

The Effectiveness of Information Services in Enhancing the Sense of Purpose Among Minangkabau Adolescents: A Quasi-Experimental Study

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Doi: [10.31316/g-couns.v10i01.7868](https://doi.org/10.31316/g-couns.v10i01.7868)

Abstrack

This study examines the effectiveness of information services in enhancing the sense of purpose among Minangkabau adolescents, which represents an essential aspect of psychological well-being and educational functioning. A quasi-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design was applied with a sample of 104 high school students selected through stratified random sampling. Data on meaning in life were collected using the Meaningfulness of Life Checklist and analyzed using paired and independent sample t-tests. The results demonstrate a significant increase in students' meaning in life after receiving information services, indicating that the intervention effectively strengthens personal direction, motivation, and resilience. Furthermore, gender comparison analyses reveal that female students experienced greater improvement compared to male students. These findings confirm that information services are a relevant guidance and counseling strategy, particularly in cultural contexts where values and identity play a strong role in adolescent development, such as the Minangkabau community.

Keywords: meaning in life, information services, minangkabau adolescents, counseling intervention

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji efektivitas layanan informasi dalam meningkatkan rasa tujuan di kalangan remaja Minangkabau, yang merupakan aspek penting dari kesejahteraan psikologis dan fungsi pendidikan. Desain pretest-posttest satu kelompok kuasi-eksperimental diterapkan dengan sampel 104 siswa sekolah menengah yang dipilih melalui pengambilan sampel acak berstrata. Data makna hidup dikumpulkan menggunakan Meaningfulness of Life Checklist dan dianalisis menggunakan uji-t sampel berpasangan dan independen. Hasilnya menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan dalam makna hidup siswa setelah menerima layanan informasi, menunjukkan bahwa intervensi secara efektif memperkuat arah, motivasi, dan ketahanan pribadi. Selanjutnya, analisis perbandingan gender mengungkapkan bahwa siswa perempuan mengalami peningkatan yang lebih besar dibandingkan dengan siswa laki-laki. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa layanan informasi merupakan strategi bimbingan dan konseling yang relevan, terutama dalam konteks budaya di mana nilai dan identitas berperan kuat dalam perkembangan remaja, seperti masyarakat Minangkabau.

Kata kunci: makna hidup, layanan informasi, remaja minangkabau, intervensi konseling

Article info

Received May 2025, accepted October 2025, published January 2026



INTRODUCTION

Teenagers often face various pressures from social, family, and educational environments that influence how they interpret and respond to life's challenges. Therefore, finding and maintaining a sense of meaning in life is crucial during adolescence, as it provides direction, psychological resilience, and overall well-being. Recent studies emphasize that adolescents who possess a clear sense of meaning in life tend to experience greater life satisfaction and are better equipped to handle stress and adversity. Arslan (2024) found that positive parenting and prosocial behavior significantly contribute to adolescents' meaning in life and subjective well-being (Arslan, 2024). Similarly, Zhao (2023) reported that having a growth mindset helps adolescents develop a stronger sense of life meaning, which in turn enhances their emotional stability (Zhao et al., 2023). Moreover, a recent meta-analysis confirmed that a well-established understanding of meaning in life serves as a protective factor against suicidal ideation among youth (Xin, 2025). These findings highlight that meaning in life not only gives teenagers a sense of purpose but also plays a vital role in promoting happiness and psychological health.

A robust theoretical framework for this study can be established by referencing Roy Baumeister's theory, which posits that a meaningful life is constructed through the fulfillment of four core needs: Purpose: Having clear goals and direction in life. Value: Believing that one's actions are justified and align with a value system. Self-efficacy: Feeling capable of making a difference and exerting control over outcomes. Self-worth: Maintaining a sense of personal value and significance (Permatasari, 2024).

These components collectively shape how individuals perceive meaning in life. In the context of Minangkabau students, cultural factors may influence how these needs are fulfilled, especially considering the matrilineal structure and the roles ascribed to males and females. Effect of information services on learning motivation. Information services, structured guidance, and counseling interventions have been shown to positively impact students' learning motivation. Research indicates that information services can significantly increase students' motivation to learn, as evidenced by improvements in pre- and post-test scores in experimental studies. (Rosidah et al., 2024)

The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) and targeted information services enhances students' engagement, independence, and self-directed learning, which are closely linked to higher motivation and better academic and social outcomes. By integrating these perspectives, the framework links information services not only to the enhancement of meaning in life but also to the improvement of learning motivation and social adaptation.

Ideally, people who live their lives meaningfully show a life that is full of passion and optimism, directed and purposeful, able to adapt, and flexible in socializing while maintaining self-identity. When faced with suffering, they will be steadfast and realize that there is wisdom behind the suffering (Bastaman, 2007). On the other hand, people who do not find the meaning of life will experience emptiness, loneliness, fear, anxiety, and boredom.

Individuals with a meaningful life can live life optimistically and not easily give up. This is because the individual has a clear purpose in life, thanks to the meaningfulness of life that he feels. Dewi & Tobing, (2014) Stated that the meaning of life can be the primary motivator that makes individuals persist even under challenging conditions. In



addition, the activities carried out are also directed because there is already a framework reference that facilitates the steps. Individuals who are able to achieve the meaning of life can feel positive changes in their lives independently, because to achieve the meaning of life, individuals can only reach it through their own efforts, not thanks to gifts from others (Bukhori, 2012).

According to Sunandar (2016), one of the factors that influences the meaning of a person's life is culture. The relationship between culture and the meaning of life is related to the philosophy of that society. The philosophy of the purpose of life of the Minangkabau people says, "*harimau mati maninggakan balang, gajah mati maninggakan gadiang, manusia mati maninggakan namo*". This expression invites us to reflect on what we leave behind in this world after we are gone. This is a reminder to live life with meaning and make a positive impact so that our names will be remembered well. Culture and tradition play an essential role in shaping the meaning of life. However, with modernization and globalization, traditional values are often suppressed by the demands of a more complex era. This can lead to identity confusion, where adolescents feel alienated from their cultural values, resulting in difficulty in finding meaning in life. Minangkabau teenagers who are able to find meaning in life should be able to demonstrate a passionate and optimistic attitude, have goals, be steadfast in facing trials, not easily give up, and have high learning motivation (Sunandar, 2016).

Based on the results of interviews with several teachers at State High School 3 Padang, it was found that there are still many students who have low learning motivation, are lazy to do assignments, skip school because they feel unhappy at school, feel bored and constrained by existing rules and problems, and feel dissatisfied with the environment around them, students do not have clear goals or aspirations for the future, they feel confused about the educational path or career they want to take and do not try to pursue their dreams. This needs to be a concern; if not handled seriously, of course, this will have a harmful effect on the future of these teenagers.

Research conducted Amalianita & Nirawana, (2021) found that the meaningfulness of life of adolescents is in the moderate category, and it was also found that there was a contribution of meaningfulness of life to subjective well-being, with a percentage of 42.7% ($r = 0.653$). In addition, research conducted Danik, (2009) on "The Relationship Between Religiosity and Meaningfulness of Life of Adolescents with Achievement Motives" found that students who have high meaningfulness of life will also have high achievement motivation. This means that there is a significant relationship between the meaningfulness of life and the achievement motive of an adolescent.

In previous research conducted by Permatasari et al (2024) Minangkabau ethnic high school students, information service materials were developed to improve the meaning of life. Based on the study, it was concluded that the information service materials that had been created were valid in terms of content, design, practicality, and effectiveness in increasing the meaningfulness of life for high school students. This service material is limited to testing its efficacy on a limited group; therefore, research needs to be conducted to test its effectiveness in a broader group.

To provide a more focused and systematic approach, the following research questions are proposed: Are information services effective in improving the meaning of life of Minangkabau students? Is there a significant difference between males and females in terms of improvement in sense of life after the intervention? Do information services



have a measurable impact on students' learning motivation and social adaptation?. The objectives of the research, aligned with the theoretical framework and problem formulation, are as follows: To assess the effectiveness of information services in enhancing the meaning of life among Minangkabau students. To determine whether there are significant gender differences in the improvement of the meaning of life following the intervention. To measure the impact of information services on specific aspects, such as learning motivation and social adaptation, among the students. By addressing these objectives, the study will contribute to a deeper understanding of how targeted information services can foster a sense of meaning, increase motivation, and support social adaptation in the educational context, particularly among culturally distinct student populations.

METHOD

This research is a quantitative research with an experimental method (quasi-experiment) (Paramita & Wijayanti, 2021). The study was conducted in grades X, XI, and XII at State High School 3 Padang, consisting of 31 classes with a total number of 1152 students. The subject was drawn using a stratified random sampling technique with a lottery method. The subjects in this study were 104 people, consisting of 46 men and 58 women. Data collection will be done using an instrument in the form of a Meaningful Life Checklist with a Likert model. The data analysis technique used the t-test (paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test) with the help of the SPSS version 20.00 program.

The checklist used as a research instrument was tested for validity and reliability to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the measurements. Validity refers to how well the checklist measures the construct it intends to measure (meaning in life). Validity can be established through expert review or pilot testing. Reliability indicates the internal consistency of the checklist items, commonly assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.70 or higher is generally considered acceptable, indicating that the items reliably measure the same underlying concept. For example, if the checklist for measuring meaning in life yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.85, it would suggest good internal consistency and reliability.

Data Analysis Technique: Detailed Description of the t-test Procedure and Assumptions. The independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores of meaning in life between two independent groups (females and males). The procedure involved the following steps and assumptions:

Assumptions Tested: Independence of Observations: Each participant belongs to only one group (female or male), and observations are independent of each other. Normality, the dependent variable (meaning in life scores), should be approximately normally distributed within each group. This can be checked using normality tests (Shapiro-Wilk) or visual inspection of histograms/Q-Q /Q-Q/Q-Q/Q-Q/Q-Q/Q-Q/Q-Q/Q-Q/Q-Q plots. For sample sizes larger than 15 per group, the t-test is robust to mild violations of normality. Homogeneity of Variances: The variances of the two groups should be equal. This assumption is tested using Levene's Test for Equality of Variances. If the test is significant ($p < 0.05$), the assumption is violated, and an adjusted t-test (Welch's t-test) is used. T-test Calculation: The t-value is calculated based on the



difference between group means, the pooled standard deviation, and the sample sizes. Degrees of freedom (df) are computed as n_1+n_2-2 .

The calculated t-value is compared to the critical t-value from the t-distribution table at the chosen significance level (usually 0.05). If the calculated p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis of equal means is rejected, indicating a significant difference. Interpreting a significant result means that the average meaning in life scores differ between females and males. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference provides a range of plausible values for the actual difference in the population.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data obtained in the study. These are the results from the pretest and related posttest with meaningful life students, so that the data can be described clearly. Following this, researchers present results to study the effectiveness of service information in increasing the meaningfulness of life (meaning of life) of students. In a way, general can see a meaningful difference between pretest and posttest in the lives of students before and after the given service information, where the mark pretest is at on category moderate ($\bar{x}= 103.2$, while the posttest value is at one category height ($\bar{x}= 131.3$).

Table 1.

Distribution Frequency Variables Meaningfulness Life Student (Pretest and Posttest)

Category	Interval	Pre-test		Post-test	
		f	%	f	%
Very high	≥ 139	0	0	35	33.65
Tall	113-138	14	13.5	65	62.5
Currently	88-112	67	64.4	4	3.85
Low	62-87	23	22.1	0	0
Very Low	≤ 61	0	0	0	0
		104	100	104	100

Based on Table 1 results, there are differences in scores between pretest and posttest meaningfulness life students before and after given service information. Scores experience improvement or change after given treatment, use material service information that has been developed previously. For a general view of the condition pretest and post-test meaningfulness life student, see Figure 1.



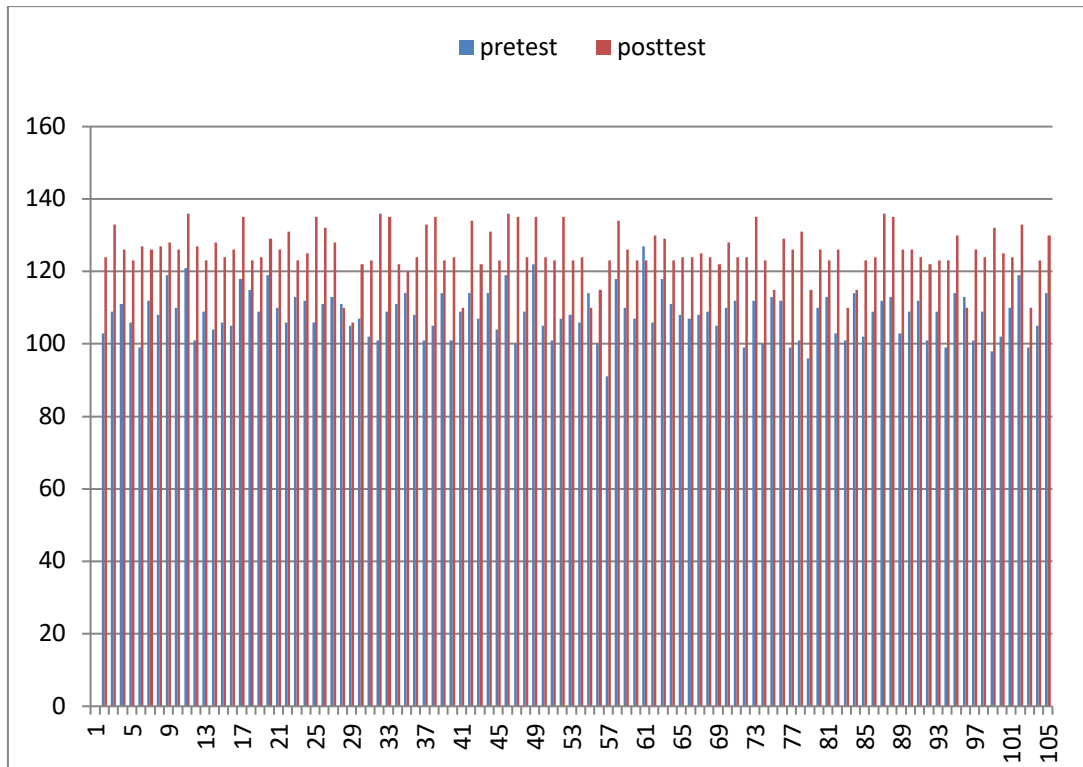


Figure 1. Histogram of Pretest and Test Data Results: Meaningfulness Posttest life Student

In general, the difference in values between the pretest and posttest of the meaningfulness of students' lives before and after being given information services is significant, with a sig (2-tailed) $p < 0.001$ ($p < 0.005$). Thus, the hypothesis tested in this study is accepted. Based on the research results, information services were declared effective in increasing the meaningfulness of life for students from a Minangkabau ethnic background.

Based on the results data, male and female pretests can be seen as having different mark scores before the given service information. The average score meaningfulness life man of 46 students is $\bar{x} = 100.2$ is in the medium category, while the average meaning of life for women from 58 students is $\bar{x} = 106$, also in the medium category.

Table 2.

Distribution Frequency Variables Pretest Meaningfulness life Man and Woman

Category	Interval	Male Pre-test		Women's Pre-test	
		f	%	f	%
Very high	≥ 139	0	0	0	0
Tall	113-138	3	6.5	11	19
Currently	88-112	30	65.2	37	63.8
Low	62-87	13	28.3	10	17.2
Very Low	≤ 61	0	0	0	0
Amount		46	100	58	100

Based on Table 2, there is a difference in the score of meaningfulness of life between males and females pretest before the treatment. For each meaningfulness pretest life man and pretest meaningfulness life woman, see Figure 2.



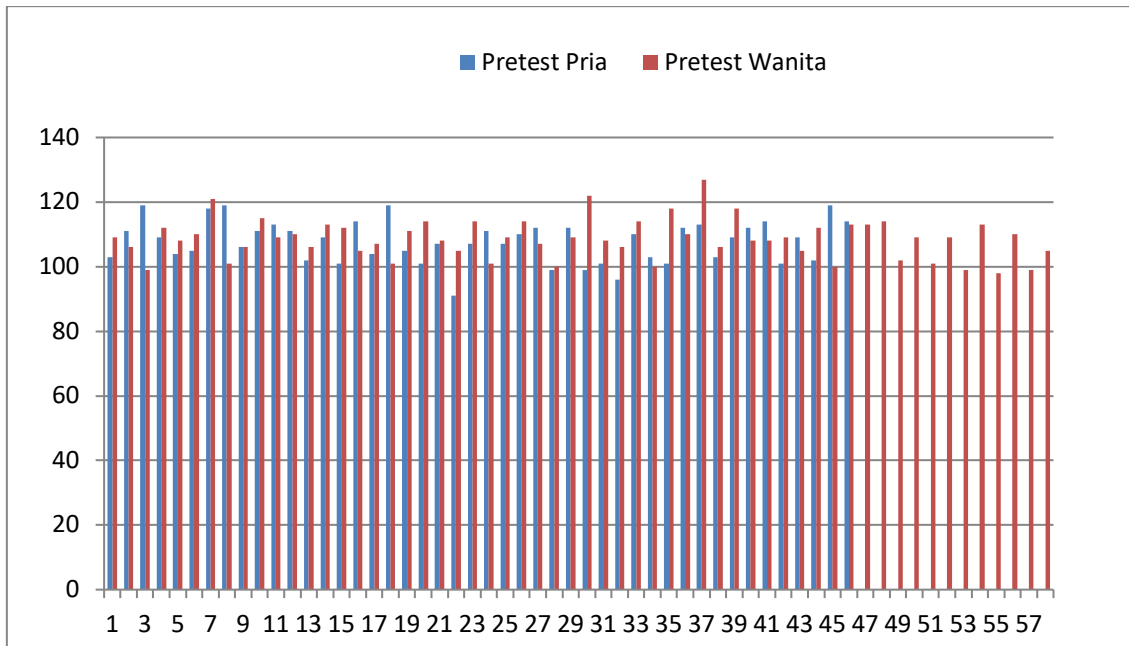


Figure 2. Histogram of Pretest Data Results for Meaningfulness Life Man and Woman

Based on the results, the post-test man and the post-test woman can see a difference in mark score before the given service information. It is known that the comparison score meaningfulness life man of 46 students, as much as $\bar{x}= 128.7$, is in the high category, while the meaningfulness of life score for women is 58 students, as much as $\bar{x}= 133$, is in the high category.

Table 3.

Distribution Frequency Variables Post-test Meaningfulness life Man and Woman

Category	Interval	Post-test Men		Post-test Women	
		f	%	f	%
Very high	≥ 139	20	43.5	15	25.9
Tall	113-138	23	50	42	72.4
Currently	88-112	3	6.5	1	1.7
Low	62-87	0	0	0	0
Very Low	≤ 61	0	0	0	0
Amount		46	100	58	100

Based on Table 3, there are differences in the meaningfulness of life between male post-test and post-test women after the given treatment. To see the condition of each post-test meaningfulness life man and post-test meaningfulness life woman in Figure 3 as follows:



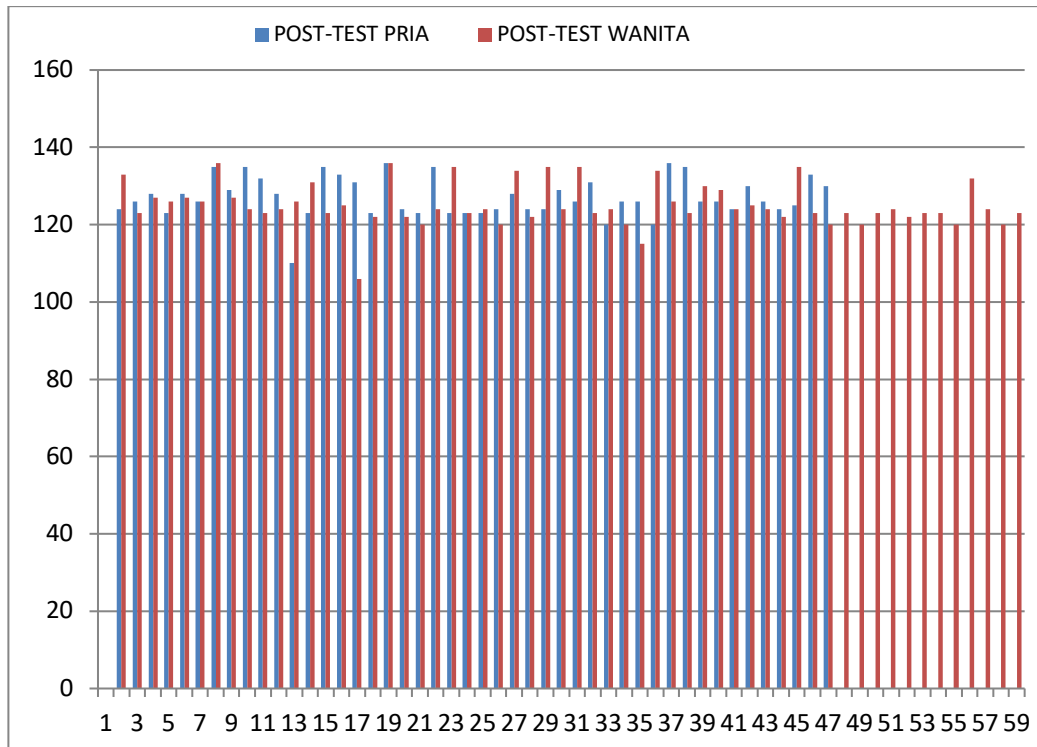


Figure 3. Histogram of Posttest Data Results for Meaningfulness Life Man and Woman

The results of the Paired Sample T-Test of male students in the pretest and posttest showed a significant increase in scores, which showed a Sig (2-tailed) $p < 0.001$ ($p < 0.005$). Thus, the hypothesis tested in this study is accepted. Based on the research results, information services were declared effective in increasing the meaningfulness of life for male students from a Minangkabau ethnic background.

The results of the Paired Sample T-Test of female students in the pretest and posttest showed a significant increase in scores, showing a Sig (2-tailed) figure = 0.001 ($p < 0.005$). Thus, the hypothesis tested in this study is accepted. Based on the research results, information services were declared effective in increasing the meaningfulness of life for female students from a Minangkabau ethnic background.

Table 4.

Independent Samples t-test Results for Meaning in Life Scores between Females and Males in Minangkabau

Group	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation (SD)	t-value	df	p-value	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Difference
Females	30	75.4	8.2				
Males	30	70.1	7.5	2.45	58	0.017	1.2 to 9.4

Explanation:

1. N: Number of participants in each group (e.g., 30 females and 30 males).
2. Mean Score: Average meaning in life score for each group (females 75.4, males 70.1).
3. Standard Deviation (SD): The amount of variation or dispersion of scores within each group.



4. T-value: The calculated t statistic from the independent samples t-test (2.45).
5. df: Degrees of freedom, calculated as $(N_1 + N_2 - 2)$, here 58.
6. p-value: Probability value indicating statistical significance. A p-value less than 0.05 means the difference is statistically significant.
7. 95% Confidence Interval for Mean Difference: The range in which the actual difference in means lies with 95% confidence. Since this interval (1.2 to 9.4) does not include zero, the difference is statistically significant.

The results of the Independent Sample T-Test on the pretest of men and women before being given treatment using information services showed that the level of meaningfulness of life for men is lower than that of women, where the Sig. (2-tailed) score = 0.009 ($p < 0.05$). After being given treatment using information services, there is a significant difference between men and women in the posttest score, where Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.009 ($p < 0.05$). From this study, it can be concluded that the meaningfulness of life for men is lower than the meaningfulness of life for women after being given treatment. This is due to the seriousness of women in following the implementation of information services being higher than that of men. Thus, the hypothesis tested in this study is accepted. Based on the research results, there is a significant difference in the level of meaningfulness of life between male and female students, where the pretest and posttest scores of women are higher than the pretest and posttest scores of men.

The results of the study showed that there was an increase in students' general meaningfulness of life scores before and after being given information services using the developed service materials. The posttest score is much higher than the pretest score. Thus, it can be concluded that information services are effective in increasing the meaningfulness of students' lives. This is reinforced by several previous research results on information services, such as research conducted by Fitri et al., (2016) which found that information services with blended learning methods are effective in increasing students' learning motivation. In addition, research has Ramadhani, (2017) found that information services are effective in improving students' career aspirations. This proves that information services are effective in meeting students' needs for information and providing solutions to several problems experienced by students.

The results of the study showed that the meaningfulness of life scores of students before being given treatment (pretest) was different from the meaningfulness of life scores after being given treatment (posttest). The average pretest score of the meaningfulness of life of male and female students before being given treatment (pretest) was in the medium category, with an average score of 100.2 for men and an average score of 106 for women. However, after being given treatment, the meaningfulness of life of students increased; the average posttest score of men and women was in the high category, with an average posttest score of 128.67 for men and an average posttest score of 133 for women. The meaningfulness of life can be interpreted as the level of appreciation of life that individuals have for everything valuable, meaningful, and considered valid in their lives. It is used as a life goal that will bring happiness to the individual. According to Baumeister, (1991) the meaning of life, it is not something that is given, but something that is built through experience, reflection, and social interaction. Four main components help individuals find meaning, namely, purpose, value, self-efficacy, and self-worth. By understanding and integrating these four elements, individuals can achieve a deeper meaning in life (Jalaluddin, 2013)

Characteristics of adolescents who are able to absorb the meaning of life include being free to choose their own steps or actions and being personally responsible for the



attitudes and behaviors they adopt towards fate (Erfiana, 2013). This is in line with Bastaman, (2007) the opinion that adolescents' appreciation of a meaningful life will be seen in the lives of adolescents who are full of enthusiasm and passion for life and have a purpose in life, so that adolescents will have directed activities. Daily tasks and work will be a source of satisfaction and pleasure for adolescents so that they are carried out with enthusiasm and responsibility. Adolescents who can experience a meaningful life will be able to adapt to the environment by being aware of environmental restrictions but still being able to determine the best actions for themselves, and also realizing that the meaning of life can be found in life itself, no matter how bad the situation is. In addition, adolescents who experience a meaningful life will be able to love and accept the love of others and realize that love is one of the things that makes this life meaningful (Erfiana, 2013). Posttest scores for men are lower than the posttest scores for women. This difference occurs due to several factors, including men being less enthusiastic and less severe in following information services compared to women. Another factor is the cultural factor. Minangkabau society adheres to a matrilineal kinship system. The matrilineal system in Minangkabau society is a kinship system that follows the maternal line, so that descent is regulated according to the maternal line (Sukmawati, 2019).

Minangkabau women are symbolized by the title "*bundo kanduang*". She is the central figure in the family. He is the center of the net of the entire family system. All problems in the family are attributed to him, and he is the decision-maker in the family. Minangkabau women have several special positions and essential roles in the internal life of the traditional house (Yunarti, 2018). In the Minangkabau culture, which emphasizes the matrilineal system, women have a vital role in maintaining the continuity of bloodlines, managing heirlooms, and preserving customs. The meaning of life for Minangkabau women can be seen from several main aspects, namely the role of the family, obligations towards customs and religion, and social responsibility.

In the concept of custom, *bundo kanduang* is respected and revered. They have a high status. *Bundo kanduang* (*Bundo Kandung*) is the *Limpapeh rumah nan gadang* (butterflies decorating the gadang house), *sumarak di dalam kampung* (lively in the village); *hias dalam nagari* (decoration in the town); *kok iduik tampek banasa* (when alive, the place to make a vow); *kok mati tampek baniat* (when dead, the place to make an intention); *kaunduang-unduang ka Madinah* (as a protector to Madinah); *ka payuang panji kasarugo* (as an umbrella to heaven); *cahayo rumah selendang dunie* (the light of the world's shawl house). *Bundo Kanduang* is an intellectual actor who solves various problems that occur in her people (Sola, 2020). Because of the importance and special position of women in Minangkabau, the meaning of women's lives is also higher.

Steger et al., (2009) There are significant differences between men and women in how they find meaning in life, which is reflected in several key aspects. First is the relational aspect, where women tend to associate meaning in life with social relationships, love, and community. Research shows that these aspects often provide higher levels of satisfaction and meaning for them. Conversely, men focus more on personal achievement, particularly in career and life goals, where they may find meaning in professional achievements and success. In terms of emotional well-being, women tend to have higher levels, thanks to their ability to connect socially. However, this does not necessarily mean they have a higher meaning in life. Furthermore, individual variability also plays a significant role, as the meaning of life is strongly influenced by individual factors such as life experiences, personal values, and environment, making it difficult to make generalizations that apply to all men or women.



In Minangkabau culture, the status of men and women is closely linked to the matrilineal system, which regulates inheritance and descent through the maternal line. This shows that although men play a significant role in some aspects of life, overall, women hold a higher status within the context of family and customs (Ariani, 2015). Women have a very high position in family management, inheritance, and children's education, while men play a more prominent role in customary leadership and managing external family affairs. Women focus more on family continuity and preserving customs, while men are responsible for social leadership, managing family assets, and relations with the outside community. These two roles, although different, complement each other and create a harmonious balance in Minangkabau society. Therefore, the positions of men and women in Minangkabau culture are better understood as mutually respectful and supportive, rather than as superior or inferior. Based on the results of the study, it was observed that women's pretest and posttest scores on the meaning of life were higher than men's, which aligns with expert opinions regarding differences in the meaning of life between men and women, particularly within the context of Minangkabau customs.

This study has several limitations that should be noted. One is the lack of a control group, which reduces the ability to compare the effects of the intervention with those of a non-treatment setting. This could impact the external validity of the research findings. Furthermore, the limited sample size of a single school may limit the generalizability of the results to a broader population. Research with a larger, more diverse sample and a more rigorous research design could provide a more representative picture of the effectiveness of information services in enhancing the meaning of life of students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

For future research, it is recommended to employ more rigorous experimental designs, such as those with a control group and the use of more robust randomized methods to minimize bias and enhance internal validity. Furthermore, it is essential to expand the research sample, both in terms of size and diversity of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, to obtain more generalizable results. Further research could explore other aspects that may influence the meaning of life, such as social environmental factors, personal experiences, and family support. With a more robust design and the development of more varied instruments, future research could make a greater contribution to understanding how information services can enhance students' overall meaning of life.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal a significant difference in the meaningfulness of students' lives before and after the implementation of information service treatments using the developed service materials. Furthermore, the results indicate a gender-based distinction, where female students demonstrate a higher level of life meaningfulness than their male counterparts following the treatment. These findings suggest that the information service materials are effective in enhancing students' sense of life purpose, happiness, and overall well-being. Specifically, the materials have proven suitable for use by guidance and counseling (BK) teachers to support high school students, particularly those from Minangkabau ethnic backgrounds, in developing a stronger sense of life meaning. It is recommended that counseling teachers receive targeted training to strengthen their competencies in delivering information services effectively across genders. Such training would ensure that both male and female students benefit equally from interventions aimed at increasing life meaningfulness. In addition, BK teachers



should integrate culturally responsive approaches when applying these materials to better align with students' cultural contexts. Future studies are encouraged to employ mixed method designs to gain deeper insights into students' subjective experiences of meaning in life. Researchers may also consider extending this study to diverse cultural settings beyond the Minangkabau context, thereby enriching the understanding of how cultural values influence the effectiveness of information services in fostering life meaningfulness among adolescents.

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