

# The Relationship Between Career Self-Efficacy And Career Adapt Ability Among Students Of The National Youth Higher Skills Institute (Iktbn) Sepang

<sup>1</sup>Fairuz Ibrahim, <sup>2</sup>Mohd Izwan Mahmud, <sup>3</sup>Salleh Amat &  
<sup>4</sup>Faridah Mydin Kutty

<sup>1, 2, 3, 4</sup>Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia  
Corresponding Author Email: izwan@ukm.edu.my

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## Abstract

The abilities and beliefs of students in determining a suitable career within the field of employment are essential factors that should be prioritized. In this context, career self-efficacy and career adapt-ability play a crucial role in aiding students to recognize their potential and comprehend their effectiveness in steering themselves towards career alignment. The objective of this study is to determine the relationship between career self efficacy and career adapt-ability among students of the National Youth Higher Skills Institute in Sepang as well as to identify the level of career self efficacy among these students. The study was conducted using the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale (CDSE SF) and the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS), through an online medium using Google Forms. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential analyses to address the research questions. The findings of the study reveal a significant correlation between student's career self-efficacy and career adapt-ability. Moreover, the level of career self-efficacy among the students was found to be notably high.

**Keywords:** career self-efficacy, career adapt-ability, national youth higher skills institute, higher education

## Introduction

In today's dynamic global landscape, individuals are constantly navigating complex challenges and opportunities to determine their desires and needs in life. High self-efficiency can facilitate the acquisition of generic skills and professional competencies more easily attainable (Zhang et al.,2021). Within this context, education is viewed as a crucial factor influencing individual's ability to make aptimal decisions, whether involving personal matters or careers. The educational framework in Malaysia has undergone numerous transformations to enhance teaching and learning accross various student levels. This sector has gained immense significance as a primary component shaping individual character and national development. Consequently, the country remains prepared to address issues and challenges in allignment

with the Malaysia Education Development Plan (PPPM 2013-2025), which prioritizes student-centered approaches over conventional methods (Lubis et al., 2021). Moreover, the goals of education extend to cultivating knowledgeable, capable, morally upright, responsible Malaysians who possess the ability to achieve personal well-being while contributing to the nation's prosperity. This ongoing commitment underscores the nation's dedication to nurturing a citizenry equipped with skills and values that can thrive in an everchanging world.

The focus to be emphasized in this educational aspect is directed towards higher education students, often the focal point in shaping the success of human capital. They are perceived as individuals functioning optimally to promote national progress and development, as at this stage, they are shaping their superior identities, social cultures, and cultivating the intellect to become icons within society (Abiddin, 2014). Furthermore, these students are directly involved in equipping themselves with technical, humane, and employability skills before completing their education. Educational institutions at the tertiary level are often expected to fully realize their functions and roles as they are considered creative, innovative, and capable of positively transforming the world. In the midst of the 21st century's impact of life, along with the advancements in sophisticated technology, skills, career self-efficacy, and career adaptability are deemed essential traits for student. These attributes assist them in becoming independent, nurturing their potential, as well as effectively adjusting to their career paths. The term "students" in the context of this study refers to young learners within vocational institutions, engaging in skill-oriented fields throughout their learning journey.

In the present time, three core components – cognition, emotions and behavior are regarded as the foundation of youth development, and as their age increases, the trend of mastering social skills becomes more pronounced (Oshri et al., 2018). Consequently, young individuals tend to gravitate towards fields of learning that align with their self-competence, thereby leading to careers suited to their capabilities. According to statistics from the Labor Force Survey Report by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), youth aged 15 to 29 in Malaysia contribute nearly 40% of the nation's workforce and form the basis of the country's economic growth. Thus, this is crucial to ensure that these youths have opportunities to seek jobs that match their abilities. Within this context, the elements of career self-efficacy and career adaptability have a significant impact on the adaptation process of students, particularly at the tertiary education level, as they determine the future trajectory of personal and career development.

Indeed, by comprehending these definitions, exploring the theories, and recognizing the importance of each element, invaluable insights can be gained to encourage personal growth and optimize career transitions. Understanding and acknowledging these factors provide a framework for facilitating self-discovery and fostering a successful transition into the working world. This holistic approach acknowledges the intricate interplay between cognitive development, emotional intelligence, and behavioral patterns, shaping a well-rounded and adaptable individual. As the youth's role in shaping the economic landscape is substantial, empowering them with the necessary self-belief and skills to navigate the complexities of career choices is a pivotal undertaking for both their personal growth and the nation's progress.

### **Career Self-efficacy**

Career self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to effectively perform specific tasks or achieve desired goals (Bandura, 1977). It serves as a core construct within Social

Cognitive Theory, asserting that an individual's confidence in their capabilities plays an important role in determining how behavioral, cognitive and emotional characteristics are shaped. Self-efficacy is context dependent, meaning that an individual's self-belief can vary across different situations and tasks. High self-efficacy is associated with perseverance, resilience and proactive problem solving, while low self-efficacy can lead to self-doubt, avoidance and diminished performance (Mahmud et al., 2020). Embedded within the notion of Career self-efficacy is the understanding that an individual's perceptions of their abilities have a significant impact on their vocational choices, goal setting and subsequent actions. This construct operates as a guiding force, steering individuals towards career paths where they believe they can excel and contribute effectively. A strong sense of career self-efficacy not only boosts motivation and initiative but also enables individuals to navigate challenges with greater confidence, viewing setbacks as opportunities for growth rather than as deterrents.

Broadly, career self-efficacy stands as a cornerstone in understanding how individuals approach and negotiate their vocational journeys. It signifies the crucial interplay between one's beliefs and actions, influencing not only their performance but also their overall career satisfaction and growth. Therefore, cultivating and reinforcing career self-efficacy is an integral aspect of preparing individuals to thrive in a rapidly evolving professional landscape. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1977) underscores the significance of self-efficacy in the human agency process, wherein individuals actively influence their environment and contribute to their own development. The theory emphasizes that self-efficacy is influenced by four primary sources: mastery experiences (past achievements), vicarious experiences (observing others), social persuasion (feedback and encouragement) and physiological and emotional states. These sources interact to shape an individual's beliefs about their self-efficacy, which, in turn impacts their choices, efforts and resilience in facing challenges.

Career self-efficacy holds significance beyond personal development and encompasses various life domains (Baron, 2016). In education, individuals with high self-efficacy are more inclined to set ambitious learning goals and persevere in their studies, ultimately leading to improved academic achievements. Within the workplace, individuals possessing strong self-efficacy are more prone to undertake challenging tasks, exhibit higher job satisfaction, and adapt more effectively to changing job demands. Recognizing and nurturing career self-efficacy can empower individuals to harness their potential, overcome obstacles and lead fulfilling lives. According to Betz and Hackett (2006), career self-efficacy is perceived as an individual's assessment of their personal effectiveness in various behaviors related to career choices and adjustments. Furthermore, according to a study by Mei (2021), a high level of career self-efficacy among students leads them to be more inclined to define the lifestyle they desire to achieve, the career objectives and make confident decisions.

### **Career Adapt-ability**

Career adapt-ability refers to the process by which individuals adjust to the changes conditions, roles or environments related to the careers. It encompasses psychological responses, behaviors and emotions during transitions such as career changes, promotions, job losses or shifts in job responsibilities. According to Savickas (2007), career adaptability is seen as an individual's attitude, behavior and competence. It also had an impact towards individual coping mechanism as well as a network of social support including friends, family and significant others in one's life (Hui, 2018). This highlights that collective self-perceptions collectively determine the outcomes of navigating and developing new career paths.

Furthermore, career adapt-ability is a crucial component enabling metacompetence in rapidly evolving work environments (Hall & Mirvis, 1995; Savickas et al., 2009; Tolentino et al., 2014). It comprises four (4) influencing components: concern (focused on preparing a career vision), control (a sense of responsibility and ownership impacting the career), curiosity (excitement to explore career opportunities and self-potential within the work environment), and confidence (motivation and hope to achieve success when facing obstacles). These four strengths and abilities facilitate adaptation to career-related changes, integration between individuals and their environment as well as successful career transitions (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012).

In the dynamic realm of the current job landscape, career adapt-ability has emerged as a priority for career development, as it facilitates adjustments and aids in seeking improved job opportunities (Klehe et al., 2012). Additionally, the sources of career adapt-ability can be further fortified through career interventions as suggested by Savickas (2013). Effective career adapt-ability is crucial for maintaining job satisfaction, psychological well-being and overall life satisfaction. Individuals who successfully navigate career transitions are more likely to experience reduced stress and enhanced job performance. Moreover, organizations stand to benefit from adaptable employees who can seamlessly adjust to role changes, leading to increased productivity and reduced turnover. By comprehending the process of career adapt-ability and providing support during transitional phases, individuals and organizations can ensure smoother and more satisfying career journey (Hirschi et al., 2015).

The Career Construction Theory developed by Donald Super in 1973 provides a foundational framework for understanding career adapt-ability. According to this theory, individuals engaged in an ongoing process of constructing their careers, influenced by self-concept, interest, values and environmental factors. Besides, career transitions require individuals to engage in cognitive adjustments to align self-concept and worldview perceptions with the evolving career paths. Super's theory emphasizes the significance of life roles, including those beyond work and how they intersect with an individual's career identity. Career adapt-ability offers valuable insights into human behavior concerning development and growth, as it is grounded in well-established theories of psychology and organizational studies. Understanding the significance of this concept can enable and empower individuals to cultivate resilience, embrace change and unleash their full potential in a rapidly evolving workplace landscape.

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Measure the relationship between career self-efficacy and career adapt-ability among students of IKTBN Sepang
2. Identify the level of career self-efficacy among students of IKTBN Sepang

### **Methodology**

This section discusses the research approach used, including the study design, research location, population, sampling technique, research instrument, study procedures and data analysis. Utilizing methodology in research aids researchers in gaining better understanding of the ongoing study process. The research design adopted for this study is quantitative, with a survey method. A questionnaire was administered to respondents as a tool for data collection, with the study population consisting of students from the National Youth Higher Skills Institute (IKTBN) Sepang. The study determined a sample size of 71 students using random sampling techniques. Subsequently, the Google Forms application was utilized to distribute the questionnaire and gather responses online.

Section A of the questionnaire aims to collect information related to gender, age, ethnicity and the course pursued at the institution. Section B pertains to Career Self-Efficacy, comprising 25 questions adapted from the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Short Form (CDSE SF) by Betz and Taylor (2006). This questionnaire aims to identify student's self-capabilities regarding their confidence and belief in career planning. On the other hand, Section C is about Career adapt-ability consisting of 24 questions used to measure student's career adjustment. This questionnaire was modified from the Career Adapt Ability Scale (CAAS) developed by Mark Savickas in 2012. Descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted using the SPSS 26.0 software. The instruments of this study have high validity and reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.956 for CDSE SF and 0.970 for CAAS.

### **Findings**

Table 1 illustrates an overview of the demographic distribution of the respondents regarding gender, age, ethnicity and the field of the study. Out of the 71 respondents, 61 respondents (86.1%) were male, while the remaining 10 respondents (13.9%) were female. This distribution indicates a higher proportion of male students in IKTBN Sepang's student population. In terms of age, 66.1% were in the range of 18 to 21 years old, comprising 47 respondents, 20% were between 22 to 24 years old, accounting for 20 respondents, and 4% were within the age range of 25 to 27 years, representing 4 respondents.

Moreover, a total of 68 respondents (95.8%) identified as Malay ethnicity and 3 respondents were Indian ethnicity (4.2%). Subsequently, respondents were categorized by their fields of study. Specifically, 27 respondents (38%) were from the field of polymer mechanics, 5 respondents (7%) from electronic technology, 4 respondents (5.7%) from CAD/CAM manufacturing mechanics, 14 respondents (19.7%) from mechanical maintenance technology and 21 respondents (29.6%) from electrical technology.

Table 1

*Demographic of Respondents (n=71)*

Demographic		Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	61	86.1
	Female	10	13.9
Age	18 to 21	47	66.1
	22 to 24	20	28.2
	25 to 27	4	5.7
Ethnicity	Malay	68	95.8
	Indian	3	4.2

## Field of study

Diploma of Polymer Mechanics	27	38.0
Diploma of Electronic Technology	5	7.0
Diploma of CAD/CAM Manufacturing Mechanics	4	5.7
Diploma of Mechanical Maintenance Technology	14	19.7
Diploma of Electrical Technology	21	29.6

**The Relationship Between Career Self-efficacy and Career adapt-ability among IKTBN Sepang Students.**

The findings of this study have addressed the first objective, which is to measure the relationship between career self-efficacy and career adapt-ability among students. Table 2 indicates that the  $p$ -value is 0.000, which is less than the significance value of alpha 0.001. This suggests a significant relationship between the two factors. The Pearson correlation value,  $r = 0.612$ , represents a high and significant correlation. Therefore, a strong positive correlation exists between career self-efficacy and the level of career adapt-ability. This signifies that as student's career self-efficacy increases, their level of career adapt-ability also increases.

Table 2

*The Pearson correlation value*

		Correlation	
		Career Self-efficacy	Career adapt-ability
Career Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.612**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	71	71
Career adapt-ability	Pearson Correlation	.612**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	71	71

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### Level of Career Self-Efficacy among IKTBN Sepang Students

The findings of this study address the second research objective, which is to identify the level of career self-efficacy among IKTBN Sepang students. Table 3 presents the study's results, indicating a high level of career self-efficacy among the students ( $M = 4.01$ ). Collectively, this demonstrates that IKTBN students possess the ability to identify and assess their own capabilities, including tendencies towards interests, talents, abilities and self-values. These students also exhibit confidence in synchronize their potential with job relates information that suits their individual selves. Moreover, they are capable of making informed career choices, taking responsibility for their decisions and executing career tasks through relevant training or programs.

Table 3

#### *Interpretation of Minimum Scores on Career Self-Efficacy Level*

Variable	Mean	Interpretation
Career Self-Efficacy	4.01	High

### Discussion and Recommendation

Referring to the level of career self-efficacy among IKTBN Sepang students, the overall minimum score value is at a high level ( $M = 4.01$ ). This signifies a positive findings regarding the career self-efficacy possessed by these students. The highest value for this variable is observed in the sub-construct 'Problem Solving' ( $M = 4.39$ ). This clearly indicates that IKTBN Sepang students possess a high ability and confidence to address career related issues. They also exhibit proficiency in conflict management and decision making within their chosen careers. These students demonstrate meticulous planning before seeking career paths that match with their personality, desires and needs. This align with the findings of a study by Mahmud et al, (2020), stating that career self-efficacy is a crucial component that demands attention as it shapes factors influencing career readiness and planning among students.

Based on the descriptives analysis of this study, it is evident that a significant relationship exist between career self-efficacy and career adapt-ability. This underscores the fact that proficiency in managing one's career contributes to students achieving their career goals and finding success in the professional world. Besides, it provides comfort and satisfaction when individuals are able to adapt within their work environment. In this context, the strong correlation between career self-efficacy and career adapt-ability tends to foster a more condusive work environment. For those facing challenges in career adapt-ability, they can overcome them through confidence and careful planning. Career self-efficacy provides a solid foundation for individuals to self-identify, maintain high levels of motivation, endure pressure and ultimately enhance positive adaptation to a dynamic work environment.

Additonally, this relationship holds significant implications in the realms of education and career development. Within the context of education, higher education institutions and educators can contribute to the development of career self-efficacy among students. This can be achieved by providing empowering learning experiences, opportunities to cultivate career skills and crucially emotional support. Therefore, a continuous exposure to various career fields in positive manner help students prepare themselves and enhance their understanding of structured career planning and making better career choices. This exposure can lead to informed decisions and heightened self-confidence in facing the challenges of the ever-evolving workplace market.

**Conclusion**

All in all, IKTBN Sepang students have specific career-related knowledge and information as they are engaged in fields aligned with their interests and preferences. By evaluating their potential and identifying their strengths, students can choose careers and establish goals that integrate with their personalities and environments (Azmi et al., 2019). As a suggestion for future research, it would be beneficial to conduct a similar study on students from IKBN across different regions in Malaysia. This would help assess the level of career self-efficacy among students in various locations. Such research would contribute to comprehensive understanding, particularly among students in vocational and skills education. There's a likelihood that variations in career self-efficacy and career adapt-ability levels exist among students from different regions or states.

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