues among secondary school students.

Career Service Planning

The results for the service planning aspect are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Career Service Implementation Based on the Service Planning Aspect

Score Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
42–50	Very High	39	41.05%
34–41	High	41	43.16%
26–33	Moderate	14	14.74%
18–25	Low	1	1.05%
10–17	Very Low	0	0.00%
Total		95	100%

Based on Table 2, The findings on career service planning suggest that students generally perceived the preparation of career services positively, with 43.16% of respondents in the high category and 41.05% in the very high category. This distribution is relevant to the developmental needs of ninth-grade students, who are approaching an important transition to further education. Career service planning should therefore consider not only the preparation of activities and materials but also students' individual interests, abilities, educational aspirations, and need for information. This interpretation is consistent with (Artosandi et al., 2025; Suwidagdhho & Purwanta, 2022) , who emphasized the importance of exploring students' vocational interests and personal characteristics in career development. Nevertheless, the moderate responses from 14.74% of students and the low responses from 1.05% indicate that planning was not perceived equally by all respondents. Schools may therefore consider strengthening needs assessments and using student feedback to ensure that planned services are relevant to students with different levels of career awareness and readiness.

From the students' perspective, the findings suggest that the planning aspect was generally perceived favorably. However, the moderate and low responses indicate that students' perceptions were not entirely uniform. Therefore, the results should be interpreted as a description of students' assessments of career service planning rather than direct evidence that every planning procedure has been implemented optimally. The findings also highlight the importance of considering students' needs, interests, abilities, and educational aspirations when preparing future career service programs.

These findings indicate that career service planning at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium UNP has been carried out relatively well. Planning is an important stage because it determines the direction, objectives, materials, methods, media, and timing of service delivery. For ninth-grade students, career service planning needs to take into account their needs in preparing for further education. (Dodd et al., 2022) highlighted the importance of career guidance in supporting students' career readiness, while (Gülşen et al., 2021) demonstrated that career education can be systematically designed through structured programs to support students' career development.

Career service planning also needs to be aligned with students' career exploration needs. (Kleine et al., 2021) demonstrated that career exploration is associated with students' career development, while (Artosandi et al., 2025; Suwidagdho & Purwanta, 2022) emphasized the importance of understanding students' interests and personal characteristics in the career exploration process. However, 14.74% of students were in the moderate category and 1.05% were in the low category. This indicates that career service planning has not been perceived equally by all students. (Şen-Baz, 2026) demonstrated an association between career exploration behavior and students' social-cognitive factors at the junior high school level, while (Liu et al., 2024) identified a relationship between *career exploration* and *career adaptation*.

Career service planning is also associated with support from the social environment. (Zhao et al., 2024) highlighted the importance of autonomy support from parents and teachers in the development of students' *career adaptability* at the secondary school level. (Söner & Gültekin, 2025) also identified relationships among parental support, career congruence between adolescents and their parents, and *self-efficacy*. Therefore, although career service planning was categorized as high, it should continue to take into account students' individual needs and the social support available within their environment.

Career Service Implementation

The results for the service implementation aspect are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Career Service Implementation Based on the Service Implementation Aspect

Score Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
47–55	Very High	31	32.63%
38–46	High	48	50.53%
29–37	Moderate	12	12.63%
20–28	Low	4	4.21%
11–19	Very Low	0	0.00%
Total		95	100%

Based on Table 3, The service implementation aspect received the largest proportion of high-category responses among the three aspects, with 50.53% of students in the high category and 32.63% in the very high category. These findings suggest that

students generally viewed the delivery of career services favorably. However, the results should not be interpreted as evidence that the services have fully met every student's needs. The 12.63% of respondents in the moderate category and 4.21% in the low category indicate that some students assessed the implementation less favorably than others. Previous research has highlighted the importance of career exploration and the alignment of educational choices with students' interests and abilities (Abdillah et al., 2025; Artosandi et al., 2025). In this context, schools may consider providing varied guidance activities, relevant information about further education, and opportunities for students to explore their individual interests and abilities. Such efforts may help make career services more responsive to differences in students' needs, although their actual effects would require further evaluation.

The distribution of responses suggests that students generally viewed the provision of career-related information and guidance favorably. Nevertheless, the moderate and low ratings indicate that some students may have had different experiences or assessments of the services provided. The questionnaire results alone do not establish whether all students' career needs have been met or whether the services have improved their career decision-making. Instead, these findings provide descriptive information that can help the school identify aspects of service delivery that may require further attention.

These findings indicate that the delivery of career services to students has been implemented well. The services include career information, career orientation, and classroom-based career guidance aimed at helping students understand their potential, identify options for further education, and develop plans for their future. This finding is consistent with (Abdillah et al., 2025), who emphasized the importance of aligning educational choices with students' potential at the junior high school level, and (Artosandi et al., 2025), who highlighted the importance of vocational interest exploration in helping students understand career options.

The predominance of the high category indicates that the services have reached the needs of the majority of students. Through a meta-analysis, (Kleine et al., 2021) demonstrated that *career exploration* is an important component of career development. (Şen-Baz, 2026) also found that career exploration behavior among junior high school students is associated with social-cognitive factors. In addition, (Parola et al., 2024) highlighted the importance of career-related teacher support in adolescent career development. (Jemini Gashi et al., 2023), through an intervention study, demonstrated that career guidance workshops can contribute to adolescents' *career self-efficacy*, *outcome expectations*, and *career goals*. (Dodd et al., 2022) also emphasized the importance of career guidance in improving students' career readiness.

The implementation of career services can be further strengthened through the use of media and technology. (Masi et al., 2025) demonstrated the use of a *mobile career counseling app* to support *career decision-making self-efficacy*. (Fahmi et al., 2025) developed a Google Sites-based career information platform to improve career planning skills, while (Alfikriah et al., 2025) developed an *augmented reality*-based career card game as a medium for career guidance. (Yüzen & Perkmen, 2022) also examined the use

of multimedia in career counseling. Therefore, the use of diverse media and methods can be incorporated into the development of career service implementation.

Although the service implementation aspect was categorized as high, 12.63% of students were in the moderate category and 4.21% were in the low category. This indicates that the benefits of career services have not been experienced equally by all students. This finding is relevant to (Mata-Correas et al., 2025), who discussed *career indecision* among secondary school students, and (Elias et al., 2023), who emphasized the importance of career guidance in increasing awareness of educational options and career planning. (Kholifah et al., 2025) also demonstrated that *self-efficacy* is associated with students' career choices.

Career Service Evaluation

The results for the service evaluation aspect are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Career Service Implementation Based on the Service Evaluation Aspect

Score Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
42–50	Very High	37	38.95%
34–41	High	40	42.11%
26–33	Moderate	12	12.63%
18–25	Low	6	6.32%
10–17	Very Low	0	0.00%
Total		95	100%

Based on Table 4, The evaluation aspect was also predominantly perceived positively, with 42.11% of students in the high category and 38.95% in the very high category. Nevertheless, 12.63% of respondents were in the moderate category and 6.32% were in the low category. These findings indicate that students' perceptions of the evaluation aspect varied, suggesting the importance of examining how student feedback is collected and considered in subsequent career service programs. Evaluation is important not only for reviewing whether activities have been delivered but also for identifying areas that may require improvement. (Dodd et al., 2022) examined career guidance in relation to students' career readiness, illustrating the relevance of assessing career-related outcomes when evaluating guidance programs. However, the present study measured students' perceptions of service implementation rather than changes in career readiness or other developmental outcomes. Therefore, the findings cannot independently establish whether evaluation procedures have improved service effectiveness. Schools may use the descriptive findings as an initial reference for reviewing feedback mechanisms and strengthening the evaluation of future career service programs.

The variation in responses suggests that students did not assess the evaluation aspect in exactly the same way. However, because the data were collected through a student questionnaire, they cannot independently confirm the extent to which formal

evaluation procedures were conducted by the school or how evaluation findings were used for follow-up actions. The results should therefore be understood as students' perceptions of the evaluation aspect. Further review of service records, feedback mechanisms, and follow-up practices could provide additional information for improving future career service programs.

These findings indicate that evaluation has become part of the implementation of career services at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium UNP. Evaluation is necessary to determine the achievement of service objectives, obtain feedback from students, identify challenges, and determine follow-up actions and improvements to subsequent service programs. (Dodd et al., 2022) emphasized the importance of using valid measures to evaluate *career readiness*, while (McCowan et al., 2025) developed a scale for assessing career education and development among elementary and junior secondary school students.

Although the high category represented the largest proportion, the evaluation aspect had a higher percentage in the low category than the planning and implementation aspects, at 6.32%. In addition, 12.63% of students were classified in the moderate category. This indicates that evaluation needs to be strengthened to provide more comprehensive information about students' needs. Evaluation is necessary not only to determine whether activities have been implemented but also to assess students' development in understanding themselves, exploring alternatives, and making career decisions. (Ebner & Paul, 2023) developed a measure of *career decision-making adaptability* associated with both subjective and objective career success, while Lee and Joo (2022) demonstrated a relationship between career maturity, motivation, and self-regulation in career development.

Summary of Research Findings

A summary of career service implementation across the three aspects is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Summary of the Percentage Distribution of Career Service Implementation by Aspect

Variable/Aspect	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
Overall Career Service Implementation	0.00%	2.11%	15.79%	45.26%	36.84%
Service Planning	0.00%	1.05%	14.74%	43.16%	41.05%
Service Implementation	0.00%	4.21%	12.63%	50.53%	32.63%
Service Evaluation	0.00%	6.32%	12.63%	42.11%	38.95%
Average	0.00%	3.86%	13.33%	45.27%	37.37%

Based on Table 5, the high category had the largest average percentage at 45.27%, followed by the very high category at 37.37%, the moderate category at 13.95%, and the low category at 3.42%. No students were classified in the very low category. Thus, the overall implementation of career services at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium UNP was categorized as high.

Overall, the three aspects demonstrated a consistent pattern, with the largest proportion of students falling within the high category. The service implementation aspect had the highest percentage in the high category, at 50.53%, whereas the service evaluation aspect had the highest percentage in the low category, at 6.32%. This pattern indicates that career services have been implemented through a relatively complete process encompassing planning, implementation, and evaluation. This finding is consistent with (Dodd et al., 2022; Wang & Wang, 2025), who positioned career services as an important component of students' career readiness development. At the junior high school level, these services also need to address career exploration, interests, potential, and various educational and career alternatives (Artosandi et al., 2025; Kleine et al., 2021; Suwidagdho & Purwanta, 2022).

The strength of the service implementation aspect indicates that career service activities have reached the majority of students. This finding is consistent with (Jemini Gashi et al., 2023), who demonstrated the benefits of career guidance workshops for *career self-efficacy*, *outcome expectations*, and *career goals*. The development of diverse media and methods can also support career services through career counseling applications, information platforms, multimedia, and technology-based media (Alfikriah et al., 2025; Fahmi et al., 2025; Masi et al., 2025; Yüzen & Perkmen, 2022). In addition, the development of guidance modules and programs can support students' decision-making abilities and career readiness (Latifah et al., 2026; Ruri et al., 2021; Suryahadikusumah et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, the evaluation aspect requires further attention because it had a relatively higher percentage in the low category. Evaluation should be utilized to identify students who continue to experience difficulties in career exploration, planning, and decision-making (Dodd et al., 2022; Ebner & Paul, 2023; McCowan et al., 2025). Accordingly, evaluation findings can serve as a basis for improving and adapting career service programs to students' needs.

Overall, the findings show that students' perceptions of career service implementation at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium Universitas Negeri Padang were predominantly positive across the three aspects of planning, implementation, and evaluation. The high and very high categories accounted for most responses in each aspect, although a proportion of students provided moderate or low ratings. Among the three aspects, service implementation had the largest proportion of respondents in the high category (50.53%), whereas service planning and service evaluation also received predominantly high and very high ratings.

These findings provide a descriptive overview of how ninth-grade students perceived career services at the school. The results should not be interpreted as conclusive evidence of service effectiveness or as proof that students' career readiness and decision-making skills have improved, since these outcomes were not directly measured in this study. Nevertheless, the distribution of responses identifies areas that the school may consider when reviewing its career service programs, particularly the need to account for differences in students' perceptions and to strengthen the collection and use of student feedback.

CONCLUSION

This study describes students' perceptions of career service implementation at SMP Pembangunan Laboratorium Universitas Negeri Padang across three aspects: service planning, service implementation, and service evaluation. The findings indicate that students' perceptions were predominantly positive across all three aspects. For service planning, 43.16% of respondents were in the high category and 41.05% in the very high category. For service implementation, 50.53% were in the high category and 32.63% in the very high category. For service evaluation, 42.11% were in the high category and 38.95% in the very high category.

Although the overall distribution of responses was favorable, some students rated the three aspects as moderate or low. These responses indicate that students' perceptions were not entirely uniform and that opportunities remain to review and improve career service programs in accordance with students' needs. The findings should be interpreted as a description of student perceptions rather than direct evidence of the effectiveness of career services or improvements in students' career readiness and decision-making. Future research may combine student questionnaires with interviews, observations, and service documentation to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of career service planning, implementation, and evaluation.

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