INTERPRETING FUTURES: APPLYING TOUR-GUIDE STORYTELLING TO CAREER DECISION SUPPORT FOR GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING TEACHERS IN BANDUNG

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ABSTRACT

Career guidance often becomes an information-delivery activity even though students must connect educational options with personal meaning, constraints, and future action. This community service program adapted selected tour-guide interpretation practices for career decision support among guidance and counseling (GC) teachers from schools across Bandung. Conducted on 18-21 August 2026, the four-day workshop used story listening, option interpretation, questioning practice, scenario-based microteaching, peer feedback, and toolkit development. Evaluation was descriptive and based on workshop products, facilitator notes, simulations, reflections, and school action plans; verified participant totals and standardized pre-post data were not available. The principal output was the PANDU model: profile the student story, ask meaning-making questions, narrate verified alternatives, discuss consequences and barriers, and unfold an actionable next step. The model positioned the teacher as an ethical interpreter of possibilities rather than a promoter of one institution or occupation. Participants practiced transforming lists of programs into contextual option narratives, separating evidence from persuasion, and helping students compare routes while retaining agency. Tourism interpretation was useful for orientation, storytelling, audience sensitivity, and active engagement, provided that counseling ethics, accuracy, equity, and informed choice remained primary. School pilots and student-informed longitudinal evaluation are recommended.

Keywords: Career Counseling, Tourism Interpretation, Storytelling, Student Agency, Community Service

1. INTRODUCTION

Career decisions are not solved by information alone. A student may know the name of a university, study program, vocational pathway, scholarship, or occupation and still be unable to decide whether it fits personal interests, values, abilities, family circumstances, and future expectations. Conversely, a student may hold a strong preference based on a short social-media impression without understanding requirements, alternatives, costs, or consequences. Career guidance must therefore help students interpret information and construct meaning, not merely receive a list of options. Guidance and counseling (GC) in Indonesian primary and secondary education includes a career-development function. Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 111 of 2014 positions counseling as an educational service supporting personal, social, learning, and career development (Indonesia, 2014). Indonesian scholarship also links comprehensive counseling with student career planning (Anggraini et al., 2021). The American School Counselor Association similarly states that school counseling programs should support academic, career, and social-emotional development and provide students with access to postsecondary and occupational possibilities (American School Counselor Association, 2024).

The practical difficulty is that career information is abundant but uneven. Students encounter school visits, education fairs, family advice, alumni stories, digital content, institutional advertising, ranking claims, and peer opinions. These sources can produce overload, inconsistent information, and pressure toward a socially preferred route. Udayar et al. (2020) classify career decision difficulties around readiness, lack of information, and inconsistent information. A service that simply adds more information can therefore deepen confusion unless it helps the student evaluate relevance and credibility. Career-construction and life-design perspectives provide a narrative response. Maree (2020) explains career intervention as a process of constructing small stories, reorganizing them into a life portrait, and co-constructing intentions for the next chapter. Narrative identity work helps individuals connect past experience, present meaning, and future possibilities (Maree, 2020). Career adaptability further emphasizes concern, control, curiosity, and confidence as resources for managing transitions and vocational tasks (Hlad'o et al., 2020). These concepts support career conversations that preserve agency and tolerate non-linear pathways.

Tour-guide interpretation offers a complementary practical lens. A competent guide does more than state facts. Guiding includes orientation, mediation, storytelling, group facilitation, audience adaptation, safety, and interpretation of place (Weiler & Black, 2015). Effective heritage interpretation invites active attention and multiple connections rather than passive reception (Weng et al., 2020). Translated carefully, these practices can help GC teachers turn

fragmented career facts into understandable option narratives and reflective questions. Tourism studies by Pinontoan et al. (2025a, 2025b, 2025c) show that experiences differ in autonomy, emotional involvement, reflection, cultural interpretation, and willingness to participate. The relevance to career counseling is analogical rather than literal. Students should not be treated as tourists or customers. However, they also differ in how much structure, explanation, exploration, and reassurance they need. A uniform presentation may be adequate for one student and overwhelming or insufficient for another.

The adaptation also requires a clear ethical boundary. A tour guide may recommend routes, but a school counselor must not direct a student toward an institution, occupation, or decision because of personal preference, promotional pressure, or institutional interest. The counselor provides accurate and balanced information, identifies assumptions, discusses trade-offs, and supports informed choice. Storytelling must illuminate possibilities rather than manipulate emotion. Student agency, confidentiality, equity, developmental appropriateness, and professional scope remain primary. The community service program addressed this need among GC teachers from schools across Bandung. It was organized as an interpretation and microteaching workshop rather than a conventional career-information seminar. The objectives were to strengthen story listening, improve the interpretation of verified options, develop questioning and comparison skills, and produce an actionable counseling model. The output was PANDU: Profilkan cerita, Ajukan pertanyaan, Narasikan pilihan, Dialogkan konsekuensi, and Uraikan langkah.

2. METHOD

The program used a practice-based community service design and was conducted face to face in Bandung from 18 to 21 August 2026. Experiential learning informed the sequence because professional capability develops through experience, reflection, conceptualization, and revised action (Morris, 2020). Each conceptual input was followed by analysis, demonstration, role-play, feedback, and transfer to a school context. Participants were GC teachers from schools across Bandung. Verified attendance totals and demographic characteristics were not provided for this manuscript, so no numerical participant profile is reported. No identifiable student data were collected. Fictionalized scenarios represented common career concerns, including uncertainty about study programs, tension between family expectations and personal interests, financial limitations, vocational versus academic routes, changing aspirations, misinformation, and fear of making the wrong choice.

The workshop used six techniques: career-information audit, story-circle listening, interpretation demonstration, question redesign, microteaching, and toolkit development. The audit separated evidence, assumption, promotional language, and missing information. Story circles trained participants to identify values, turning points, role models, constraints, and recurring interests. Demonstrations translated raw option facts into balanced narratives. Microteaching tested short counseling conversations using different student scenarios. Evaluation was formative and descriptive. Evidence included facilitator notes, information-audit sheets, scenario interpretations, observation of microteaching, peer feedback, reflections, and school action plans. Outputs were reviewed for relevance, accuracy, neutrality, student participation, comparison quality, and clarity of the next step. A standardized pre-test or post-test was not administered, and no follow-up student outcomes were available. Findings therefore concern the immediate learning process and toolkit feasibility rather than measured impact.

Table 1. Four-day workshop sequence and learning evidence

Date	Workshop focus	Practice activity	Learning evidence
18 August 2026	Career information and student stories	Audit information sources; identify aspirations, constraints, and decision difficulties	Information map and story-listening notes
19 August 2026	Tour-guide interpretation	Practice orientation, audience adaptation, storytelling, and evidence framing	Interpretation principles and sample narratives
20 August 2026	PANDU microteaching	Use scenarios, reflective questions, option comparison, and peer feedback	Observed counseling behaviors and revised scripts
21 August 2026	Toolkit and school transfer	Consolidate PANDU cards, option map, safeguards, and implementation plan	Career interpretation toolkit and action plan

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reframing career service from promotion to interpretation

The first analytical shift was the distinction between promotion, information, and interpretation. Promotion seeks preference or response. Information presents facts. Interpretation helps a person understand why facts matter in relation to a context and a decision. GC teachers may receive institutional brochures or presentations that blend all three. The workshop therefore asked participants to mark each statement as verified evidence, interpretation, persuasive claim, or information requiring confirmation. This distinction matters because students frequently encounter attractive narratives that omit conditions. A story about a successful graduate may inspire, but it does not show the range of outcomes or the effort, support, and opportunity structures involved. A statement about employment prospects may be relevant, but only if the source, date, field definition, and local conditions are clear. Ethical career interpretation uses stories as entry points and then returns to evidence, alternatives, and the student's own priorities.

A second shift concerned the role of the counselor. The counselor was framed as an interpreter and dialogic guide, not a distributor of recommendations. In tour guiding, interpretation connects visitors with the significance of a place while adapting to audience characteristics (Weiler & Black, 2015; Weng et al., 2020). In career counseling, the comparable task is to connect students with the significance and consequences of options without selecting the destination on their behalf. This requires curiosity about the student before explanation of the option. A third shift concerned diversity of participation. The cited tourism studies describe experiences that range from self-directed exploration to organized participation and from aesthetic attention to reflective and transformative meaning (Pinontoan et al., 2025a, 2025b, 2025c). The workshop used this insight to vary facilitation. Some students may need open exploration, some benefit from structured comparison, and some require a smaller first step because anxiety or limited information blocks engagement. The goal is responsive guidance, not fixed labeling.

The PANDU Career Interpretation Model

The main workshop product was the PANDU model. PANDU means guide in Indonesian and emphasizes that the counselor accompanies interpretation and decision preparation. The sequence begins with the student story, passes through reflective questioning and balanced option narratives, examines consequences, and ends with a feasible next action. Figure 1 presents the five stages and supporting principles.

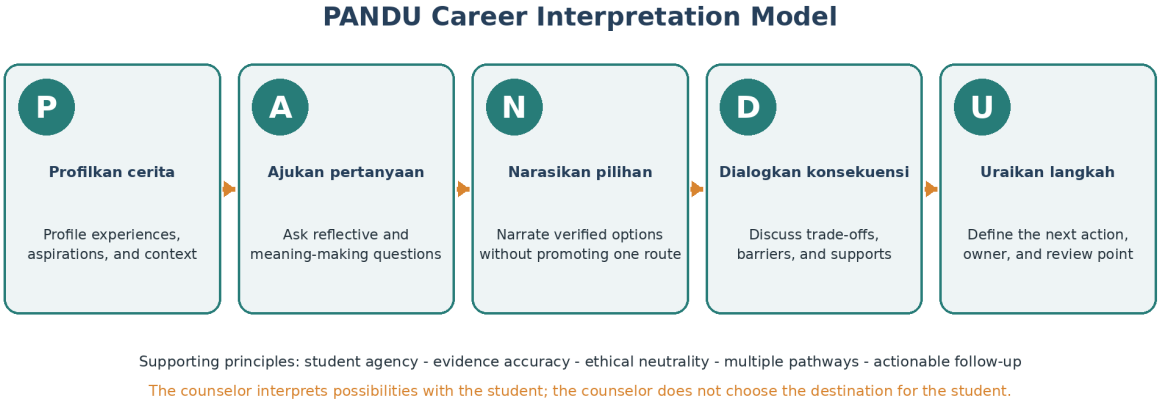

Figure 1. PANDU Career Interpretation Model

Profile the story identifies experience before preference. The teacher listens for activities that energize or drain the student, roles the student has enjoyed, values, abilities, role models, family expectations, learning experiences, constraints, and previous decisions. This is not a diagnostic label. It is a provisional portrait that helps the counselor understand what the student is trying to preserve, change, or become. Ask questions (ask meaning-making questions) turns the story into a reflection. Questions move from description to significance: What did the students enjoy about the experience? What difficulty was worth solving? Which values were present? Whose expectations are shaping the decision? What information would reduce uncertainty? Narrative career work is useful because identity develops through the connection of experiences into an interpretable story (Maree, 2020).

Narrated verified options translate a program or occupation into a balanced route narrative. The counselor explains entry requirements, learning activities, likely demands, possible roles, alternatives, costs, support, and uncertainty. Sources and dates are named when important. Promotional superlatives are removed. More than one option is presented whenever possible so the narrative expands the field of choice rather than narrowing it prematurely. Discuss consequences and barriers, compare options without reducing the decision to a single score. The conversation considers alignment with interests and values, financial and geographic implications, academic readiness, family

context, accessibility, uncertainty, and alternative routes. Career decision difficulties may arise from lack of readiness, insufficient information, or inconsistent information (Udayar et al., 2020); each requires a different counseling response. Describe the steps (unfold the next step) converts reflection into an action that is small enough to complete and meaningful enough to reduce uncertainty. Examples include verifying one requirement, speaking with an alumnus, attending an open class, comparing curricula, completing a financial plan, visiting a workplace, or scheduling another counseling session. The step has an owner, evidence of completion, and a review point. This supports career adaptability by strengthening concern, control, curiosity, and confidence (Hlad'o et al., 2020).

Table 2. Translation of tour-guide functions into career counseling practice

Tour-guide function	Career counseling translation	Ethical safeguard
Orientation	Explain the decision landscape, terms, routes, and reliable information sources	Do not frame one pathway as the default destination
Interpretation	Connect option facts with the student story, values, and context	Separate verified evidence from interpretation and opinion
Storytelling	Use cases to illustrate possibilities, effort, turning points, and uncertainty	Avoid exceptional success stories as promises of outcome
Audience adaptation	Adjust depth, language, pace, channel, and structure to student readiness	Preserve equal access and avoid ability stereotypes
Facilitation	Invite questions, comparison, reflection, and student-generated alternatives	The student retains agency and the right to reconsider
Duty of care	Recognize distress, conflict, misinformation, and needs beyond career guidance	Use confidentiality, safeguarding, and responsible referral

Learning demonstrated through interpretation practice

Microteaching made the difference between explaining and interpreting observably. Early scenario responses often began with the institution or occupation: requirements, duration, facilities, and prospects. The PANDU sequence required participants to begin with the student story. After profiling and questioning, the same information could be reorganized around what the student needed to understand. This reduced generic monologues and created more opportunities for clarification. Participants also practiced converting persuasive language into evidence-sensitive language. Instead of saying that a field has the best prospects, the counselor names the type and date of available evidence, acknowledges variation, and asks what kind of work the student wants to explore. Instead of saying that a program is suitable, the counselor explains features and invites the student to assess alignment. This language protects trust because it makes uncertainty and professional limits visible.

Role-play exposed the danger of premature closure. When a student mentioned one interest, the first response could become an immediate matching exercise. PANDU slowed the process by asking what the interest meant, when it appeared, how it related to other experiences, and what constraints affected action. A tentative option was then treated as a hypothesis to investigate, not a final identity. This is consistent with life-design approaches that emphasize dynamic processes, context, and co-construction. The workshop also recognized that narrative methods need structure. Storytelling without evidence can reinforce bias, and extensive reflection without an action step can leave the student in the same state of uncertainty. The option map and next-step card therefore complemented the narrative conversation. The map compared routes using common criteria, while the card documented what would be verified, by whom, and when the conversation would resume.

Table 3. Minimum school indicators for a PANDU career-guidance pilot

Indicator domain	Practical indicator	Suggested evidence
Student story	Counseling notes include experiences, values, aspirations, and relevant constraints	Confidential story profile
Information quality	Options use current sources and distinguish facts, interpretations, and unknowns	Source and option audit
Breadth of choice	Students examine more than one route or an alternative entry pathway	Option comparison map
Agency	Students can explain why an option matters and what remains uncertain	Student reflection or teach-back

Indicator domain	Practical indicator	Suggested evidence
Action	Each session ends with a feasible next step, owner, and review point	PANDU next-step card
Equity and ethics	Guidance is accessible, non-promotional, confidential, and responsive to barriers	Anonymous feedback and case review

Implementation strategy, limitations, and sustainability

Implementation can begin with a limited pilot for students approaching a study-program or pathway decision. Schools can prepare five PANDU prompt cards, a verified option-source list, a comparison map, and a next-step card. GC teachers can test the toolkit in individual or small-group sessions and review anonymized cases together. The purpose of the review is not to judge the student decision, but to examine whether the process increased clarity, agency, and actionable exploration. Leadership support is needed to protect neutrality and information quality. Schools should disclose relationships with education providers, avoid incentives that distort counseling recommendations, update scholarship and admission information, and provide access to diverse pathways. Career services should include academic, vocational, entrepreneurial, public, private, local, and international possibilities as relevant. Students facing financial, disability, family, language, or geographic barriers need information about support and alternative routes, not reduced expectations.

The present community service report has limitations. Verified participant numbers and demographic characteristics were unavailable. The activity did not use standardized pre-post measures, a comparison group, or independent observation after teachers returned to school. Evidence was limited to workshop products, simulations, facilitator notes, reflections, and implementation plans. Consequently, the paper establishes the conceptual and practical feasibility of PANDU but does not claim long-term changes in teacher behavior or student decisions. Future evaluation should examine career decision clarity, information quality, perceived agency, breadth of explored options, completion of next steps, and career adaptability. Student interviews can test whether stories felt relevant rather than persuasive and whether the conversation respected uncertainty and family context. A three-month pilot could compare intended actions with completed exploration and identify which PANDU stages need further support. Budiman & Chen (2025) emphasize the importance of career guidance for Indonesian senior high school students navigating educational and occupational transitions; local evaluation is needed to determine how this toolkit contributes.

The broader contribution is a translation between two professional practices. Tour guiding contributes orientation, interpretation, storytelling, audience sensitivity, and facilitation. Career counseling contributes narrative identity, decision analysis, adaptability, ethics, and student agency. PANDU integrates these contributions in a simple sequence. Its defining principle is that the teacher helps the student interpret routes and prepare movement, but does not choose the destination.

4. CONCLUSION

The community service program held in Bandung on 18-21 August 2026 developed an interpretation-based approach to career guidance for GC teachers. Unlike communication protocols or service-process mapping, this paper focused on how teachers help students make meaning from career information. The PANDU model begins with the student story, uses reflective questions, narrates verified alternatives, discusses trade-offs and barriers, and ends with an actionable next step. Tour-guide practices proved useful as a source of orientation, storytelling, interpretation, audience adaptation, and facilitation. Their educational use must remain bounded by accuracy, neutrality, confidentiality, equity, professional scope, and student agency. Descriptive workshop evidence supports the feasibility of the model but does not establish lasting impact. School-level pilots, leadership safeguards, updated information sources, student feedback, and longitudinal assessment are needed to determine whether PANDU improves career clarity, adaptability, and informed decision-making.

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