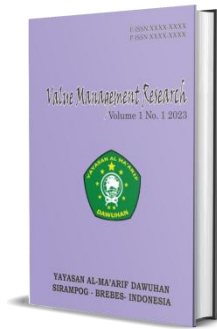




## The Influence of Competency, Career Guidance and Self-Efficacy on Work Readiness

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the influence of competency, career guidance, and self-efficacy on work readiness among 2020 PGRI Semarang University students. The study utilized primary data collected through questionnaires distributed via Google Forms to 100 respondents who were purposively selected. The sampling technique employed was non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling method, targeting students from PGRI University Semarang who enrolled in 2020. The variables examined in this research included work competency, career guidance, and self-efficacy as independent variables, and work readiness as the dependent variable. The findings revealed that there is a positive and significant influence of work competency on the work readiness of PGRI University Semarang students. This indicates that students with higher levels of competency are better prepared to face the demands of the job market. Similarly, career guidance was found to have a positive and significant impact on work readiness, underscoring the importance of structured and effective career support services in enhancing students' employability. Furthermore, self-efficacy also demonstrated a positive and significant influence on work readiness, suggesting that students who believe in their abilities are more confident and prepared to enter the workforce. Overall, this research highlights the critical roles of competency, career guidance, and self-efficacy in shaping the work readiness of university students. The findings provide valuable insights for higher education institutions to develop targeted interventions aimed at improving these factors, thereby equipping students to successfully transition into the professional world.

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## Introduction

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The era of increasing globalization has placed significant pressure on companies and government agencies to improve the quality and performance of their employees. This demand stems from the rapidly evolving technological advancements and the dynamic nature of the global market, which necessitate a highly skilled and adaptable workforce. Universities play a critical role in addressing these demands by producing graduates equipped with the competencies required to excel in the workforce. However, despite these efforts, unemployment remains a persistent issue in many urban areas, including Semarang. This situation underscores the need for higher education institutions to intensify their focus on enhancing the employability of their graduates, aligning educational outcomes with market needs, and fostering a culture of lifelong learning to adapt to ever-changing industry standards.

In the context of Semarang, the phenomenon of high unemployment presents a pressing challenge. Institutions like Universitas PGRI Semarang are striving to address this issue by emphasizing the development of competencies and improving the quality of education to better prepare students for the workforce. Job readiness—encompassing knowledge, technical skills, soft skills, and mental resilience—is a crucial factor that determines how quickly graduates can secure employment in their respective fields. Unfortunately, data from the Universitas PGRI Semarang Tracer Study indicate a concerning decline in the number of employed alumni between 2020 and 2022. This trend reflects the complex challenges faced by fresh graduates, including mismatched skills, limited job opportunities, and inadequate preparation for the demands of the job market. Such challenges highlight the importance of bridging the gap between academic training and industry expectations.

One of the primary factors contributing to job readiness is self-efficacy—an individual's belief in their ability to perform tasks and achieve goals. Students with high self-efficacy tend to approach challenges with confidence and resilience, making them better prepared to navigate the competitive job market. Research supports the significant role of self-efficacy in shaping work readiness. For instance, Ngaini (2017) found a positive and significant influence of self-efficacy on students' readiness to enter the workforce. Similarly, Kurniawati (2016) highlighted the critical role of self-efficacy in empowering graduates to overcome barriers and seize job opportunities. These findings emphasize the need for educational institutions to foster self-efficacy among students through targeted programs, mentorship, and experiential learning opportunities.

In addition to self-efficacy, other factors such as vocational competence and learning outcomes also play a pivotal role in determining work readiness. According to Afriani and Setiyani (2019), students' perceptions of their vocational competencies, although modest in impact, significantly influence their readiness to enter the workforce. This is further corroborated by Lestari and Siswanto (2021), who demonstrated that learning outcomes from training and productive subjects contribute substantially to job readiness. These findings suggest that a comprehensive approach to education—one that integrates technical training, real-world applications, and reflective learning—can enhance students' preparedness for employment. Consequently, higher education institutions must design curricula that not only impart theoretical knowledge but also equip students with practical skills and adaptive mindsets.

To address the issue of unemployment and enhance work readiness, it is imperative for students to proactively plan their future by acquiring skills relevant to the evolving job market. Universities must act as catalysts in this endeavor by fostering industry partnerships, providing career counseling, and embedding employability skills into their academic programs. Moreover, promoting self-efficacy and aligning vocational competencies with market needs are essential strategies to empower graduates. By prioritizing these efforts, institutions like Universitas PGRI Semarang can contribute to reducing unemployment rates and ensuring that their alumni are well-prepared to meet the challenges of the workforce. In doing so, they not only enhance the employability of their graduates but also strengthen the economic and social fabric of their communities.

Literature Review

Work readiness is a condition where a person has the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and physical and mental health needed to carry out tasks effectively. According to Muspawi and Lestari (2020), work readiness involves physical and mental dedication to produce goods or services in exchange for compensation. Falaqiyah (2021) added that work readiness includes physical, mental maturity, experience, motivation and ability to carry out work. Pratama (2019) explains that work readiness also involves students' ability to immediately enter the world of work after graduating, including physical, mental and experiential maturity. Student work readiness can be measured through indicators such as experience, work plans, motivation, critical attitude, ability to work together, readiness to accept responsibility, and ability to adapt.

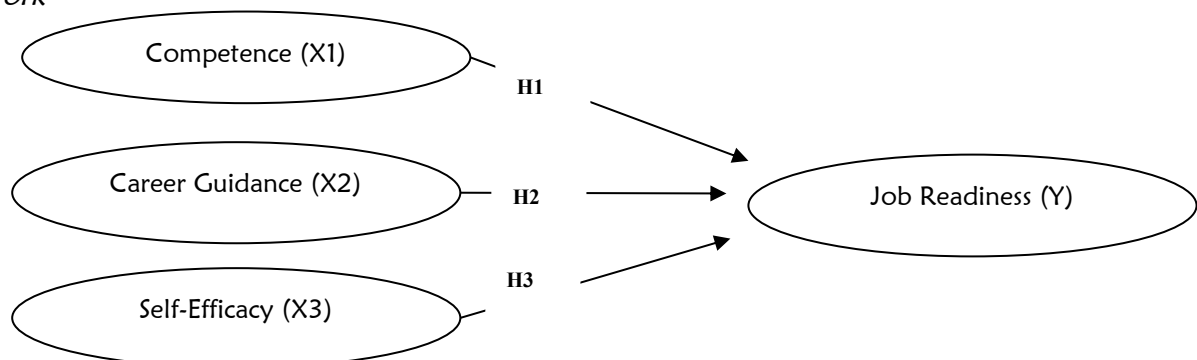
Competence, according to Rahmat (2019), is a trait or characteristic possessed by a person that is related to his ability to achieve effective performance in certain work situations. Sumendap et al. (2019) define work competency as the ability to carry out tasks based on the required skills, knowledge and attitudes. Competencies include not only technical skills or knowledge, but also personal attributes, interpersonal abilities, and other characteristics that are important for success on the job. Competence is a deep and permanent element in a person, not a temporary or situational trait. For example, a competent leader not only has managerial skills, but also integrity and the ability to motivate others. Competency is closely related to individual performance, because it includes skills, knowledge, attitudes and behavior that influence a person's effectiveness in carrying out tasks.

Career guidance is a service that helps students understand the world of work, so they can make the right career choices and plan their career paths well (Jemini Gashi et al., 2023). This service is educational, aimed at supporting students in designing career plans and preparing themselves to enter the world of work. As a subset of guidance and counseling, career guidance focuses on helping students understand, evaluate, and make decisions regarding their careers. This process considers personal potential and environmental conditions so that students have a broader view of the right career choice.

Self-efficacy, or self-efficacy, is a person's belief in their ability to successfully carry out a task or achieve certain goals, which was introduced by psychologist Albert Bandura. Self-efficacy influences how a person faces challenges and overcomes situations. According to Mawaddah (2021), self-efficacy is an individual's confidence in organizing and carrying out the actions needed to complete a task. This concept is influenced by the interaction between the external environment, adjustment mechanisms, and personal abilities, including experience and education. Santrock in Pratomo's research (2022) explains self-efficacy as an individual's belief in completing tasks and achieving positive results. Feist, as explained in the research of Hariyati et al. (2022), added that self-efficacy is related to an individual's confidence in controlling functions and events in their environment.

Figure 1.

Framework



Source: Zainuddin (2022), Rahmawati and Ahmad (2021), Susilowati and Fauzan (2022) developed by researchers, 2024

The research was obtained based on theory and not yet on facts. Based on the empirical model and the thesis research model that has been explained, the research hypothesis put forward as a temporary answer to the problem formulation is as follows:

H1: There is an influence between work competency and student work readiness.

H2: Career guidance influences students' work readiness

H3: Self-efficacy influences students' work readiness.

### Method, Data, and Analysis

This research uses quantitative research methods which aim to collect data from a certain population or sample using research instruments. The main aim is to test the hypothesis that has been formulated (R. Yusuf et al., 2020). The data collection method used was a questionnaire. This study aims to explore the influence of competence, career guidance and self-efficacy on work readiness. This research was conducted on undergraduate students at PGRI University Semarang.

Population is the total number of objects or subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics determined by the researcher to be studied in the context of the research problem (Tirtayasa et al., 2021). In my research, the population consisted of all undergraduate students at PGRI University Semarang. Meanwhile, the sample is part of the entire population which reflects the characteristics of the entire population to be studied (Tirtayasa et al., 2021). The method used in this research is purposive sampling, where sample selection is based on certain criteria in accordance with the research objectives, so that respondents can provide relevant answers to the research problem (Sitompul et al., 2020).

Data collection techniques are techniques used by researchers to obtain data in a study (Stevanus & Pratiwi, 2019). In this research, data collection techniques were used using questionnaires. A questionnaire is a data collection technique that is carried out by giving a set of questions or statements to respondents (Nadia et al., 2021).

Data analysis is the final stage of research carried out with the aim of answering questions, proving hypotheses, and explaining the phenomena underlying the research. This research involves more than one independent variable, so multiple regression analysis is used. So the data analysis techniques used are descriptive statistics, instrument tests (validity and reliability), classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity), and multiple regression with the help of the SPSS 22.0 application.

### Result and Discussion

**Table 1.**

*Results of Respondent Characteristics*

Data Distribution Results Table		
Description	Total	Percentage
Distribution of Questionnaires	100	100%
Questionnaires received	100	100%
Questionnaires processed	100	100%

Source: Primary Data 2024

The results of the research above explain data from the distribution of questionnaires carried out at PGRI University Semarang. The distribution of questionnaires was distributed to 100 people, the number of questionnaires received was 100, and the questionnaires processed were 100. The percentage from distribution of questionnaires to processed questionnaires was 100%.

**Table 2.**  
*Respondent Characteristics Based on Gender*

Number	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	44	44%
2	Female	56	56%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data 2024

Based on the table above, the results of characteristics based on gender show that the total number of respondents in this study was 100 people, which represents 100% of the total sample. The results show that the number of female respondents is greater than male, with 44 male respondents (44%) and 56 female respondents (56%).

**Table 3.**  
*Respondent Characteristics Based on Department*

Number	Department	Faculty	Frequency	Percentage
1	Management	Economics and Business	100	100%
<b>Total</b>			<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data 2024

Based on the table above, the characteristics results based on type of major show that the total number of respondents in this study was 100 people, which represents 100% of the total sample. The results show that the number of Management Department respondents in the Faculty of Economics and Business was 100 (100%).

**Validity Test Results**

The validity test aims to determine whether an instrument, such as a questionnaire, can be considered valid or not in measuring certain research variables. The validity test is said to be valid if the results of  $r_{count} > r_{table}$  with a significance value  $< 0.05$ . The  $r_{table}$  value is calculated using the formula, namely  $df = n-2$  (n is the number of samples/data). In this study using 100 respondents, it can be obtained using the formula  $df = 100-2 = 98$  with a significance of 0.05 so that an  $r_{table}$  value of 0.196 is obtained. The following are the results of the validity test statistical calculations as follows:

**Table. 4**  
*Results of the Validity Test*

Variable	Items	$r_{hitung}$	$r_{tabel}$	Description
Competence (X1)	K1	0,354	0,196	Valid
	K2	0,460		Valid
	K3	0,413		Valid
	K4	0,301		Valid
	K5	0,450		Valid
Career Guidance (X2)	B1	0,264	0,196	Valid
	B2	0,301		Valid
	B3	0,345		Valid
	B4	0,330		Valid
	B5	0,322		Valid
Self-Efficacy (X3)	E1	0,312	0,196	Valid
	E2	0,452		Valid
	E3	0,394		Valid
	E4	0,541		Valid
	E5	0,409		Valid
Job Readiness (Y)	Q1	0,330	0,196	Valid
	Q2	0,450		Valid
	Q3	0,468		Valid
	Q4	0,374		Valid

Variable	Items	r <sub>hitung</sub>	r <sub>tabel</sub>	Description
	Q5	0,492		Valid

Source: Primary Data using SPSS

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the variables Competence (X1), Career Guidance (X2), Self-Efficacy (X3) and Work Readiness (Y) obtained a calculated value greater than r<sub>tabel</sub>, so all questionnaire items are said to be valid.

### Reliability Test Results

Reliability testing is a tool used to measure how consistent a questionnaire is from variable indicators. The reliability test can be seen from the Cronbach Alpha coefficient value > 0.6, so the questionnaire items are declared reliable. The following are the results of the reliability test statistical calculations as follows:

**Table 5.**

*Reliability Test Table*

Variable	Results	Description
Competence	0,639	Reliable
Career Guidance	0,649	Reliable
Self-Efficacy	0,636	Reliable
Job Readiness	0,648	Reliable

Sumber: Data Primer menggunakan SPSS 22

Based on the table above, it can be seen that Competency (X1), Career Guidance (X2), Self-Efficacy (X3) and Work Readiness (Y) produce Cronbach Alpha > 0.6, so all questionnaire items are declared reliable.

**Table 6.**

*Descriptive Analysis Test Results*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Competence	100	16	25	20,86	2,045
Career Guidance	100	16	25	20,48	1,915
Self-Efficacy	100	13	25	20,62	2,356
Job Readiness	100	16	25	20,65	1,930
Valid N (listwise)	100				

Source: SPSS 23 Data Processing Results

Based on the results of the descriptive test above, we can illustrate that the data obtained by researchers are:

1. Competency Variable (X1), from this data it can be described that the minimum value is 16 while the maximum value is 25, the average value is 20.86 and the standard deviation of price data is 2.045. This indicates that the average answer from the competency variable is in the like category.
2. Career Guidance Variable (X2), from this data it can be described that the minimum value is 16 while the maximum value is 25, the average value is 20.48 and the standard deviation of price data is 1,915. This indicates that the average answer for the Career Guidance variable is in the like category.
3. Self-Efficacy Variable (X3), from this data it can be described that the minimum value is 13 while the maximum value is 25, the average value is 20.62 and the standard deviation of price data is 2.356. This indicates that the average answer for the self-efficacy variable is in the like category.
4. Work Readiness Variable (Y), from this data it can be described that the minimum value is 16 while the maximum value is 25, the average value is 20.65 and the standard deviation of price data is 1.930. This indicates that the average answer to the work readiness variable is in the like category.

**Table 7.**  
*One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Results*

		Unstandardized Residual
N		100
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	,0000000
	Std. Deviation	1,70651140
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,098
	Positive	,086
	Negative	-,098
Test Statistic		,098
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.190 <sup>c</sup>

a. *Test distribution is Normal.*

b. *Calculated from data.*

c. *Lilliefors Significance Correction.*

The table above shows the results of the normality test, which shows that using the Exact P Values Kolmogorov – Smirnov Test method produces a sig value of 0.190 > 0.05. These results indicate that the research data has a normal distribution and meets the assumptions of normality.

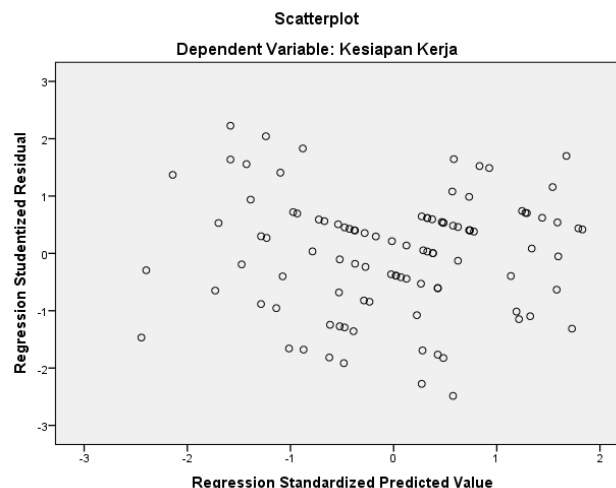
**Table 8.**  
*Multicollinearity Test Results*

Table of Multicollinearity Test Results			
Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Competence	,862	1,160
	Career Guidance	,852	1,174
	Self-Efficacy	,827	1,209

a. *Dependent Variable: Job Readiness*

Based on the table above, the results of the multicollinearity test show that from the results of the multicollinearity test, the competency, career guidance and self-efficacy variables are classified as normal and do not experience multicollinearity among the independent variables, because the tolerance value for each research variable is > 0.1 and the VIF value is < 10 .

**Figure 2.**  
*Heteroskedastisitas Test*



Judging from the picture above, it can be concluded that there is no heteroscedasticity in this study, because the points on the graph are spread on both sides of the number 0 on the Y axis and have no pattern.

**Table 9.**

*Table of Multiple Linear Regression Test Results*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6,141	2,369		4,703	,000
	Competence	,407	,092	,431	4,439	,000
	Career Guidance	,242	,099	,142	2,941	,005
	Self-Efficacy	,391	,081	,111	2,823	,003

Source: SPSS 22 Data Processing Results

Based on the table above, the resulting regression equation is as follows:

1. a = constant of 6.141 explains that if the variables are competency, career guidance, self-efficacy then the student's ability to determine work readiness is 6.141.
2. The competency variable (X1) has a regression coefficient of 0.407, which shows that if the competency variable increases by 100%, then the work readiness variable will also increase by 40.7%. The regression coefficient has a positive value, so it can be concluded that the competency variable (X1) has a positive direction towards work readiness (Y).
3. The career guidance variable (X2) has a regression coefficient of 0.242, which shows that if the career guidance variable increases by 100%, then the career guidance variable will also increase by 24.2%. The regression coefficient has a positive value, so it can be concluded that career guidance (X2) has a positive direction towards work readiness (Y).
4. The Self-Efficacy variable (X3) has a regression coefficient of 0.391, which shows that if the financial knowledge variable increases by 100%, then the student financial management variable will also increase by 39.1%. The regression coefficient has a positive value, so it can be concluded that the self-efficacy variable (X3) has a positive direction towards work readiness (Y).

**Table 10.**

*Coefficient of Determination Test Table (R2)*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.467 <sup>a</sup>	0,748	0,732	1,733

Source: Primary Data processed using SPSS

Based on the table above, it is known that the results of the R coefficient of determination test from this research obtained an Adjusted R Square of 0.732 or 73.2%. This can be interpreted that the work readiness variable can be explained by competency, career guidance and self-efficacy by 73.2% while the remaining 26.8% is influenced by other variables not examined by researchers.

**Table 11.**

*Hypothesis Test Table (T test)*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6,141	2,369		4,703	,000
	Competence	,407	,092	,431	4,439	,000
	Career Guidance	,242	,099	,142	2,941	,005
	Self-Efficacy	,391	,081	,111	2,823	,002

Source: Primary Data processed using SPSS

Based on the data results above, after processing the data using SPSS, the t test results are as follows:

1. Competence

Competency has a tcount value of 4.439 with a ttable value of 1.984 and a significance value of 0.000. This shows a tcount value of  $4.439 > 1.984$  with a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . So H1 is accepted, which means that the competency variable has a positive and significant effect on work readiness.

2. Career Guidance

Career guidance has a tcount value of 2.941 with a ttable value of 1.984 and a significance value of 0.005. This shows a tcount value of  $2.941 > 1.984$  with a significance value of  $0.005 < 0.05$ . So H2 is accepted, which means that the career guidance variable has a positive and significant effect on work readiness.

3. Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy has a tcount value of 2.823 with a ttable value of 1.984 and a significance value of 0.002. This shows a tcount value of  $2.823 > 1.984$  with a significance value of  $0.002 < 0.05$ . So H3 is accepted, which means that the self-efficacy variable has a positive and significant effect on work readiness.

### Pembahasan

The findings of this study reveal a positive and significant influence of work competency, career guidance, and self-efficacy on the work readiness of PGRI University students in Semarang City. These results were derived from partial tests (t-tests), demonstrating significant t-values for each independent variable in relation to the dependent variable. These findings align with established theories and previous research on the factors influencing students' work readiness.

First, work competency has been proven to have a positive and significant impact on students' work readiness. The t-test results show a t-value of 3.014, exceeding the critical t-value of 1.984, with a significance level of 0.003, which is less than the threshold of 0.05. This indicates that students with better work competencies are more prepared to enter the workforce. Work competency encompasses the knowledge, skills, and attitudes relevant to workplace demands. The competency theory proposed by Spencer and Spencer (1993) explains that competency is an individual's fundamental characteristic associated with effective performance in specific jobs. These findings are consistent with prior research by Wibowo (2018), which identified work competency as a primary predictor of students' work readiness.

Second, career guidance also demonstrates a positive and significant influence on students' work readiness. The t-test results indicate a t-value of 2.941, exceeding the critical t-value of 1.984, with a significance level of 0.000, which is below 0.05. Career guidance provides students with direction to understand their potential, identify career opportunities, and plan concrete steps toward their career goals. According to Super's (1990) career development theory, career growth is a lifelong process involving individual growth and changes in the context of work. Effective career guidance enhances students' understanding of labor market demands and helps them build relevant professional networks. A study by Suherman (2019) also found that structured career guidance programs significantly improve students' work readiness.

Third, self-efficacy was found to have a positive and significant influence on students' work readiness. The t-test results show a t-value of 2.823, surpassing the critical t-value of 1.984, with a significance level of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Self-efficacy, as defined by Bandura (1997), refers to an individual's belief in their ability to organize and execute actions necessary to achieve specific outcomes. Students with high self-efficacy are more confident in facing workplace challenges and more proactive in seeking job opportunities. These findings align with research by Prasetya (2020), which highlights the critical role of self-efficacy in motivating students to prepare themselves for career challenges.

Overall, these findings underscore the importance of developing work competencies, providing effective career guidance, and enhancing self-efficacy to improve students' work readiness. Higher education institutions, particularly PGRI University in Semarang City, are encouraged to integrate these insights into

their policies and student development programs to produce graduates who are competitive in the job market.

## Conclusion

Based on the results above, after analyzing and carrying out the discussions described previously, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. There is a positive and significant influence between work competency on the work readiness of PGRI University students in Semarang City. This is shown by the results of the partial test (t test) which obtained a tcount value of 3.014 > ttable 1.984 with a significance value of 0.003 < 0.05. So H1 is accepted.
2. There is a positive and significant influence between career guidance on the work readiness of PGRI University students in Semarang City. This is indicated by the tcount value of 2.941 > ttable 1.984 with a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05. So H2 is accepted.
3. There is a positive and significant influence between self-efficacy on the work readiness of PGRI University students in Semarang City. This is indicated by the test results of the tcount value of 2.823 > ttable 1.984 with a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05. So H3 is accepted.

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