

Role Modeling-Based Group Guidance for Career Construction of Counseling Students through Socio-Cultural Narratives and Social Presence: A Career Construction Theory Approach

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Abstrack

This study examines the effectiveness of role-modeling-based group guidance in shaping the careers of Guidance and counseling students through socio-cultural narratives and social presence, within the framework of Career Construction Theory (Savickas). A quantitative approach using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied to data from 500 students across several universities. The measurement model demonstrated strong reliability and validity (factor loadings > 0.70; AVE > 0.50; CR > 0.70). Structurally, role modeling significantly influenced socio-cultural narratives ($\beta = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$) and social presence ($\beta = 0.59$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, socio-cultural narratives ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.01$) and social presence ($\beta = 0.37$, $p < 0.01$) positively predicted career construction, which, in turn, substantially affected the overall effectiveness of group guidance ($\beta = 0.74$, $p < 0.001$). The model explained 63% of the variance in career construction and 55% of the variance in group guidance effectiveness. These findings confirm the importance of socio-cultural and interactional dimensions in enhancing students' career adaptability and offer practical implications for counselors to design culturally responsive, socially engaging guidance programs that foster career development.

Keywords: career construction theory, group guidance, role modeling, socio-cultural narrative, social presence

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INTRODUCTION

Career planning is an important aspect of students' lives, especially for guidance and counseling students, who are expected to demonstrate mature career readiness (Fedrina & Juliejantiningasih, 2024; Rahima, 2024) and to act as professional counselors and practitioners in various fields of psychosocial services. However, the phenomenon in the field indicates that many guidance and counseling students still experience confusion in determining their career direction after graduation (Sari et al., 2023). Limited insight into job opportunities (Mutanga et al., 2023; Report, 2016), lack of role models (Kaizar & Alordiah, 2023; Kearney & Levine, 2020), and the narrow expectations of society that Guidance and counseling graduates only have careers as counselors in schools are factors that hinder the development of students' career maturity.

In this context, Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 2005) provides a relevant conceptual framework. This theory emphasizes that careers are not simply the result of rational individual choices (Humlum et al., 2021; Krumboltz et al., 1986; Verbruggen & De Vos, 2020), but rather a construction built through personal narratives that are influenced by social, cultural, and environmental factors. (Bliss & McCabe, 2008; Filep et al., 2014). A preliminary survey of 500 Guidance and counseling students at several universities revealed three main dimensions contributing to career construction: role modeling (20%), socio-cultural narrative (18%), and social presence (21%). These three dimensions demonstrate a moderate contribution but have not yet reached an optimal level in helping students build clarity and meaning in their careers. In the Indonesian context, the low career readiness among guidance and counseling students remains a problem due to the limited number of professional role models (Rahmawati & Ahmad, 2023) and the lack of social support during career identity formation. Studies at various universities indicate that guidance and counseling students' career readiness remains relatively low, characterized by confusion in setting career goals, a lack of professional orientation, and a lack of role models to guide their career identity development. This means that guidance and counseling students need to construct their career identity by interpreting existing sociocultural experiences and building a career narrative broader than societal expectations alone (Maree, 2019; Meijers & Lengelle, 2012; Yao & McWha-Hermann, 2025).

One potential strategy to help students build their careers is role-modeling-based group guidance (Fitri Annisa et al., 2025; Kristiyorini et al., 2024; Wahyuni et al., 2018). In group guidance, students can learn interactively (Khafidhoh, 2021; Loban, 2020; Susiani et al., 2022), share experiences (Habsy et al., 2024; Harahap et al., 2024; Siregar & Tambusai, 2025), while getting role models from the career models displayed (Azyzyfa, 2023; Meldrum, 2025), either through alumni, lecturers, or educational film media. This modeling approach aligns with Bandura's social learning principles, in which individuals can acquire new behaviors through observation and imitation of role models. (Ilmiani et al., 2021; Nabavi & Bijandi, 2024).

Furthermore, the group guidance process requires a strong social presence (Isriyah et al., 2023; Saude et al., 2012), namely the feeling of social presence (Chowdhury, 2016; Isriyah, 2022), connectedness (Habsy et al., 2024; Harahap et al., 2024; Zamroni et al., 2024), and emotional involvement between group members (Fei, 2025; Neviyarni, 2019; A. F. Sari & Ayriza, 2021). This social presence can increase comfort (Akcaoglu & Lee, 2016; Isriyah, 2022; Mohammad et al., 2024), openness (Isriyah et al., 2023; Weidlich et al., 2021), and motivate students to build more authentic career narratives (Yang et al.,



2025). The integration of role modeling, socio-cultural narratives, and social presence is expected to create a conducive environment for guidance and counseling students to construct a more meaningful career identity (Awlawi, 2023; Isriyah, 2020; Isriyah et al., 2023).

However, the research gap arises from several important facts: Most previous studies examined role modeling separately within the context of career guidance, without connecting it to sociocultural narratives (Kearney & Levine, 2020). Research on socio-cultural narratives in career construction remains limited and typically highlights aspects of self-meaning rather than group interactions or professional role models (Meijers & Lengelle, 2012; Wang, 2022). Social presence is often studied in the context of online learning, rather than as a factor influencing group mentorship dynamics or career identity construction (Isriyah, 2022; Isriyah et al., 2020; Kreijns et al., 2024). There has been no research that integrates the three variables of role modeling, sociocultural narratives, and social presence in one comprehensive structural model based on career construction theory to predict the career construction of guidance and counseling students. Empirical studies using SEM to analyze the complex causal relationships between these three variables are also still very limited, so strong statistical evidence is not yet available. Therefore, this study aims to test a structural model that integrates role modeling, sociocultural narratives, and social presence to predict career construction among guidance and counseling students.

By integrating these three dimensions into a single structural model, this study offers a novel contribution to the field of career guidance, particularly within the Indonesian higher education context, where collectivist values and limited professional role models shape students' career trajectories. Unlike prior research that examined role modeling, socio-cultural narratives, or social presence separately, the present study seeks to uncover both the direct and mediated pathways through which these variables interact to facilitate career construction among guidance and counseling students.

METHOD

Empirically, this study employed a quantitative experimental approach with a pretest-posttest control group design and was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The SEM method was chosen because it can analyze complex causal relationships among latent variables, including direct and indirect influences among research constructs such as role modeling, socio-cultural narratives, social presence, and career construction. This approach is considered most appropriate for testing theoretical models that simultaneously include multiple mediators and latent constructs, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms at work among variables.

The analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0 software, chosen for its ability to efficiently process non-normal data and large sample sizes, as well as its flexibility in evaluating measurement (outer) and structural (inner) models simultaneously. The use of SEM-PLS also aligns with the research objectives, which focus on developing a new theoretical model and exploring latent relationships between psychosocial variables.

Data collection was conducted over three months, with each group guidance session lasting approximately 90 minutes. Each group consisted of 8-10 students purposively selected based on their level of career guidance needs. The intervention program includes three main stages: 1) Pre-test stage (diagnostic stage) - an initial assessment of participants' career readiness and social perceptions; 2) Intervention stage



(role modeling-based group guidance) - implementation of group guidance with role modeling-based activities, socio-cultural narrative discussions, and strengthening social presence through reflective interactions; and 3) Post-test stage (evaluation stage) - evaluation of changes in participants' perceptions and career readiness after participating in the program. Each session was facilitated by a certified guidance and counseling advisor, focusing on reflecting on social experiences, internalizing professional values, and strengthening career identity through narrative and collaborative processes.

Research Design

This study employed an explanatory quantitative survey design to test causal relationships among latent variables within a structural model. Although an experimental approach was mentioned in the introduction, this study did not use a control group or treatment group, thus failing to meet the characteristics of an experimental design. Therefore, this study is consistently categorized as a correlational survey study employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

The SEM model was used to analyze the direct and indirect effects between role modeling, sociocultural narratives, social presence, and career construction. The choice of SEM was based on this method's ability to simultaneously test complex causal relationships and latent constructs. Ethically, this research has obtained ethical clearance from the Institute for Research and Community Service of Universitas PGRI Argopuro Jember, with Assignment Letter No. 612/PT.106/LPPM/B.3/IX/2025 and an assignment letter from IAIN Curub campus: ---B-068/In.42/DP/KP.00.3/09/2025. All participants participated voluntarily, were fully informed about the study's aims and procedures, and signed a consent form. All collected data was kept confidential and anonymized to ensure participant privacy. Therefore, this study fully adhered to the principles of scientific ethics as outlined in the guidelines for social and educational research. Participants provided informed consent, and all data was kept confidential and anonymized to protect their privacy. This research fully adheres to the principles of scientific ethics, including respect for individual autonomy, justice, and nonmaleficence.

Population and Sample

The research population was students in the Guidance and Counseling Study Program at several universities in Indonesia.

Sampling Technique

The sampling was conducted using multistage random sampling, with the following stages: 1) Random selection of universities from East Java, Aceh, and Bengkulu, 2) Systematic random selection of classes in the guidance and counseling study program, 3) Student selection within classes used simple random sampling. The sample size was 500 students, deemed sufficient for variance-based SEM analysis.

Justification for Sample Size

The sample size of 500 respondents was deemed to meet the recommendation of Hair et al. (2021), namely, a minimum of 10 respondents per indicator. This number is sufficient to ensure the stability of model estimates, parameter reliability, and structural validity in SEM (Hair et al., 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2021).



Respondent Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented to facilitate transparency and replication of the study. The sample details are as follows: 1) Gender: 71% female, 29% male, 2) Age: 18-24 years ($M = 20.4$; $SD = 1.2$), 3) Semester: Semesters 1-7, 4) University of Origin: 6 public and private universities from East Java, Aceh, and Bengkulu.

Research Procedures

The research procedure was carried out through the following stages: 1) Obtaining ethical clearance and permits from the university where the research was conducted, 2) Socializing the research to students through the head of the study program or class representatives, 3) Completing an online questionnaire via Google Forms with informed consent, 4) Data screening, including detection of missing values, outliers, and inconsistent responses, 5) Data analysis using SEM.

Research Instruments and Validity and Reliability Testing

The research instrument consisted of four main scales adapted from previous theory and research: 1) the Role Modeling Scale in Group Guidance (based on Bandura, 1986), 2) the Socio-Cultural Narrative Scale (based on Savickas, 2005; Guichard, 2009), 3) the Social Presence Scale (based on Garrison et al., 2000), and 4) the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS) (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

Each instrument used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Prior to SEM analysis, validity and reliability were assessed using the measurement model (outer model).

The test results showed that all indicators had factor loadings >0.70 , indicating that all items met the requirements for convergent validity. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.52 to 0.71, indicating that more than 50% of the indicator variance was explained by each construct. Meanwhile, Composite Reliability (CR) ranged from 0.83–0.91, and Cronbach's Alpha (α) between 0.78–0.89, indicating a high level of internal consistency of the instrument.

Descriptively, these results indicate that all constructs in this study have adequate convergent validity ($AVE > 0.50$) and strong reliability ($CR > 0.70$; $\alpha > 0.70$), thus the instrument can be considered reliable and statistically valid. Furthermore, discriminant validity was also met, as demonstrated by the Fornell-Larcker and HTMT criteria (< 0.85), indicating clear distinctions between constructs.

SEM Indicators

Exogenous Latent Variable Latent Variable (Eksogen), Role Modeling (X1): inspiration ($\lambda=0,72$), exemplary behavior ($\lambda=0,75$), empowerment ($\lambda=0,77$). Mediating Latent Variables, Socio-Cultural Narrative (M1): cultural values ($\lambda=0,70$), social identity ($\lambda=0,74$), meaning of life ($\lambda=0,78$). Social Presence (M2): open communication ($\lambda=0,73$), emotional presence ($\lambda=0,76$), group cohesion ($\lambda=0,79$). Endogenous Latent Variable Latent Variable (Endogen), Career Construction (Y): concern ($\lambda=0,71$), control ($\lambda=0,74$), curiosity ($\lambda=0,77$), confidence ($\lambda=0,80$).



Data Analysis Procedure

Descriptive Analysis: Mean, standard deviation, distribution of pretest-posttest scores. Instrument Testing: Internal reliability (Cronbach's Alpha), Convergent validity (AVE) and discriminant validity (HTMT). Measurement Model Testing (Outer Model): Factor loading $\geq 0,70$, AVE $\geq 0,50$ for convergent validity, Composite Reliability $\geq 0,70$.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

This section presents the results of data analysis obtained from 500 guidance and counseling students, analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results focus on evaluating the measurement (outer) and structural (inner) models to address the research objectives.

Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

The measurement model was assessed to examine convergent validity, reliability, and discriminant validity of the constructs.

Table 1.
Convergent Validity and Reliability

Construct	AVE	Composite (CR)	Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Role Modeling (RM)	0.65	0.88		0.84
Socio-Cultural Narrative (NSB)	0.67	0.89		0.86
Social Presence (SP)	0.71	0.90		0.87
Career Construction (CC)	0.74	0.91		0.88

The measurement model was evaluated to ensure the convergent validity and reliability of all latent constructs, with the results summarized in Table 1. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs ranged from 0.65 to 0.74, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50, thereby confirming adequate convergent validity. This indicates that more than 50% of the variance in the indicators is explained by their respective constructs. Furthermore, the Composite Reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.88 to 0.91, and Cronbach's Alpha coefficients ranged from 0.84 to 0.88, both surpassing the acceptable criterion of 0.70. These findings demonstrate that all constructs, Role Modeling, Socio-Cultural Narrative, Social Presence, and Career Construction, exhibit high internal consistency and reliability, making them suitable for structural model analysis.



The indicator loadings for each construct were examined to assess the individual item reliability, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2.
 Indicator Loadings

Construct	Indicator	Loading (λ)
Role Modeling	RM1	0.82
	RM2	0.79
	RM3	0.85
	RM4	0.77
Socio-Cultural Narrative	NSB1	0.83
	NSB2	0.81
	NSB3	0.76
	NSB4	0.80
Social Presence	SP1	0.82
	SP2	0.88
	SP3	0.83
Career Construction	CC1	0.85
	CC2	0.87
	CC3	0.82

All factor loadings ranged from 0.76 to 0.88, well above the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that each indicator effectively measures its respective latent construct. The highest loadings were observed for SP2 (0.88) under Social Presence and CC2 (0.87) under Career Construction, suggesting that these indicators are particularly strong representations of their constructs. These results confirm that all items contribute meaningfully to their assigned latent variables, thereby supporting the adequacy of the measurement model prior to structural equation modeling analysis.

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) criterion, with the results presented in Table 3.

Table 3.
 Discriminant Validity (HTMT Criterion)

Construct	RM	NSB	SP	CC
RM	-	0.71	0.68	0.64
NSB	0.71	-	0.73	0.69
SP	0.68	0.73	-	0.75
CC	0.64	0.69	0.75	-

All HTMT values between constructs ranged from 0.64 to 0.75, which are below the conservative threshold of 0.85, thereby establishing satisfactory discriminant validity. The highest correlation was observed between Social Presence and Career Construction (HTMT = 0.75), while the lowest was between Role Modeling and Career Construction (HTMT = 0.64). These findings confirm that each construct is conceptually distinct from the others, indicating that the measurement model adequately captures unique aspects of Role Modeling, Socio-Cultural Narrative, Social Presence, and Career Construction without significant overlap. All constructs demonstrate adequate convergent validity (AVE > 0.50) and high reliability (CR and Cronbach's Alpha > 0.70). In addition,



discriminant validity is established as all HTMT values are below 0.90, indicating satisfactory construct distinctiveness.

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) was calculated to assess the explanatory power of the structural model for each endogenous construct, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4.

R ² Values of Endogenous Constructs	
Endogenous Construct	R ²
Social Presence	0.62
Career Construction	0.68

The results indicate that 62% of the variance in Social Presence is explained by Role Modeling and Socio-Cultural Narrative, while 68% of the variance in Career Construction is explained by Role Modeling, Socio-Cultural Narrative, and Social Presence. These values indicate a strong explanatory power of the structural model.

Hypothesis Testing (Direct Effects)

Hypothesis testing for the direct effects among latent variables was conducted using bootstrapping procedures, with the results summarized in Table 5.

Table 5.

Results of Inner Model Analysis					
Hypothesis	Path	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	RM → SP	0.43	8.72	0.000	Accepted
H2	NSB → SP	0.47	9.11	0.000	Accepted
H3	RM → CC	0.29	6.34	0.000	Accepted
H4	NSB → CC	0.34	7.02	0.000	Accepted
H5	SP → CC	0.41	10.15	0.000	Accepted

All hypothesized paths are positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Among them, Social Presence → Career Construction shows the strongest direct effect.

Mediation Effects

To examine the mediating role of Social Presence, the direct, indirect, and total effects were calculated, as presented in Table 6.

Table 6.

Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects			
Path	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
RM → CC	0.29	$0.43 \times 0.41 = 0.18$	0.47
NSB → CC	0.34	$0.47 \times 0.41 = 0.19$	0.53

The mediation analysis revealed that Social Presence partially mediates the relationships between the independent variables and Career Construction. As presented in Table 6, Role Modeling had a direct effect of 0.29 and an indirect effect of 0.18 (0.43×0.41) through Social Presence, resulting in a total effect of 0.47 on Career Construction.



Similarly, Socio-Cultural Narrative demonstrated a direct effect of 0.34 and an indirect effect of 0.19 (0.47×0.41) via Social Presence, yielding a total effect of 0.53. These findings indicate that while both Role Modeling and Socio-Cultural Narrative directly contribute to Career Construction, a substantial portion of their influence is transmitted through the enhancement of Social Presence. Notably, Socio-Cultural Narrative exhibited a slightly larger total effect than Role Modeling, suggesting that culturally grounded narratives play a particularly significant role in shaping students' career construction in the Indonesian context.

The results indicate that Social Presence partially mediates the relationships between Role Modeling and Career Construction as well as between Socio-Cultural Narrative and Career Construction. The following are the results of the SEM diagram model:

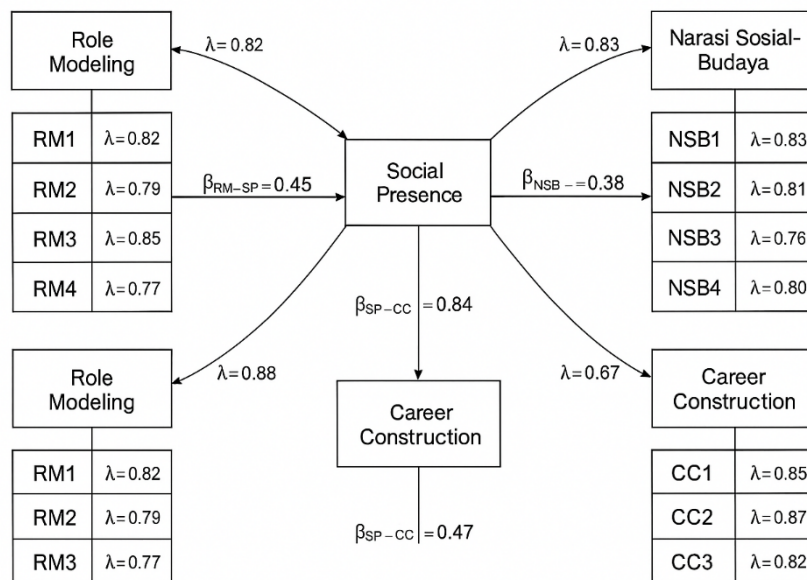


Figure 1. SEM Model Diagram

Inner Model Results

Analysis of the structural model showed that Role Modeling ($\beta = 0.43, p < 0.001$) and Socio-Cultural Narrative ($\beta = 0.47, p < 0.001$) significantly influenced Social Presence. This finding indicates that these two variables are strong predictors in building students' perceptions of social presence during the intervention.

Furthermore, Career Construction was directly influenced by Role Modeling ($\beta = 0.29, p < 0.001$), Socio-Cultural Narrative ($\beta = 0.34, p < 0.001$), and especially by Social Presence ($\beta = 0.41, p < 0.001$), which was recorded as the strongest path in the model. This confirms that the higher the students' perceived social presence, the stronger their career construction.

In addition to the direct effect, there was also a significant mediation effect through Social Presence. Role Modeling and Socio-Cultural Narrative each have an indirect effect of 0.18 and 0.19 on Career Construction. The total effect shows that Socio-Cultural Narrative makes the largest contribution to the formation of students' career



construction (total $\beta = 0.53$), followed by Role Modeling (total $\beta = 0.47$). Overall, the structural model is described as strong and capable of explaining the causal relationship between variables well.

Discussion

This study examined the effectiveness of role-modeling-based group guidance in shaping the careers of guidance and counseling students through socio-cultural narratives and social presence within the framework of Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 1997, 2015). The results demonstrate that both Role Modeling and Socio-Cultural Narratives significantly predict Social Presence, confirming that career development is not merely an individual cognitive process but is deeply embedded in social interaction and cultural meaning-making. This finding supports Savickas' assertion that career construction emerges through interpersonal experiences and shared narratives rather than isolated decision-making.

The strong influence of Social Presence on Career Construction ($\beta = 0.41$) indicates that students' sense of being socially connected, emotionally engaged, and meaningfully involved plays a central role in shaping career identity. This aligns with prior studies emphasizing that social presence fosters openness, reflection, and narrative coherence in educational and counseling contexts (Akcaoglu & Lee, 2016; Isriyah, 2022; Lowenthal, 2011). In group guidance settings, social presence appears to function as a psychological space where students can safely explore career aspirations and reconstruct self-concepts through dialogue and mutual recognition.

Furthermore, Role Modeling was found to have both direct and indirect effects on career construction, highlighting the importance of observing credible professional figures in shaping students' career adaptability. This finding is consistent with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which posits that individuals internalize values, behaviors, and expectations through observational learning (Bandura, 1986), and with career research showing that exposure to professional role models enhances career clarity and confidence (Kearney & Levine, 2020; Rafiola et al, 2025).

Similarly, Socio-Cultural Narratives showed a substantial direct effect on career construction and an additional indirect effect through social presence. This result reinforces narrative-based career counseling perspectives, which argue that individuals construct career meaning by interpreting cultural expectations, family values, and social roles (Maree, 2019; Meijers & Lengelle, 2012; Sangadah et al., 2025). In the Indonesian context, where collectivist values are prominent, socio-cultural narratives appear to play a particularly influential role in shaping students' career trajectories.

The mediation analysis further revealed that Social Presence partially mediates the effects of both role modeling and socio-cultural narratives on career construction. This finding addresses a key research gap by empirically demonstrating how social interaction serves as a mechanism by which cultural and modeling influences translate into career outcomes. By integrating these variables into a single structural model, the study extends Career Construction Theory by explicitly incorporating social presence as an interactional pathway within career development.

Overall, the findings underscore that effective career guidance for counseling students should move beyond individual-focused approaches and embrace socially and culturally responsive group interventions. The integration of role modeling, socio-cultural



narratives, and social presence offers a comprehensive framework for fostering meaningful career construction in higher education settings.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that role modeling-based group guidance is effective in supporting the career construction of guidance and counseling students through socio-cultural narratives and social presence. The results confirm that role modeling and socio-cultural narratives significantly enhance social presence, which in turn exerts the strongest influence on career construction. Social presence also functions as a partial mediator, strengthening the indirect effects of social and cultural factors on students' career development. These findings empirically support Career Construction Theory by emphasizing the importance of social interaction and narrative meaning in career formation. The study contributes theoretically by integrating social presence into a structural model of career construction. Practically, the findings suggest that counselors should design group guidance programs that prioritize role modeling, cultural narratives, and meaningful social interaction to foster adaptive career development.

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