

Career Self-Efficacy and Career Maturity Contributions on Career Planning Abilities Among Youths

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Abstract: This study aims to identify the contributions of career self-efficacy and career maturity on career planning abilities of community college students. This study used quasi-experimental non-equivalent of pre and post-test control group design. The experimental group followed a career intervention by using exploration Module for 18 h. The sample consisted of 122 semester four students from two community colleges in the state of Malacca. Data were collected using three sets of instruments Career Maturity Inventory-Revised (CMI-R) to measure attitude and skills in career planning Career Decision Making Self Efficacy Scale-Short Form (CDMSE-SF) to measure students' self-efficacy career level and Career Planning Ability Instrument (CPAI) to measure the ability of career planning. The reliability of the instruments was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha and the value for all three instruments exceeded 70. Data were analyzed using multiple regression to investigate the contributions of self-efficacy and career maturity on career planning abilities. The findings show career self-efficacy is a major predictor of career planning abilities. This career program should give a focus on career self-efficacy as a stand-alone as it contributes to career planning abilities.

Key words: Career self-efficacy, career maturity, career planning abilities, career exploration module, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Self-efficacy and career maturity are two concepts that are often associated with career planning process. Self-efficacy was first introduced by Bandura (1977a, b) through the social cognitive theory. This theory focuses on human capacity in relation to the environment in which they live, the actions that need to be done, cognitive thinking used in finding a solution and develop thinking and reflection in order to communicate effectively. Each individual will give meaning to their experiences, by structuring, organizing and providing useful continuity bearing morphology about where they live. This concept was later tried associated with psychological career by Betz and Hackett (1981). Through this theory they are trying to see how an individual makes career choices based on trust and confidence in themselves. It covers aspects of abilities in a job, choosing a course of study in college, effort and perseverance in carrying out the choices made. Mitchell *et al.* (1994) defines self-efficacy as trust and confidence of a person in its ability to do things or carry out the work well. Meanwhile, Lent and Brown (1996) and Gysbers *et al.* (2003) associated

self-efficacy with experience in past achievements that can form a new career self-efficacy that is more buoyant and brilliant.

Career maturity is a concept that has been presented by Super (1957) through the career development theory. Career maturity includes readiness, attitude and competencies to effectively control tasks in career development. This theory suggests the behavior that should happen at each stage of career development. According to Super (1957), youth need to master and complete tasks in the exploration stage of development. If the behavior can be expected or perceived, then the person is more mature in terms of career development. Individuals who have high career maturity will be able to think, act and make informed decisions related to career. Completion of tasks at each stage of development will enable more young people to achieve optimum maturity in the future (Crites, 1978). Coetzee *et al.* (2007) and Coetzee and Roythorne (2007) believed that career maturity refers to a person's ability to make career decisions that reflect decisiveness, self-reliance, independence and a willingness to compromise between personal needs and career needs.

The findings of Mizan (2005) found that, among the aspects that become a major problem for students are) do not know the future plans) not sure what profession to choose, need help in finding a job, do not know how to find a job and v) low self-esteem and fear of unemployment. This poses a problem that can be attributed to what is stated by Super (1957) and Betz namely career maturity and career self-efficacy. According to them, these elements need to be emphasized in the process of deciding on a career.

Feedback from employers reported that students do not thoroughly understand and are less confident to perform a given task. Moreover elements such as communication skills, personality and lack of discipline, the ability to execute commands and less creativity and enthusiasm are also major problems in the training place. The feedback obtained through the community college tracer study from 2008-2012 shows that interpersonal and intrapersonal skills are among the additional skills that are indispensable in addition to support programs such as English-language skills, ICT skills and entrepreneurial skills. Mustapha found that the technical graduates in Malaysia have more than sufficient technical skills but employers are less satisfied with their communication skills, interpersonal skills, critical thinking, problem solving and entrepreneurial skills. This is supported by Abdullah (2005) which found that 80,000 technical graduates remain unemployed due to the reliance on academic qualifications simply to get a job and less competence in employability skills. Lau *et al.* (2011) found that, although technical skills are fundamental to employment, non-technical skills are complementary to the skills of a skilled worker in industry.

The implementation of a comprehensive career program can affect the community college student's career self-efficacy, career maturity and career planning abilities. According to the assumption of career development theory Super (1957), students at the age of 18-24 year are at the exploratory stage of career development. The main activity that should be done is to explore career information. Exposure to fine careers can increase the maturity of their careers. The more students are exposed to career information, the more they mature. Teens who can accomplish tasks at development stage will usually achieve more optimal career maturity.

In order to improve the career self-efficacy, career maturity and career planning abilities among community college students, a modular career intervention was introduced. Intervention methods for modular career have been proven to be effective by previous researchers (Tan, 2005; Halit, 2007; Miles, 2008; Moore, 2003; Bleier, 2006; Medina, 2010). The studies also proved that

involvement in a career program for modular gives students the opportunity to develop their potential (Hirschi and Lage, 2008; Medina, 2010). Another study also proved that development does not just happen in terms of career planning, career decision making and career knowledge but also involves other aspects in their self-development (Castellano *et al.*, 2004; Hughes and Karp, 2004).

Up until now there has been no follow-up study which has been conducted in response to the issues among community college students. Although studies related to career intervention have been carried out in the country but they are more focused on high school students and look upon other aspects rather than moldy career self-efficacy and career maturity (Amla 2002; Ponnan, 2002; Tan, 2005; Sani, 2011). There has been no study conducted at the college or university in the country while the study abroad at the college level has been carried out and prove a career intervention program had a positive impact on career self-efficacy and career maturity of students (Brown, 2000; Gail, 2004; Scott and Ciani, 2008; Williamson, 2006; Brake, 2001; Medina, 2010; Tarigan and Wimbari, 2011). There are gaps especially with researches related to ability in planning a career, career self-efficacy and career maturity through interventions using the module among community college students. To fill this gap, the study was conducted. This study aims to identify the contribution of career self-efficacy and career maturity on career planning abilities among community college students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used a quasi-experimental design of pre-test and post-test non-equivalent control group (Campbell dan Stanley, 1963). The experimental group attended a career intervention using the career exploration module for 18 h. This intervention is run by facilitators who had been given training in the ethics of career exploration module. The control group had teaching and learning sessions in class as usual. A sample of 122 students (56 women and 66 men) were selected by using purposive sampling technique. The sample consisted of students who had taken courses in hotel and catering certificate, certificate in automotive, computer systems and support certificate and certificate of community college landscape and masjid tanah bukit beruang community college in the state of Malacca. Three sets of questionnaires were used for data collection) Career Maturity Inventory-Revised (CMI-R) by John O Crites and Savickas) Career Decision Making Self Efficacy Scale-Short Form (CDMSE-SF) by Betz *et al.* (1996) Career

Planning Ability Inventory (CPAI). A pilot study in reliability of the instruments involved 30 students in semester four Jasin community college. Cronbach alpha value for all three instruments were 0.96, 0.94 and 0.84 for the CMI-R and reaches the CDMSE-SF. Data were analyzed using stepwise multiple regression method to look at the contribution of career self-efficacy and career maturity on career planning abilities. Multiple regression tests were carried out where some prerequisites such as sample size, test outliers, multicollinearity and singularity, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity had been met.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regression analysis involves two predictors of career self-efficacy and career maturity and career planning abilities variables are criterion to both the independent variables. Analysis of variance in regression model was conducted to explain whether that to produce a good prediction about the significance of the predictors are realized. F test results showed there was a relationship between predictor variables of career self-efficacy with criterion variables at the level of significance, $F = 223,705$, $p = 0.000$, $p < 0.05$ (Table 1).

The results of multiple regression analysis (stepwise) which identifies the relative contribution of the two predictor variables on the abilities of career planning is summarized in Table 2.

The results show that the predictor variables that contributed significantly ($p < 0.05$) in the amount of variance in career planning abilities. The predictor variables is career self-efficacy. These variables give a contribution of 65.1% to the variance in career planning abilities.

The main predictor of ability and highest career planning is career self-efficacy ($B = 0.806$, $t = 14.957$ and $p = 0.000$) and accounted for 65.1%. This situation shows that for every one unit increase in self-efficacy career, the scoring ability of student's career plans increased by 0.807 units. This clearly shows that the increase in career self-efficacy among students is a major factor contributing 65.1% to increase the ability of student's career planning.

Thus, the results show that for a quasi experimental study population (number of respondents = 122), the predictor variables of career self-efficacy is a predictor of increased post-test career planning abilities. Overall contribution to the ability of the predictor variables of career planning was 65.1%. A surplus of 34.9% can be explained by other variables that are not considered in this model. This finding suggests the possibility that

Table 1: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model 2	Sum of squares	df	Min square	F-values	Sig.
Regression	45.989	1	45.989	223.705	0.000 ^b
Residual	24.669	120	0.2060		
Total	70.658	121			

Table 2: Contribution of independent variables on career planning abilities

Predictors	B	SE	β	t-values	Sig.	Contribution	
						R ²	(%)
Self-efficacy	0.806	0.054	0.807	14.957	0.000	0.651	65.1
Constant	0.700	0.174		4.021	0.000		

there are several other factors that have an impact or influence on the career planning abilities that are not covered in this study (Hair *et al.*, 2010; Pallant, 2007).

Adjusted R² values provide estimates the extent to which this model fits with other data sets from the same population. The value is in the range of 0:00-1.0. In assessing the extent to which the regression model fit or match the data (Pallant, 2007) have suggested the value of R² adjusted <0.1 is weak (not good), 0.11-0.3 is low, 0.31-0.5 is moderate and > 0.5 is stronger (good) As R² value of this study is 65.1, then the model is produced is good. However, R² is within 0.5, makes this model suitable for predicting the ability of students' career planning.

Generally, the overall contribution of the variables that significantly influences the career planning abilities can be developed through regression equation. It is forecasting for the dependent variable when the independent variables are determined. The regression analysis of the findings can be created by regression equation for this study as follows:

$$Y = 0.700 + 0.806 X_1 + 0.174$$

Where:

Y = Career planning ability

X₁ = Career self efficacy Constant = 0.700 Error = 0.174

Referring to the above regression equation, the independent variables were found to have a correlation and impact and contribution to the score of career planning abilities. The independent variable is career self-efficacy.

This study found that self-efficacy career contributed significantly to the ability of community college students in career planning. Some earlier studies submitted in support of such research findings by Medina (2010) and Sani (2011) also found that self-efficacy career has contributed to the ability of students' career planning. All of these researchers have found that high self-efficacy careers can affect the way of thinking in determining career planning, career patterns of participation in activities and actions taken by the students. Studies by Medina (2010) on college students, for example found that students who are positive and have high level of

confidence can easily define their career goals. Sneva (2011) also found that self-efficacy career has a positive relationship with the pattern of career choices of college students in which students who have self-efficacy career are easier to make plans and they take more initiative than those who have low self-efficacy career. Similarly, Sani (2011) also found the involvement of students in career programs have a positive correlation with career self-efficacy. Students who are always involved with career program are found to have high self-efficacy and have clearer career goals.

It is assumed self-efficacy influences career development, career choices and career readiness of students. According to Luzzo (1996), if self-efficacy career theory by Betz and Hackett (1981) is applied in making a career choice, someone who has a career-high self-efficacy will be improved in terms of ability in making career decisions than individuals with low self-efficacy. In this context of this study, self-efficacy is one of the factors that contributes to the ability of community college students career planning. The findings of this research is in accordance with the theory which is in the context of career development for individuals with high self-efficacy career working and able to tap into and perform the duties of his career. This assumption had been proven by Betz and Hackett (1998) through studies that have been carried out and found that career self-efficacy not only affects career choices but also academic achievement.

These findings also have an impact on the parties to implement the program mainly by counselors to focus on activities that can enhance student's career self-efficacy as it has been proven as a contribution in career self-efficacy of career planning abilities. Counselors also need to explore or at least be aware with the ability and the confidence of students to face the working world. This is consistent with the Mitchell *et al.* (1994) which stated that career self-efficacy as someone's beliefs as to the ability and the confidence to do things as well as to carry out the research.

The results show that the career maturity aspect does not contribute to career planning abilities. Although, career maturity does not contribute directly to the ability of community college students career planning, it may contribute to other aspects of the careers that are not investigated in this study such aspects of career readiness, decision-making and exploration of information and so on. This finding is somewhat at odds with previous studies (Sani 2011; Pattorn and Lokan, 2001; Patton and Creed, 2001) who found a career maturity as an important element in the determination of an individual's

career. This finding is not in line with the basic assumptions of the Super Career Development Theory (1957) which stated that maturity is a process throughout the life of a person starting from the fantasy stages during childhood until old age or retirement. According to Super (1957), maturity is one of the factors that have a close relationship with a person's career development. The ability of individuals to plan and design also has something to do with the maturity of his career. This finding may be influenced by several factors, including the method of collecting data used in this study which is based on the findings of the questionnaire alone. The variety of data collection methods may provide more accurate information. The time control module for 18 h may not be enough to improve career maturity sample so it does not contribute to career planning abilities. Module contents may also be less helpful in contributing towards career maturity research sample. All these assumptions may lead to the results obtained in this study which indicate that career maturity does not contribute to career planning abilities.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, career self-efficacy is a significant contributor to the ability of community college students in planning a career. However career maturity does not contribute directly to the ability of students' career planning. A follow-up study should be conducted to confirm the findings because the study was limited to community college students and the findings are only based on questionnaires given after the completion of a career intervention. Perhaps the diversity of samples and data collection techniques can provide more precise information based on the requirements of the study.

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