

**THE RELATIONSHIP OF CAREER INDECISION, CAREER DECISION
SELF-EFFICACY AND CAREER ANXIETY
AMONG STUDENTS IN UPSI**

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study is to examine the relationship between career indecision, career decision self-efficacy and career anxiety. The descriptive analysis is used to identify the mean level of career anxiety based on gender, while T-test is used to compare the gender differences. Besides, Pearson's Correlation is used to identify the relationship between the variables. A sample of 95 students in Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris is involved in the study. There is total three instruments were used in the study: Career Decision Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ), Career Decision Self-Efficacy Short Form (CDSE-SF), and Career Anxiety Scales (CAS). The findings reported that there are no significant differences between males and females towards career anxiety, thus gender does not affect the level of career anxiety. Furthermore, the result showed there was a significant positive relationship between career indecision and career anxiety with the Pearson correlation of $r=.861$, $p<.01$. A significant negative relationship is identified between the career decision self-efficacy and career anxiety with $r=-.327$, $p<.01$. In conclusion, there is a significant relationship shows for each variable in the present study. The theoretical implication, practical implication and recommendation were discussed in the study.

ABSTRAK

Objektif kajian adalah untuk mengkaji hubungan antara ketidaktetapan kerjaya, efikasi sendiri pemilihan kerjaya dan kebimbangan kerjaya. Analisis deskriptif digunakan untuk mengenal pasti tahap min kebimbangan kerjaya berdasarkan jantina, manakala ujian-T digunakan untuk membandingkan perbezaan jantina. Selain itu, Korelasi Pearson digunakan untuk mengenal pasti hubungan antara pembolehubah. Jumlah Sampel 95 pelajar siswazah di Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris terlibat dalam kajian ini. Terdapat tiga instrumen yang digunakan dalam kajian ini: Career Decision Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ), Career Decision Self-Efficacy Short Form (CDSE-SF), and Career Anxiety Scales (CAS). Dapatan kajian melaporkan bahawa tidak perbezaan yang signifikan antara lelaki dan perempuan terhadap kebimbangan kerjaya, justeru jantina tidak mempengaruhi tahap kebimbangan kerjaya. Tambahan pula, keputusan menunjukkan terdapat hubungan positif yang signifikan di antara ketidaktetapan kerjaya dan kebimbangan kerjaya dengan korelasi Pearson $r=.861$, $p<.01$. Hubungan negatif yang signifikan dikenal pasti antara efikasi sendiri pemilihan kerjaya dan kebimbangan kerjaya dengan $r=-.327$, $p<.01$. Kesimpulannya, terdapat hubungan yang signifikan menunjukkan bagi setiap pembolehubah dalam kajian ini. Implikasi teori, implikasi praktikal dan cadangan telah dibincangkan dalam kajian.



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 OVERVIEW



This chapter will focus on research background, problem statement, research questions, objectives and hypothesis of the research, significance of the study, and variable definition.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Career choice has a significant effect on individual life satisfaction and harmonization. (Nachiappan, Zabit, Sukri, Suffian, Sehgar, 2018; Rashid, Bakar, Asimiran, Loh, 2009). Thus, career choice and career planning is the main development task during the adolescent to adult transition (Viola, Musso, Inguglia & Coco, 2016; Kaur & Kaur, 2017).





Based on Malaysia's structure, the students started their primary education at the age of six until the age of twelve, which consists of six years. Then students will enter their secondary education for five to six years (StudyMalaysia, 2015). The career decision involves as early as the secondary education as well as the tertiary education, where they need to choose their preferred major of study in upper secondary and for university or college (Rashid et al., 2009).

According to Mallet (2002), career anxiety progressively increases during the adolescence years. Furthermore, students started to worry about their future career as well as academics (as cited in Yilmaz & Gunduz, 2018). A study carried out by Mohamad, Sidik, Akhtari-Zavare and Gani (2021) with 1851 students' participants, shows that the students who have uncertainty towards their future had 1.5 times the risk to get into anxiety compared to those who are confident with their future. The process of searching for a suitable career and planning for the future career after graduating from university may cause worries and anxiety among everyone (Wahi, 2021). Besides the UK National Student Survey, had found that 26% of students facing the mental distress that major triggered by career choice issues (Wahi, 2021).

Career activities play an important role and major parts in people's lives (Bandura et al., 2001). The degree of anxiety and indecision of an individual when making the career decision are influenced by a variance variable (Daniels, Stewart, Stupnisky, Perry and LoVerso, 2011). As a result, it is important to explore the factors that may affect the career anxiety because it may lead to long-term consequences in his or her life. (Olamide & Olawaiye, 2013).



The assessment of Career Anxiety Scale (Tsai, Hsu & Hsu, 2017) has evaluated career anxiety through four dimensions including personal ability, irrational beliefs about employment, professional education training, and employment environment.

In short, the personal ability involves the evaluation of basic skills and ability, for example the language skills, computer skills, leadership skills and the ability to work with others (Tsai, Hsu & Hsu, 2017). while the irrational belief about employment refers to the beliefs of an individual about the difficulties they might face when they enter the workforce (Tsai, Hsu & Hsu, 2017). Professional education training included the training they received in the university, which included the knowledge for the professional skills and also the career expectations when they enter the certain profession field (Tsai, Hsu & Hsu, 2017).

Career decision is one of the processes where individuals select their career among a variety of options with a preference for the one that is most suitable to him or her (Dogan & Bacanli, 2011). Different types of theory have been developed to explain or describe the career choice, decision, and development. One of the career theories is Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) which is derived from Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. (Bolat. N., & Odachi. H., 2016).

The term "career self-efficacy" refer to a person belief that he or she has the ability and capacity to complete the tasks that need specific skills, technique, or behaviour (Taylor and Betz, 1983). The significant component that is used in SCCT is self-efficacy beliefs. Besides that, self-efficacy also plays an important component in social cognitive theory (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorelli, 2001).

Self-efficacy not only refers to an individual belief towards their ability to complete certain task, also it might bring a greatest effect when they need to make decision on people or things. People with high self-efficacy can make the career decision as well as considering the education requirements and occupational roles. Additionally, they are ready to accept the challenges when they pursued their chosen career. In contrast, people with low level of self-efficacy are less confident to complete a certain task (Richard, 2013). Besides, people with low self-efficacy might easily trigger the emotion of worry and anxiety, during the process of career choice and career decision.

Besides, in career choice models in SCCT, the outcome expectation, interests, and skills in different performance domains are playing the important roles in Career decision (Steven & Robert, 2013).

Career indecision has always been a main heed of career counsellors (Seker, 2021; Osipow, 1999). Career indecision is described as an individual uncertainty in the process of making the decision on career or education (Kelly & Lee, 2002). In general, career indecision is defined as the difficulty or individual's problem when making the career decision in the process of career development (Şeker, 2021).

Initially the difficulty in making career decisions are focused on high school students where they need to choose their major or the career, however based on Osipow (1999), the issues of career indecision are now involved in all life stages because of the increasing number of people that require to revise their decision. Thus, each transition has the possibility for career indecision to occur (Osipow, 1999). In addition, according



to Pond (2010), career indecision proved to be related to some psychological issues such as low self-efficacy, career anxiety or low self-esteem.

Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ) will be used in the study to evaluate the career indecision. The objective of CDDQ is to discover the main difficulties throughout the career decision making process (Rochat, 2018). There are a total three major clusters and ten categories included in CDDQ (Rochat, 2018; Jenrette, 2004).

The three major groups are lack of readiness (a), which include the categories of lack of motivation, general indecisiveness, and dysfunctional beliefs. The second group are lack of information (b), which include the categories of lack of information regarding the career choice process, the self, occupations, and how to obtain additional information. The last group is inconsistent information(c), which involves unreliable information, internal conflicts, and external conflicts.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Anxiety disorder refers to extreme anxiety and worry about multiple issues where the person perceives as unmanageable (Portman et al., 2012 as cited in Mahmud et al., 2021). Choosing or planning for a career path, might be a challenge for an individual, or it can be called it as a crucial life decision, and it is common to experience career anxiety, which later may lead to fear and indecision (Eddins, R., 2021).



According to IPSOS Malaysia (2021), the career anxiety during a pandemic shows the statistics of 74% which is the highest category compared to career stress with 67% and family pressure with 58%. Besides that, Malaysia has reported the highest level of anxiety over 28 countries (IPSOS, 2021).

Based on the recent study carried out by Sundrasen, et al. (2020), with 983 respondents from university students in Malaysia, has shown that students were in relation to higher levels of anxiety. While, the anxiety of career and worry about future career prospects is one of the causes (Sundrasen, et. al., 2020). Career anxiety has lead to an individual incompetence and uncertainty (Daniels, Clifton, Perry, Mandzuk & Hall, 2006).

From the studies above shows that career anxiety has a negative impact towards an individual 's career life. However, the majority of studies focus on how career anxiety affects other factors and there is a lack of study to investigate the factor causes or affect career anxiety. Thus, it is crucial to look into the factors that might affect career anxiety. This study aimed to fulfill this gap by examining the relationship of career anxiety with the possible factors that may cause career anxiety.

Career indecision is generally defined as the difficulty to make the career or education choice (Osipow, 1999). Career decision is the most important process for an individual in one's career development (Bhang & Xu, 2019). Besides, career indecision always remain as a core issues in career counseling (Lipshits-Braziler, Gati & Tatar, 2016).

The recent study of Seker (2020) has proved the positive significant relationship of career indecision and career anxiety. The study was carried out in Turkey with a total sampling of 663 high school students. Besides that, another study which also belongs to the high school category that was done in Turkey with 444 students, supports the research findings of Seker (Yilmaz & Gunduz, 2018).

In addition, a study done in French to examine the relationship between career anxiety, career exploration and career indecision, proved a significant positive relationship between career indecision and career anxiety. The study is done with 245 French high school students (Vignoli, 2015).

The findings of several studies shows that if the career indecision of an individual increases, it will also cause an increase in career anxiety. However, most of the recent studies are done in western countries, where the growing environment and culture is totally different from Asean countries which include Malaysia. Thus, this study is aimed to fulfill the gap by carrying out the study in Malaysia.

According to Deer, Gohn and Kanaya (2018), the relationship between anxiety and self-efficacy are significant, where the higher level of anxiety the lower level of self-efficacy. The research is mainly focused on career choice and the sampling are college students in the USA (Deer, Gohn & Kanaya, 2018). Recently, a study carried out in Malaysia reported that 40% out of 2800 students with the age range of 13 to 16 fall into the categories of low career decision self-efficacy (Abidin, Amat, Mahmud, Bakar, & Bakar, 2019).

Another study carried out in South Korea with 117 university students shows the significant relationship between career decision self-efficacy and career choice anxiety (Park, Lee, Kim, Kim & Jahng, 2019). However the measurement of career anxiety and career choice anxiety is different. Career anxiety involves the measurement scale of personal ability, irrational beliefs about employment, employment environment, and professional education training (Tsai, Hsu & Hsu, 2017).

According to Isik (2012), a research was carried out in Turkish with 249 university students, shows the negative significant relationship between self-efficacy and trait anxiety. Traits anxiety is a form of anxiety which refers to a part of the personality (Isik, 2012).

From the study above, career decision self-efficacy is shown to have a significant relationship with different types of anxiety, and the studies are carried out in other nations where the culture is totally different with Malaysia. Beside that, there is a lack of research journals that are related to the topic of the relationship between career decision self-efficacy and career anxiety. The aim of this study is to fill the gap by examining the relationship between career decision self-efficacy and career anxiety in Malaysia.

1.3 SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY

By studying the factor that might causes career anxiety, career counsellor able to have the pre-concept towards the client, it brings the advantage to career counsellor to create

a effective treatment plan. To understand the factor of career anxiety, career counselors are able to identify certain resources that clients need to cope with in order to overcome the career anxiety.

For example, if career anxiety has a significant relationship with career decision self-efficacy, when clients are feeling lack of control in the workplace and lead to career anxiety, career counselors can increase the awareness in career decision self-efficacy, where they have the ability to change or choose the certain career they want.

Career decision is not only the process during high school age, but it is a life-long process. (Eddins, 2021). According to Nachiappan et al., 2018; Rashid et al., 2009, career decision also brings the significant impact towards an individual life satisfaction, which later might affect the future work field, lifestyle and profession. The statement are supported by Bandura et al. (2001), where the career decision will determine their career satisfaction, due to career activities are the major part of an individual daily life. Olamide & Olawaive (2013), also mention that career decision will bring the long-term effect in an individual life so is a serious issue that require careful consideration.

In addition, people are always making decisions to find the best suited career, however career anxiety is one of the factors that make people fear making changes, and it might lead to life dissatisfaction and career dissatisfaction. Thus, one of the contributions for this study is to increase the awareness of the importance of career anxiety in affecting one's career decision.



1.4 OBJECTIVE

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study aims to examine the relationship between career indecision and career decision self-efficacy on career anxiety among students in UPSI. Besides that, the gender differences towards career anxiety will be discussed.

1.4.2 Specific Objective

Specific objectives are create based on the general objective of the study.

1. To identify the level of career anxiety among UPSI students according to gender.
2. To determine the gender differences in career anxiety.
3. To identify the relationship between career indecision towards career anxiety among UPSI students.
4. To identify the relationship between career decision self-efficacy towards career anxiety among UPSI students.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of career anxiety among postgraduate students according to gender?
2. Is there a significant difference between gender in career anxiety?



3. What is the relationship between career indecision towards career anxiety?
4. What is the relationship between career decision self-efficacy towards career anxiety?

1.6 HYPOTHESIS

Regarding the objective of the study the following hypothesis was proposed.

- Ha1 There are significant differences between gender in career anxiety.
- Ha2 There is a significant relationship between self-appraisal (CDDQ) with career anxiety.
- Ha3 There is a significant relationship between lack of information (CDDQ) with career anxiety.
- Ha4 There is a significant relationship between inconsistent information (CDDQ) with career anxiety.
- Ha5 There is a significant relationship between self-appraisal (CDSE) with career anxiety.
- Ha6 There is a significant relationship between occupational information (CDSE) with career anxiety.
- Ha7 There is a significant relationship between goal selection (CDSE) with career anxiety.

Ha8 There is a significant relationship between planning (CDSE) with career anxiety.

Ha9 There is a significant relationship between problem-solving (CDSE) with career anxiety.

1.7 DEFINITION OF VARIABLE

The conceptual and operational definition of the research variables is described as follows.

1.7.1 Career Indecision

Conceptual definition	Career indecision refers to the difficulty or inability in making decisions related to career and choosing the right education (Talib & Tan, 2009 Osipow, 1999).
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Operational definition	Career indecision can be defined with Career Decision-Making Difficulties (CDDQ)(Gati, et al., 1996). CDDQ consists of 34 questions with nine-point Likert Scale. There are three major categories, including lack of readiness, lack of Information, and inconsistent Information. Each of the major categories consists of three subscales (Rochat, 2018; Jenrette, 2004).
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1.7.2 Career Decision Self-efficacy

Conceptual definition	Self-efficacies are defined as the the degree of an individual's beliefs in completing certain task successfully or handling the challenge situation or issues. While Career decision self-efficacy refers to the beliefs in making career decisions or completing the task that related to career. (Jiang et al., 2015).
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Operational definition	Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale Short Form (CDSE-SF) are use to measure career decision self-efficacy. CDSE-SF consists of 25-items and five subscales. The five subscales are Self-Appraisal, Occupational Information, Goal Selection, Planning, and problem-solving. Each subscale was measured by five items. In CDSE-SF, a higher score defined as a high level of self-efficacy in completing the tasks that related to a career (Taylor & Betz 1983).
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1.7.3 Career Anxiety

Conceptual definition	Anxiety is the automatic response to emotional and physiological responses when anticipation of future threats (APA, 2017). However, it is harmful to human physical health
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when there is an excessive amount of anxiety (APA, 2017; Holland, 2018).

Operational definition Career anxiety can be measured by Career Anxiety Scale (Tsai, Hsu & Hsu, 2017). Career Anxiety Scale consists of 25 questions with a four-point Likert scale. The Career Anxiety Scale consists of four subscales: Personal Ability, Irrational Beliefs about Employment, Employment Environment and Professional Education Training (Tsai, Hsu & Hsu, 2017).

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1.1 shows the theory concept used in the present study, where it involved Social Cognitive Career Theory, career indecision and career anxiety.

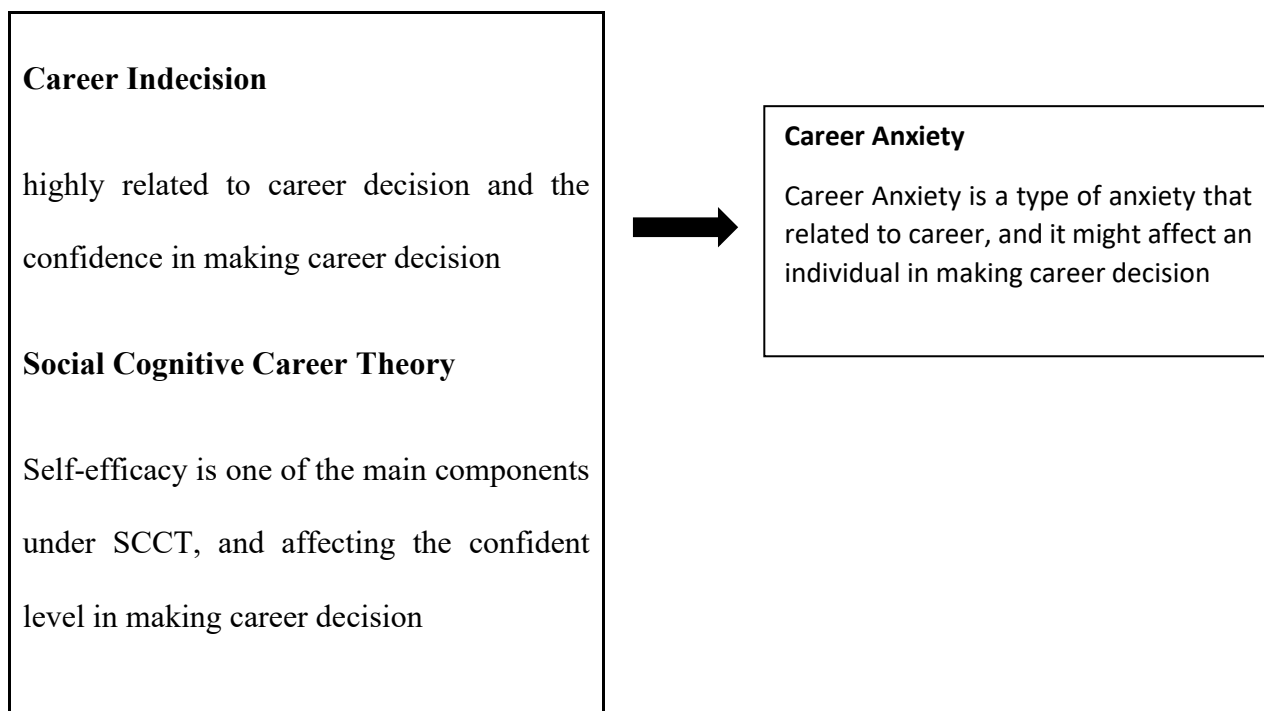
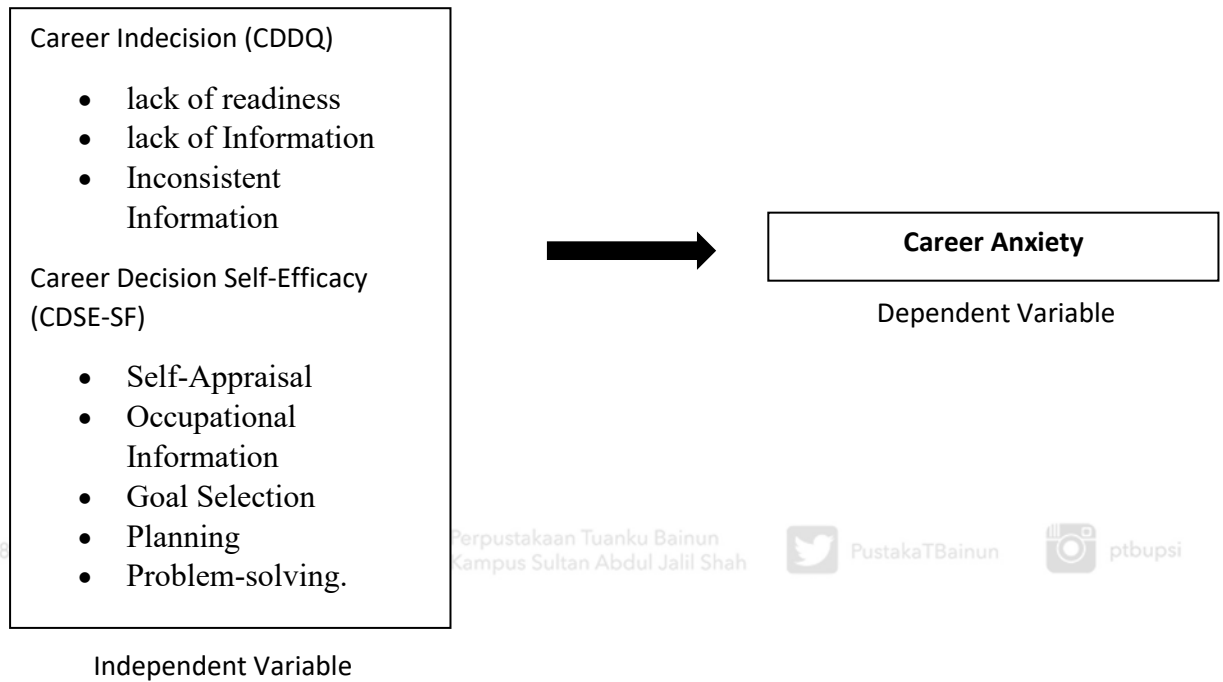


Figure 1.1. Theoretical Framework

1.9 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1.2 is the conceptual framework that will utilized in the study.

Figure 1.2 Conceptual Framework



1.10 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 are mainly provided the research background, problem statement of the study, the significance of the study, objectives, and hypotheses. Then, conceptual, and operational definition of each variable were discussed in this chapter. Lastly is the theoretical and conceptual framework.