

Experiential Communication as a Meaning Process in Shaping Agricultural Career Interest among Generation Z : A Cross-Educational Perspective

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis *experiential communication* sebagai proses pembentukan makna (*meaning-making*) dalam memengaruhi minat karier pertanian pada Generasi Z melalui pendekatan lintas jenjang pendidikan. Penelitian menggunakan desain *mixed-methods explanatory sequential*, dengan data kuantitatif dari 136 siswa SMK Pertanian Banjarbaru dan data kualitatif melalui diskusi kelompok terarah (FGD) dengan mahasiswa agribisnis ULM. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa minat karier berada pada kategori sangat tinggi, dengan dominasi dimensi afektif dan konatif dibandingkan kognitif, yang mengindikasikan bahwa minat lebih banyak dibentuk oleh pengalaman dan keterlibatan emosional daripada pemahaman konseptual. Tingkat motivasi siswa juga sangat tinggi, ditandai oleh kombinasi motivasi intrinsik dan ekstrinsik yang mencerminkan proses internalisasi yang sedang berlangsung. Temuan kualitatif menegaskan bahwa *experiential communication* berfungsi sebagai mekanisme komunikasi transformasional yang mampu mengurangi stereotip negatif serta membentuk pemahaman baru mengenai potensi sektor pertanian. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa *experiential communication* merupakan proses pembentukan makna yang berperan penting dalam membentuk orientasi karier Generasi Z di sektor pertanian.

Keywords: *Experiential Communication; Pembentukan Makna; Minat Karier; Generasi Z; Komunikasi Pertanian*

Abstract

This study analyzes *experiential communication as a meaning-making process* in influencing agricultural career interest in Generation Z through a cross-level education approach. The study used a *mixed-methods explanatory sequential design*, with quantitative data from 136 students of SMK Pertanian Banjarbaru and qualitative data through a directed group discussion (FGD) with ULM agribusiness students. The results showed that career interests were in the very high category, with the dominance of affective and conative dimensions over cognitive, indicating that interests were more shaped by experience and emotional involvement than conceptual understanding. The level of student motivation is also very high, characterized by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that reflects the ongoing internalization process. Qualitative findings confirm that *experiential communication* functions as a transformational communication mechanism that is able to reduce negative stereotypes and form a new understanding of the potential of the agricultural sector. Thus, this study emphasizes that *experiential communication* is a process of forming meaning that plays an important role in shaping the career orientation of Generation Z in the agricultural sector.

Keywords: *Experiential Communication; Meaning Formation; Career Interests; Generation Z; Agricultural Communication*

Introduction

The agricultural sector has a significant contribution to food security and national labor absorption. Data from Badan Pusat Statistik (2025) shows that in February 2025 the agricultural sector will still be the business field with the largest labor absorption in Indonesia, which is around 41.6 million workers. However, the importance of this role is not directly proportional to the level of interest of the younger generation to a career in agriculture. The low interest in the agricultural profession shows that the problem of farmer regeneration is not only related to economic factors and employment opportunities, but also to the process of forming meaning that takes place through communication. In the context of a digital society, the way the younger generation views agriculture is greatly influenced by the information, experience, and social representation they receive about the sector.

Generation Z born between 1997 and 2012 is a generation that grew up in a very dynamic digital communication environment (Dimock, 2019). This characteristic makes them more exposed to various narratives regarding career choices that develop through social media and digital platforms. Francis & Hoefel (2018) and Seemiller & Grace (2019) explained that Generation Z's career preferences tend to be influenced by social perceptions, professional image, and identity values inherent in a profession. In these conditions, the agricultural sector often faces challenges in building a positive image because it is still perceived as a less prestigious job, has a high level of risk, and has not been fully associated with modern technological innovations. As a result, the construction of meaning that develops among younger generations tends to be less supportive of agriculture as an attractive career option.

The problem of the low interest of the young generation in the agricultural sector is basically not only related to economic aspects or job opportunities, but also related to how the meaning of the agricultural profession is built and understood by them. This phenomenon is the main basis of this research. Various previous studies have examined the issue from various perspectives. De Guzman et al., (2025), shows that direct involvement in agricultural activities from an early age has an important role in the formation of interest and career identity in agriculture. Meanwhile, the results of a systematic review conducted by Consentino et al., (2023) revealed that agricultural career interests are influenced by several main groups of factors, namely individual motivation, family and social environment influences, economic conditions, and the image of the agricultural profession that develops in society and the media. In the conditions in Indonesia, Juniasih et al., (2025) It found that limited knowledge about opportunities and developments in modern agriculture is still a significant obstacle in

encouraging the interest of the younger generation to pursue a career in the agricultural sector. On the other side, Unay-Gailhard & Brennen (2022) emphasized that digital communication plays a role in shaping the perception and career orientation of the younger generation towards the agricultural sector, although its effectiveness is still influenced by various contextual factors that limit the process.

Although various studies have made important contributions in explaining the factors that influence the agricultural career interest of younger generations, there are still a number of conceptual gaps that need further attention. First, most previous studies viewed experience primarily as a means of learning or a source of motivation, so its role as a communication process that allows the formation of meaning has not been explored in depth. In fact, experience not only generates new knowledge, but can also be a medium that influences the way individuals interpret and understand a social reality. Second, research that specifically discusses experiential communication as a meaning-making mechanism in the context of agricultural education at various levels of education is still relatively limited. As a result, the understanding of how experiences are communicated, interpreted, and internalized at different stages of educational development has not been comprehensively depicted. Third, until now there is little research that connects the perspective of persuasive communication with social cognitive career theory to explain the process of forming career choices in the agricultural sector. These limitations have led to an inadequate explanation as to why the growing interest in agriculture does not always continue to be a real career decision, especially among Indonesia's Generation Z.

This research is designed to answer various conceptual gaps that are still found in previous studies. To achieve this goal, this study involved two groups of participants who were purposively selected based on theoretical considerations and relevance of the research context. The first group consisted of students of the Banjarbaru Agricultural Vocational School which was seen as representing the initial phase of the formation of agricultural career orientation. At this stage, the perception and meaning of the agricultural profession is still developing through the vocational learning process, field practice, and various educational experiences gained during the study period. The second group is students of the Agribusiness Study Program of Lambung Mangkurat University (ULM) which represents the advanced stage in the process of forming career meaning. In this phase, more intensive academic and field experience has provided opportunities for students to develop a deeper understanding of the agricultural sector while considering career options more realistically. Through a cross-educational perspective,

this study seeks to obtain a more comprehensive picture of how experiential communication works at different stages in the formation of agricultural career orientation.

Starting from these research gaps, the study formulates four main questions:

1. **[Quantitative]** How is the profile of agricultural career interests of Generation Z reviewed from the affective, cognitive, and conative dimensions in a communication perspective?
2. **[Qualitative]** What is the working mechanism of experiential communication as a communication process in shaping and changing the meaning and interests of agricultural careers?
3. **[Qualitative]** Through what communicative mechanisms does experiential communication mediate the construction of meaning, motivation, and career orientation?
4. **[Integrative]** Why is there a gap between the interests formed and actual career decisions from a communication perspective?

Literature Review

1. Experiential Communication as Meaning-Making Process

In the development of contemporary communication studies, attention is no longer solely focused on how the message is conveyed, but rather on how meaning is formed through the communication process itself. This perspective places communication not simply as the transmission of information, but as an interpretive process in which individuals actively construct reality based on experiences, interactions, and the social context that surrounds them.

Experiential communication as an academic concept is rooted in the experiential learning theory formulated by Kolb (2015), which describes the learning cycle through four stages: *concrete experience*, *reflective observation*, *abstract conceptualization*, and *active experimentation*). From a communication perspective, this cycle not only describes the learning process, but also explains how messages are produced, interpreted, and internalized through experience. Morris (2020) through a systematic review and revision of the Kolb model asserts that the integration between experience and reflection significantly increases the depth of learning and interpretive capacity of individuals—a finding that was later further confirmed by Villarroel Henríquez et al., (2025) in the context of cross-disciplinary deep learning.

Furthermore, experiential communication has characteristics that distinguish it from conventional forms of communication: the meaning formed comes from empirical experience, not from mediated information. In this context, experience serves as a bridge between the social representation of a profession and the reality that can actually be felt directly. Briñol & Petty (2022), in their update of the *Elaboration Likelihood Model* (ELM), assert that messages experienced directly have a stronger persuasive capacity because they are processed through a central pathway that involves

empirical validation, not just the reception of information through peripheral pathways.

In the context of the formation of career interests, Lent & Brown (2020) emphasized that direct experience contributes to the formation of *outcome expectations* and *self-efficacy*, which are the strongest predictors in *Social Cognitive Career Theory* (SCCT). In other words, experiential communication is not just a pedagogical tool, it is the main communicative mechanism that connects concrete experiences to the formation of career orientation.

2. Career Interests: Affective, Cognitive and Conative Dimensions

Career interests in the study of communication and educational psychology are understood as multidimensional constructs that include three interacting components: affective components (likes or dislikes, emotional attachment), cognitive (knowledge, belief, and understanding), and conative (tendency to act, behavioral intent). This three-dimensional framework has long been used in vocational interest research and has proven effective in capturing the complexity of adolescent career orientation across the board.

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) developed by Lent et al., (1994) and later comprehensively updated by Lent & Brown (2020) is the most influential theoretical framework for understanding career interests. SCCT emphasizes the central role of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals in shaping career interests. What sets the Lent & Brown update apart is its integration of career decision-making models that blend intuitive and deliberative processes—which are relevant to understanding why interest doesn't always lead to real career commitments.

In the context of agriculture in Indonesia, Awaludin et al., (2024) found that family factors, social environment, personality, motivation, and farming experience simultaneously exert a positive and significant influence on Generation Z's interest in a career in the agricultural sector in Bima Regency. Juniasih et al., (2025), through a comprehensive systematic review, affirm that negative perceptions of the agricultural profession are the greatest cognitive barriers that suppress the formation of strong agricultural career interests among Indonesian youth—findings that have direct implications for agricultural communication efforts.

3. Generation Z and Agricultural Career Orientation

Generation Z has the characteristics of distinctive career choices, oriented towards meaning and Social impact, economic pragmatism and decision-making that relies on digital information (Seemiller & Grace, 2019). Dimock (2019) defines Generation Z as a cohort born between 1997-2012, characterized by early exposure to digital technologies that fundamentally shape their communication preferences and information consumption.

In the context of agriculture, De Guzman et al. (2025) research in Australia found that when younger generations are comprehensively informed about modern agriculture, they can view the sector with a sense of passion, pride and purpose, a fundamental shift in perception from the original stereotypes. These findings confirm the importance of designing communication and educational programs that are able to bridge the information gap about modern agriculture.

Consentino et al. (2023) systematic review concluded that there are four determinant clusters that influence the perception and choice of agricultural careers among the younger generation, namely: motivational factors, intrinsic factors, family and community influence, economic conditions and policies, and the image and representation of the agricultural profession in the media. This cross-country research confirms that the issue of agricultural career interest among the younger generation is a global phenomenon that requires a structured and evidence-based communication approach.

Girdziute et al. (2022) in their comparative study in Lithuania found that the unwillingness of young people to work in the agricultural sector is caused not only by economic factors, but also by social constructions about prestige and professional identity. These findings are in line with Geza et al. (2021) which identifies that the low participation of youth in agriculture in Africa is also influenced by social perceptions constructed through everyday communication environments, including media and interactions with communities.

4. Agricultural Communication and Vocational Education

Agricultural Vocational High School (SMK) has a strategic role as an institution that not only transfers technical knowledge, but also shapes the identity and career orientation of students. Within the framework of agricultural communication, a curriculum that integrates theoretical learning with field practice is a form of institutional experiential communication that can significantly affect students' interest and motivation.

Shaw et al., (2015) emphasizing that progress in the field of agricultural communication requires the active involvement of the audience in the communication process, not just the receipt of one-way messages. In this case, the field practice program, internship and teaching factory at the Agricultural Vocational School is a concrete implementation of this principle, where students are conditioned to become active participants in the process of their own interpretation of agriculture. Unay-Gailhard & Brennen (2022) further identify three effective communication channels in shaping agricultural career choices, namely: (1)

emphasis on sustainable agriculture trends that are aligned with the value of self-fulfillment of the younger generation; (2) the spotlight on agricultural technology innovation; and (3) communication campaigns targeted at specific demographic groups.

Methods

This study uses *mixed-methods explanatory sequential design* with a *cross-educational* perspective. This design integrates quantitative and qualitative data sequentially: quantitative data is collected and analyzed first to identify patterns of interest and motivation, then qualitative data is used to explain the mechanisms underlying the findings in more depth. The cross-education dimension refers to the involvement of two different levels of education agricultural vocational schools and agribusiness colleges as representations of different stages in the formation of agricultural career orientation.

Quantitative data was collected from 136 students of the Agricultural Vocational School Banjarbaru who were selected using *a simple random sampling technique*. The Agricultural Vocational School was chosen because it represents the early stage of the formation of career meaning, where the construction of perceptions about the agricultural profession is still very dynamic and vulnerable to change through experiential communication. Qualitative data were obtained through *a Focus Group Discussion* (FGD) involving 32 agribusiness students University of Lambung Mangkurat (ULM), selected by *purposive sampling* with the criteria of having participated in agricultural field visit activities. Agribusiness students are chosen because they represent an advanced stage where field experience is more structured and career decision considerations begin to strengthen.

The quantitative instrument is a five-point Likert scale questionnaire that measures two main constructs: (1) the dimension of career interest consisting of affective, cognitive, and contive sub-scales; and (2) the dimension of career motivation consisting of sub-scales of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation based on the SDT framework (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The validity of the construct was tested using *Confirmatory Factor Analysis* (CFA) with a factor loading of > 0.60 and an adequate model feasibility index ($CFI > 0.90$; $RMSEA < 0.08$). The reliability of the instrument was confirmed with an Alpha Cronbach value of > 0.80 on all sub-scales.

Qualitative data were collected through a structured FGD with open-ended question guidance focused on an exploration of agricultural communication experiences, mechanisms of perception change, and factors that mediate the relationship between interests and career decisions. Each FGD session lasts 90–120 minutes, is recorded with the consent of the participants, and transcribed verbatim.

Quantitative data analysis was carried out descriptively (mean and percentage) using a score index, with interpretation categories: $< 60\%$ (Low), 60–70% (Adequate), 71–80% (Moderate), 81–90% (High), and $> 90\%$ (Very High). Qualitative analysis uses an inductive thematic analysis approach

through three stages: open coding (identification of units of meaning), thematic grouping, and theoretical interpretation. Data integration is carried out at the interpretation stage by linking the statistical patterns of quantitative analysis results with qualitative thematic findings, resulting in a comprehensive understanding of the role of experiential communication in the formation of agricultural career orientation.

Results

1. Agricultural Career Interest Profile of Vocational School Students

Descriptive analysis of quantitative data obtained from 136 respondents provides a comprehensive picture of the profile of career interest in agriculture in agricultural vocational schools in Banjarbaru. In general, the average career interest score is in the high category (80.74%), which indicates that most students show a strong enough interest in career options in the agricultural sector. The distribution of interest by dimension is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Agricultural Career Interest Dimension

No.	Dimensions	Percentage (%)	Category
1.	Affective	86,19%	Very High
2.	Conatif	84,71%	Height
3.	Cognitive	71,32%	Medium
Overall Average		80,74%	Height

Source: Primary data processing (2025)

The results showed that the affective dimension had the highest value, followed by the contive dimension, while the cognitive dimension was in the medium category.

2. Agricultural Career Motivation Profile of Vocational School Students

Analysis of the motivation dimension shows that in general, the level of student motivation for careers in the agricultural sector is in the very high category with an average of 83.67%. The distribution of motivation is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Dimensions of Agricultural Career Motivation for Agricultural Vocational School Students

No.	Dimensions	Percentage (%)	Category
1.	Extrinsic	85,07%	Very High
2.	Intrinsic	82,26 %	Very High
Overall Average		83,67%	Very High

Source: Primary data processing (2025)

These results show that most respondents have a strong drive to consider the agricultural sector as a career choice, both from internal and external factors. High intrinsic motivation is reflected in personal interest in agricultural activities, a sense of likeness, and a desire to be involved in activities related to the sector. Meanwhile, high extrinsic motivation shows the influence of external factors such as environmental support, economic opportunities, and perception of career prospects in agriculture. In general, the combination of both high extrinsic and intrinsic motivation dimensions suggests that students have a relatively strong and diverse motivation to consider a career in the agricultural sector, both from the environment and from within the individual.

3. Qualitative Findings: Experiential Communication Experience

Table 3. Summary of Qualitative Findings from the FGD

No.	Theme Findings	Short Description
1.	Changing perceptions of agriculture	Agriculture is understood as a modern and technology-based sector
2.	Increased understanding of economic opportunities	Students understand the potential for profit through the agribusiness model
3.	The role of role models of young farmers	The presence of young farmers increases interest in agricultural careers
4.	Interest gap and career outcomes	Interest is not always followed by decisions due to external factors

Source: Primary data processing (2025)

The results of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) show that experiential communication experiences contribute to changes in students' perceptions and career interests in the agricultural sector. In general, first-hand experience provides a new understanding of the characteristics of the agricultural sector, both in terms of technology and economic opportunities. In addition, interaction with agricultural business actors, especially young farmers, also affects students' interest in careers in this field. However, the findings also show that there is a gap between the interests formed and the career decisions taken, which are influenced by a variety of external factors.

Discussion

1. Career Interest Profile: Affective Dominance and Its Implications

The results show that the dominance of the affective dimension is higher than the cognitive dimension, this means that agricultural career interest in Generation Z is more built through experiential engagement and emotional resonance than through formal knowledge accumulation. These findings indicate that direct experience has a stronger communication capacity in shaping perceptions and career orientation than the delivery of information that is purely informative. In the perspective of persuasive communication, field experience serves as a form of message that has a high level of credibility because individuals not only receive information, but also verify the meaning of the information through first-hand experience.

This view is in line with the development of the Elaboration Likelihood Model put forward by Briñol & Petty (2022), which asserts that personal involvement and the process of validation of experiences can strengthen attitude formation and increase resilience to change. Thus, agricultural experiences not only play a role as a means of learning, but also as a communication medium that allows the process of constructing meaning in a more profound way. Through this process, individuals not only know the potential of the agricultural sector, but also develop a more positive belief and orientation towards the possibility of making agriculture a career choice.

The findings of this study reinforce the results of previous research that affirmed the importance of first-hand experience in encouraging the interest of the younger generation in the agricultural sector. Awaludin et al., (2024) reported that farming experience has a positive contribution to the career interests of Generation Z in Bima Regency. The results of this study provide a deeper understanding by showing that the influence is mainly reflected in the affective and conative dimensions, while the cognitive dimension is still relatively lower. These findings indicate that hands-on experience tends to be more effective at building emotional attraction and encouraging the inclination to act than at improving conceptual understanding of the agricultural sector.

This condition is in line with the results of a systematic review conducted by Juniasih et al. (2025), which identified the limitations of knowledge about opportunities and developments in modern agriculture as one of the main obstacles in the formation of interest in agricultural careers among Indonesian youth. In this study, this phenomenon can be seen in the lower cognitive dimension score compared to the affective and conative dimensions. Thus, although respondents show a positive interest and inclination towards the agricultural sector, their level of understanding of agricultural prospects, innovations, and career opportunities still needs to be

strengthened.

From a communication perspective, these findings show that the formation of career interests is not only determined by the amount of information that individuals receive, but also by the quality of experience that allows the information to be interpreted personally. Therefore, agricultural communication strategies that only focus on delivering technical information have the potential to be less effective in reaching Generation Z. Conversely, communication approaches that provide opportunities to be directly involved in agricultural activities tend to be more able to build emotional attachment, strengthen positive perceptions, and encourage the formation of a stronger career orientation towards the agricultural sector. These findings support the view that experience is a communication medium that plays an important role in the process of constructing meaning and forming attitudes towards a profession.

2. Internalisasi Motivasi dalam Perspektif Self-Determination Theory

The level of motivation that is in the very high category indicates that respondents have a strong drive to consider the agricultural sector as a career choice. Interestingly, the difference between extrinsic and intrinsic motivations is relatively small, which indicates that the process of internalizing motivation is ongoing. These findings suggest that interest in the agricultural sector is no longer solely driven by external factors, such as economic opportunities, environmental support, or job prospects, but is beginning to evolve into a drive that stems from personal interest in and involvement in the agricultural activity itself.

This phenomenon can be explained through Self-Determination Theory (SDT) developed by Ryan & Deci (2017). This theory explains that motivation that initially comes from external factors can develop into more internalized motivation when individuals gain experience that is able to meet basic psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence, and social relationships. In the context of this research, the experience gained through field practical activities allows participants to actively engage in agricultural activities, develop relevant abilities and skills, and build interaction with the environment and agricultural actors. The combination of these experiences has the potential to strengthen the process of internalizing agricultural values so that the motivation formed becomes more sustainable.

The results of this study show a different pattern from the findings Geza et al., (2021), which reveal that the motivation of youth to engage in the agricultural sector in some African countries is still more driven by external factors and has not been followed by the development of strong intrinsic motivation. These differences are likely influenced by different educational and institutional contexts. In this study, respondents came from an agricultural vocational education

environment that systematically integrated practical experience into the learning process. This condition provides a greater opportunity for students to understand, experience, and interpret agricultural activities directly, so that the process of internalizing motivation can take place more optimally.

From a communication perspective, these findings indicate that experiences serve not only as a means of learning, but also as a medium of communication that allows individuals to build personal relationships with the agricultural sector. Through first-hand experience, messages about the values, opportunities, and relevance of agriculture are not only received as information, but also interpreted and internalized as part of self-orientation. Thus, experiential communication plays an important role in bridging the transformation of motivation from an external one to a more personal and meaningful motivation.

3. Transformation of Meaning through Experiential Communication

a. Disruption of Perception and Reconstruction of Meaning

The results of the qualitative findings show that direct experience is able to disrupt negative stereotypes about agriculture and replace them with more positive perceptions. In the perspective of communication, this process can be described as *frame transformation*, where experience functions as *a counter-frame* that replaces social representations that were previously formed through media and social environments. Research by Unay-Gailhard & Brennen (2022) revealed that the perception of the younger generation towards agricultural careers is greatly influenced by the representation of communication they receive, both through the media and social interactions. Therefore, direct experience becomes an effective communication strategy to reconstruct meaning and change previously formed perceptions.

b. Reality Reconstruction: From Mediated Reality to Experienced Reality

The change in perception of the economic potential of agriculture shows a shift from *mediated reality* to *experienced reality*. In the context of communication, this suggests that meaning is no longer formed solely through symbolic representations, but through direct experiences that have a higher level of credibility. These findings are in line with research Lent & Brown (2020), which shows that direct experience plays a role in shaping outcome expectations that influence career decisions. Thus, experiential communication not only conveys information, but also validates meaning through empirical experience.

c. **Social Identification and Career Identity Formation**

Direct interaction with young farmers shows that experiential communication works through *identification-based communication* mechanisms. Role models serve as symbolic communicators that represent possible future identities that individuals can achieve. Within the framework of *Social Cognitive Career Theory*, direct experience and observation of relevant figures play a role in shaping career identities and expectations of outcomes (Lent & Brown, 2020). The proximity of identity between individuals and role models increases the effectiveness of communication because it reduces psychological distance, thereby strengthening the process of forming career meaning.

d. **Interest and Decision Gap : Narrative Gap in Career Communication**

Although experiential communication is successful in shaping meaning and increasing interest, the results show that there is a gap between interests and career decisions. From a communication perspective, this phenomenon can be explained as *a narrative gap*, which is the absence of a narrative that is able to bridge the meaning that has been formed with real actions. Factors such as social pressure, limited access to resources, and unclear career paths suggest that the communication process does not stop at the stage of meaning-formation. As explained by Lent & Brown (2020), Career decisions are influenced by contextual factors that mediate the relationship between interests and actions. This suggests that experiential communication needs to be supported by a broader communication system, including a clear career narrative and institutional support.

4. **Experiential Communication Model as a Meaning-Making Process**

Based on the integration of findings, experiential communication can be understood as a layered communication system consisting of three main stages, namely:

1. **Meaning Construction**

Direct experience shapes and reconstructs meaning through the disruption of perception.

2. **Meaning Internalization**

The meaning formed is internalized through reflection and validation of experiences, which affect the motivation and identity of the individual.

3. **Meaning Translation Constraint**

The transformation of meaning into action is influenced by structural factors and narrative limitations.

This model emphasizes that experiential communication is the main communication mechanism that connects experiences, meaning-making, and career orientation. However, its effectiveness is limited to the stage of construction and internalization of meaning, so broader

communication system support is needed to bridge the gap between interests and career decisions.

Conclusion

This study confirms that Generation Z's agricultural career interests are the product of experiential communication processes that work through mechanisms of constructing and internalizing meaning not simply the accumulation of cognitive knowledge. Quantitatively, the career interest of Banjarbaru Agricultural Vocational School students is in the high category (80.74%), with the affective dimension as the strongest component (86.19%), followed by conative (84.71%), and cognitive (71.32%). Career motivation is in the very high category (83.67%), with extrinsic motivation (85.07%) slightly more dominant than intrinsic (82.26%), indicating an ongoing internalization process but not yet fully optimal.

Qualitatively, experiential communication works through four interrelated communicative mechanisms: (1) *disruption* of negative perception and reconstruction of meaning through direct experience; (2) reconstruction of the reality of agricultural economics from subsistence to modern agribusiness; (3) social identification through *the role model* of young farmers that reduces the psychological distance between individuals and agricultural careers; and (4) narrative *gaps* that hinder the translation of interests into concrete career decisions.

Based on these findings, the research recommends: first, agricultural education institutions need to design experiential communication in a systematic and reflective manner as the core of the curriculum, not just a complement; second, agricultural career communication systems need to be strengthened with clear, concrete, and contextual career narratives—including through the use of *role models* young farmers and digital platforms relevant to Generation Z; Third, agricultural policy needs to ensure clear career path accessibility and capital support to bridge the gap between career interests and commitments. Longitudinal and cross-regional follow-up research is strongly encouraged to validate experiential communication models generated in more diverse contexts.

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