

# Relationship between Proactive Personality, Perceived Social Support, and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy among Final-Year Students in Public Universities of Selangor

Nithyalakshmi Sivanesan & Azlina Mohd Khir

Department of Social and Development Sciences, Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), 43400 Serdang, Selangor

Email: chessnithya2802@gmail.com & m\_azlina@upm.edu.my

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## Abstract

Studying career decision-making self-efficacy among final-year students is crucial because it affects students' readiness and confidence in making informed career choices. Understanding factors such as proactive personality traits and perceived social support ultimately leads to improved career outcomes and reduced uncertainty. The study aimed to determine the relationships between proactive personality, perceived social support, and career decision-making self-efficacy among final-year students in public universities in Selangor, Malaysia. 359 respondents selected through simple random sampling, participated in the study. Data were collected via self-administered questionnaires using the Proactive Personality Scale, Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Short Form. Statistical analysis used were the Pearson correlation and multiple regression. Findings revealed that the respondents' proactive personalities were at a medium level, while perceived social support and career decision-making self-efficacy were at a high level. Moreover, findings indicated positive significant relationships between proactive personality and perceived social support with career decision-making self-efficacy. The multiple regression analysis showed that proactive personality and perceived social support explained 44.6% variances in career decision-making self-efficacy. These findings suggest that enhancing individuals' proactive personality traits and increasing their perceived social support could substantially improve their confidence in making career decisions.

**Keywords:** Proactive Personality, Perceived Social Support, Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy, Final-Year Students, University

## Introduction

It is undeniable that career choice is one of the most difficult and huge decisions for every student while planning their future. College students who belong to the early adulthood phase usually learn about themselves through hands-on experiences while they are in their

exploration and growth stage (Kim & Ra, 2022). Career choices or career decision-making is a process-oriented model that assesses the decisions of individuals or situations that lead to career choices (Rami et al., 2021). Albert Bandura was the prime person to introduce the concept of self-efficacy to the world. Self-efficacy is one's belief in their capacity to behave in a certain way to achieve a goal or need (Bandura, 1977; Saleem et al. 2017). According to Betz and Taylor (1996), and Saleem et al (2017), Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE) is the competency one demonstrates to accomplish the necessary tasks for making important career decisions.

In Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Social Cognitive Learning Theory, it is stated that individuals with high self-efficacy strive to master difficult tasks, whereas those with low self-efficacy tend to avoid these tasks and focus more on negative outcomes (Nabavi, 2012). In this context, to determine a student's career path and their belief in their ability to execute the necessary behaviors for making career decisions (self-efficacy), it is essential to analyze other influencing factors. One of the factors that can be researched is proactive personality. According to Bateman and Crant (1993), a proactive personality is an individual's strong liking to use opportunities and take the first step to impact their environments in a wide range of activities and situations. Theoretically, it was stated that a proactive personality has an important role in the career decision-making process thus relating that a proactive personality positively influences career self-efficacy (Kim & Park, 2017). Another factor that can be researched is perceived social support. Several studies highlight the importance of perceived social support among university students (Jun et al., 2024; Mohd Khir et al., 2020). Perceived social support can be referred to as emotional comfort, assistance received in material form, and individual trust received from personal relations such as family, friends, or significant others (Park et al., 2018). The career competence of a person depends intensely on his or her career decision-making self-efficacy thus regarding this, social support plays an important role during the whole process of career decision-making of the person (Wasif et al. 2020).

In the 2023 International Labour Organization (ILO) report, it was stated that there is a higher probability that more workers will be forced to accept low-quality jobs or jobs with poor wages, which also do not have much security and social protection due to the latest global economic slowdown and post effect of the COVID-19 crisis. The 21st-century changes have caused many individuals to face difficulties in career transition, which consists of career decision-making because the process consists of finding good alternatives, gathering information comparing those job alternatives, and finally choosing one (Kulcsar et al., 2019). While choosing a career successfully can result in higher self-esteem, better health, and greater job satisfaction, career indecision can also cause extra stress, needless delays, and occasionally avoidance (Situmorang & Salim, 2021). Several factors associated with career indecision have been identified, and some of them are logical decision-making and career decision self-efficacy. Career decision-making self-efficacy happens due to many influencing factors but at the same time, it is also interrelated with employment opportunities in the market. As globalization causes boundaryless careers and these careers become mainstream, career decision-making self-efficacy among individuals needs to be improved during career transitions so that better work outcomes and sustainable career development can be secured, especially when shifting from school to a work environment (Xin et al., 2020).

Since career decision-making self-efficacy varies between people, it is undeniable that many factors influence an individual's career decision-making self-efficacy, however, this research will focus more on undergraduate students. Studying proactive personality and perceived social support in the context of career decision-making self-efficacy is crucial for understanding and enhancing individuals' abilities to make effective career choices. Proactive personality traits are important for coping with these obstacles because they are defined by a proactive approach to problem-solving, taking initiative, and anticipating opportunities. However, it cannot be denied that people's confidence and conviction in their capacity to make wise job decisions can be greatly impacted by the perceived social support they receive from their social networks. Hence, this study will examine whether significant relationships exist between proactive personality, perceived social support, and career decision-making self-efficacy among final-year students in public universities in Selangor and whether these factors can aid students in making better career choices in the future.

### **Literature Review**

#### *Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy*

Chen et al. (2021) studied Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE) and Career Exploration (CE), considering them crucial components for building a sustainable career. Their findings demonstrated that CDMSE positively predicted CE and school moderated the relationship between CDMSE and CE, with the effect of CDMSE on CE being stronger among students from rural schools. Gender did not appear to be a moderating factor in any of these relationships. According to these results, encouraging CDMSE can encourage high school students particularly those attending rural schools to participate more in CE, which will guarantee sustainable career development under the flexible and boundaryless career orientation.

Furthermore, to add to a local study, Hamzah et al (2021), studied the mediating role of career decision self-efficacy on the relationship of career emotional intelligence and self-esteem with career adaptability among 205 undergraduates of Universiti Putra Malaysia. They found out that CDSE has a significant linear relationship with career adaptability and is the main forecaster of emotional intelligence and self-esteem. Even though the study is more focused on career adaptability and concluded that career adaptability is important for improving efficiency in the workforce and employability among graduates, CDSE plays an important role in mediating career adaptability hence career decision-making self-efficacy should not be left aside when discussing career.

#### **Relationship between Proactive Personality and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy**

A proactive personality can be defined as an individual who initiates something, acts when there is a chance given, and keeps going until a significant change happens. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a study was conducted by Zhou et al (2021), among graduate students in China and they studied the employment stress as a moderating role in the relationship between proactive personality and career decision-making self-efficacy. They discussed that the proactive personality is certainly related to career decision-making self-efficacy while employment stress negatively predicted proactive personality and career decision-making self-efficacy. Besides, the moderating outcome of a proactive personality was more when the employment stress was reduced. This made them conclude that the students graduating

during the COVID-19 pandemic are inclined to be having difficulties with complex career decision-making processes intensified by the demanding and shifting labour market.

In a study conducted by Zhang et al (2023), it was stated that although proactive personalities have been shown to increase self-efficacy in college students, college students who possess relatively high proactive personalities may not necessarily have greater levels of career decision self-efficacy (CDSE). To close this gap, 371 Chinese college students (229 females) participated in this study made in China, which looked at the mediating role of positive affect in the association between proactive personality and CDSE as well as the moderated effects of gender and social class in the mediating model. The findings demonstrated that a proactive personality positively influenced CDSE through positive affect. Furthermore, among female students and the group with a higher subjective social class, respectively, the favourable effects of proactive personality on positive affect were larger. In addition to offering helpful professional advice for raising CDSE, the study advanced the understanding of how and when a proactive personality affects Chinese college students' self-efficacy in career growth.

### **Relationship between Perceived Social Support and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy**

Social support is defined as support received from a close relation to oneself such as information, emotional comfort, and self-trust. Angeline and Rathnasabapathy (2021) studied the influence of perceived social support on career decision-making self-efficacy among 100 undergraduate students to identify whether social support influences CDMSE because their hypothesis was self-efficacy and motivation are enhanced by social support. Their result proved that CDMSE and social support have a positive significant relationship (with significance at 0.01 and 0.05 levels for self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection and planning domains) and female students had more perceived social support than male students. It can be stated that in general Indian families, parents have more control over the choices of their children when it comes to future life, marriages, and careers thus showing the significant relationship between social support and career decision self-efficacy.

A study by Lee (2019), in South Korea analysed the effects of social support and career decision self-efficacy besides the mediating effects of career decision self-efficacy which can influence career based on career-interrupted women's perception of their preparation behaviours for their career. The results showed that firstly, social support had a significant correlation with career decision self-efficacy and career preparation behaviours. Besides, it was found that job information and goal selection as career decision self-efficacy sub-factors had a significant effect on career preparation behaviours. Next, career decision self-efficacy was a partial mediating effect between social support and career preparation behaviours. Thus, the study suggested that regarding career guidance for women with interrupted careers, the focus should be given more on psychological aspects than technological aspects according to the results above.

### **Objective of the Study**

The study aims to determine the relationships between proactive personality, perceived social support (family, friends, and significant others), and career decision-making self-efficacy (self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning, and problem-

solving) among final-year students at public universities in Selangor. Besides, the factors uniquely influencing career decision-making self-efficacy were predicted.

### **Hypothesis**

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between proactive personality and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE).

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between perceived social support (family) and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE).

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between perceived social support (friends) and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE).

Ho4: There is no significant relationship between perceived social support (significant others) and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE).

Ho5: There are no factors that uniquely predict Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE).

### **Methodology**

This section presents the sampling, participants, measurements, and data analysis for this study.

#### *Sampling*

For this research, the sampling techniques used were simple random sampling. Simple random sampling was used to choose universities and faculties. Among the four public universities in Selangor, two were chosen at random: Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). After selecting the two universities from the random pick, six faculties were chosen from these universities through random pick as well. They were the Faculty of Human Ecology, the School of Business and Economy, the Faculty of Health and Medical Science, the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology, the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, and the Faculty of Science. The simple random sampling method was used to collect data on the respondents. The number of final-year undergraduates from each chosen faculty was surveyed and based on the number of male and female students, the questionnaire was distributed to them through email and other social media. By using a simple random sampling, it ensures that every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected, which minimizes selection bias and allows for the generalization of results to the broader population. This method is particularly useful in obtaining a representative sample when the population is homogenous. By randomly selecting participants, simple random sampling provides a fair and unbiased approach to data collection, enhancing the validity and reliability of the study's findings.

#### *Participant*

The total number of respondents was 359 with different backgrounds. In terms of gender, most of the respondents were females which made up 240 respondents (66.9%) and 119 were males (33.1%). The age of the respondents varies from 21 to 25 years old where the highest number of students was 23 years old (29.2%) followed by 24 years old (26.7%), 22 years old (26.5%), 25 years old (14.8%) and lastly 21 years old (2.8%). The academic achievement was categorized into 4 groups. The largest group of final year students (46.8%) scored 3.7 to 3.99 for their CGPA followed by the second largest group of final year students (23.7%) who scored 3.50 to 3.69 for their CGPA. Another 20.6% of final year students scored 3.00 to 3.49 for their CGPA and final year students scored 4.00 for their CGPA only 32 students (8.9%).

### *Measurement*

This study used a questionnaire which consisted of four sections. The first section is the demographic section which includes the final-year student's information followed by the second section which is the Proactive Personality Scale by Bateman and Crant (1993). This scale consists of 17 items which includes one reverse item and utilises a 7-point Likert scale. Sample items from this scale are "I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life", "I enjoy facing and overcoming obstacles to my ideas" and "I excel at identifying opportunities". If the respondents score high, it reveals that they have a high level of proactive personality. The internal reliability of this scale was 0.83.

Next, the third section will be the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS). This instrument consists of 12 items covering three sub-scales such as family, friends, and significant others. Besides, the instrument has a 7-point rating scale which is from very strongly disagree (1), strongly disagree (2), mildly disagree (3), neutral (4), mildly agree (5), strongly agree (6), and very strongly agree (7). Sample items from this questionnaire are "There is a special person who is around when I am in need", "My friends really try to help me" and "I can talk about my problems with my family". If the respondents score high, it shows they have a high level of perceived social support. The internal reliability of this scale was 0.85.

The last section will be the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Short Form (CDMSE-SF) which consists of 25 questions with 5 subdomains (self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning, and problem-solving). Each item will be measured on a five-point Likert-type scale and if a student scores high, it shows that the student has high self-efficacy toward career decision-making. Since this scale has copyrights, it cannot be published but some examples can be shared. A sample item is "I try to find out about the average yearly income of people in an occupation" and respondents were required to rate items on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (no confidence at all) to 5 (complete confidence). As for this scale, the internal reliability was 0.86.

### *Data Analysis*

This research process involved using descriptive analysis to collect and interpret numerical data. Firstly, descriptive analysis was used for analyzing objectives 1 and 2, to identify the demographic characteristics of the undergraduate students and to see the level of proactive personality, perceived social support, and career decision-making self-efficacy among undergraduate students at public universities in Selangor. In terms of descriptive analysis, the descriptive results were frequency distribution, central tendency, and dispersion. Besides, descriptive analysis was used to describe the univariate objectives of a study. The descriptive results were presented in mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum, frequency, and percentage of the variables.

Then, for the rest of the objectives, inferential statistics were used. Inferential statistics is used to infer from sample statistics to population (parameter). Inferential statistics are based on the assumption that population distributions of variables from which samples are selected are in a normal distribution. The inferential statistics used for this study were Pearson correlation and Multiple regression. To determine the relationship between proactive personality, perceived social support, and career decision-making self-efficacy, the

Pearson correlation was utilized. Meanwhile, regression analysis was employed to identify the unique predictors of career decision-making self-efficacy among undergraduate students

## Research Findings

### *Level of Proactive Personality*

Proactive personality was measured using the Proactive Personality Scale (PPS) by Bateman and Crant (1993). The total of proactive personality was classified into three levels which are low (17 - 51), moderate (52 - 86), and high (87 - 117) using mean score. According to Table 1, most of the respondents have a moderate level of proactive personality which sums up to 183 which is more than half (51%) of the study sample. Subsequently, 169 respondents (47.1%) had a high level of proactive personality, and the remaining 7 respondents (1.9%) had a low level of proactive personality. The mean score for proactive personality was 83.43 and the standard deviation was 15.67 which indicates that the average of respondents has a moderate level of proactive personality where a higher score means a higher level of proactive personality they have.

Table 1

*Score and Level of Proactive Personality (n=359)*

Variable	n	%
<b>Proactive Personality</b>		
Low (17 - 51)	7	1.9
Moderate (52 - 86)	183	51
High (87 - 117)	169	47.1
Mean	83.43	
Sd.	15.67	
Min.	30	
Max.	117	

Note: Sd. = Standard deviation, Min. = Minimum, Max. = Maximum

### *Level of Perceived Social Support*

Perceived Social Support (PSS) was measured using a Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support by Zimet et al. (1988). As shown in Table 2, perceived social support was classified into three levels including low (12 - 36), moderate (37 - 61), and high (62 - 84). Most respondents had high perceived social support summing up to 228 respondents (63.5%). Subsequently, 124 respondents (34.5%) had a moderate level of perceived social support, and the remaining 7 students had low perceived social support (1.9%). The mean score for perceived social support was 64.89 (Sd = 13.07), which indicates the average respondent has a high level of perceived social support.

In perceived social support, there are three dimensions which are family, friends, and significant others. For family, most respondents had a high level of perceived social support with 255 respondents (71%) followed by a moderate level of 90 respondents (25.1%) and a low level of 14 respondents (3.9%). The mean for family-perceived social support was 21.30 (Sd = 5.06) which also indicates the average of respondents have a high level of family-

perceived social support. As for friend-perceived social support, 231 respondents (64.3%) had a high level of support from friends followed by 114 respondents (31.8%) with a moderate level of friend support, and only 14 respondents (3.9%) had a low level of friend support. The mean of friend-perceived social support was 20.76 (Sd = 4.96) which shows that the average students have a high level of friend-perceived social support.

Lastly, 67.7% of the students had a high level of significant others perceived social support followed by 26.7% of students with a moderate level of significant others perceived social support and only 5.6% of students had a low level of significant others perceived social support. The mean of 20.84 (Sd = 5.49) shows that the average person has a high level of significant others perceived social support and for all the three dimensions, the higher the score, the higher the level of perceived social support according to family, friends, and significant others.

Table 2  
*Score and Level of Perceived Social Support (n=359)*

Variable	n	%
<b>Perceived Social Support</b>		
Low (12 - 36)	7	1.9
Moderate (37 - 61)	124	34.5
High (62 - 84)	228	63.5
Mean	64.89	
Sd.	13.07	
Min.	21	
Max.	84	
<b>Family</b>		
Low (4 - 12)	14	5.6
Moderate (13 - 21)	90	25.1
High (22 - 28)	243	71.0
Mean	21.30	
Sd.	5.06	
Min.	6	
Max.	28	
<b>Friends</b>		
Low (4 - 12)	14	3.9
Moderate (13 - 21)	114	31.8
High (22 - 28)	231	64.3
Mean	20.76	
Sd.	4.96	



Min.	6	
Max.	28	
<b>Significant Others</b>		
Low (4 - 12)	20	5.6
Moderate (13 - 21)	96	26.7
High (22 - 28)	243	67.7
Mean	20.84	
Sd.	5.49	
Min.	6	
Max.	28	

*Note:* Sd. = Standard deviation, Min. = Minimum, Max. = Maximum

#### *Level of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy*

Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE) was measured using the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Short Scale by Betz et al. (1996). The CDMSE was classified into three levels including low (25 - 58), moderate (59 - 92), and high (93 - 125) according to the mean score. Table 3 shows that most respondents have a high level of CDMSE totalling up to 303 respondents (84.4%). Subsequently, 18 respondents (5%) have a moderate level of CDMSE, and the remaining 38 students have a low level of CDMSE (10.6%). The mean score for CDMSE was 97.22 (Sd = 14.80) which indicates the average respondent has a high level of CDMSE where a higher score means a higher level of career decision-making self-efficacy.

There are five dimensions in CDMSE namely self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning, and problem-solving. For self-appraisal, most respondents had a high level of CDMSE with 268 respondents (74.7%) followed by a moderate level of 62 respondents (17.3%) and a low level of 29 respondents (8.1%). The mean score for self-appraisal was 19.31 (Sd = 3.24) which also indicates the average of respondents have a high level of self-appraisal. As for occupational information, 273 respondents (76%) had a high level of occupational information followed by 58 respondents (16.2%) with a moderate level of occupational information, and about 28 respondents (7.8%) had a low level of occupational information. The mean score of occupational information was 19.43 (Sd = 3.26) which shows that the average students have a high level of occupational information.

The next one is goal selection. Most respondents (264) had a high level of goal selection in CDMSE (73.5%) followed by 61 respondents with a moderate level of goal selection (17%) and about 34 respondents (9.5%) had a low level of goal selection. The mean of 19.48 (Sd = 3.34) shows that the average has a high level of goal selection.

The following dimension is planning. As for planning, most respondents had a high level of planning with 262 respondents (73.3%) followed by a moderate level of 62 respondents (17.3%) and a low level of 34 respondents (9.5%). The mean score for planning was 19.57 (Sd = 3.07) which also indicates the average of respondents have a high level of planning in general.

Lastly, as for problem-solving, 268 respondents (74.7%) had a high level of problem-solving followed by 62 respondents (17.3%) with a moderate level of problem-solving, and only 29 respondents (9.5%) had a low level of problem-solving. The mean score of problem-solving was 19.57 (Sd = 3.07) which shows that the average students have a high level of problem-solving. Looking into all five dimensions, the higher the score, the higher the level of career decision-making self-efficacy according to self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning, and problem-solving.

Table 3

*Score and Level of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (n=359)*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy</b>		
Low (25 - 58)	38	10.6
Moderate (59 - 92)	18	5.0
High (93 - 125)	303	84.4
Mean	97.22	
Sd.	14.80	
Min.	44	
Max.	125	
<b>Self-Appraisal</b>		
Low (5 - 12)	29	8.1
Moderate (13 - 18)	62	17.3
High (19 - 25)	268	74.7
Mean	19.31	
Sd.	5.06	
Min.	6	
Max.	28	
<b>Occupational Information</b>		
Low (5 - 12)	28	7.8
Moderate (13 - 18)	58	16.2
High (19 - 25)	273	76.0
Mean	19.43	
Sd.	3.26	
Min.	7	
Max.	25	
<b>Goal Selection</b>		
Low (5 - 12)	34	9.5

Moderate (13 - 18)	61	17.0
High (19 - 25)	264	73.5
Mean	19.48	
Sd.	3.34	
Min.	8	
Max.	25	
<b>Planning</b>		
Low (5 - 12)	34	9.5
Moderate (13 - 18)	62	17.3
High (19 - 25)	263	73.3
Mean	19.41	
Sd.	3.33	
Min.	10	
Max.	25	
<b>Problem Solving</b>		
Low (5 - 12)	28	7.8
Moderate (13 - 18)	45	12.5
High (19 - 25)	286	79.7
Mean	19.57	
Sd.	3.07	
Min.	8	
Max.	25	

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*Note:* Sd. = Standard deviation, Min. = Minimum, Max. = Maximum

*Relationships between Proactive Personality, Perceived Social Support, and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE)*

In this section, hypothesis testing was done with Pearson Correlation whereby Pearson correlation was conducted to identify the correlations between two continuous variables and the polarity of those two interactions, for whether they are positively or negatively correlated. As for this study, since career decision-making self-efficacy has five dimensions (self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning, and problem-solving), the correlation was done according to one independent variable with each dimension.

*Relationship between Proactive Personality and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE)*

According to Table 4, the findings revealed that there were significant positive relationships between proactive personality and career decision-making self-efficacy ( $r = 0.638$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and according to dimensions as well where self-appraisal ( $r = 0.615$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), occupational information ( $r = 0.553$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), goal selection ( $r = 0.566$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), planning ( $r = 0.542$ ,  $p$

= 0.000) and problem-solving ( $r = 0.630$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) were significantly related. Therefore,  $H_01$  was rejected.

Table 4

*Correlation between Proactive Personality and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy according to Dimensions (n=359)*

	<b>CDMSE</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>OI</b>	<b>GS</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>PS</b>
<b>Proactive Personality</b>	0.638** (0.000)	0.615** (0.000)	0.553** (0.000)	0.566** (0.000)	0.542** (0.000)	0.630** (0.000)

Note: \*\*Correlation is significant at the level of 0.01 level (2-tailed)

SA= Self-Appraisal, OI = Occupational Information, GS = Goal Selection, P = Planning, PS = Problem-Solving

*Relationship between Perceived Social Support and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE)*

The findings revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between perceived social support and career decision-making self-efficacy ( $r = 0.522$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and according to dimensions as well where self-appraisal ( $r = 0.479$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), occupational information ( $r = 0.483$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), goal selection ( $r = 0.474$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), planning ( $r = 0.432$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and problem-solving ( $r = 0.511$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) were significantly related (refer to Table 5).

Besides, for the perceived social support dimension, the family, friends, and significant others have a positive significant relationship with career decision-making self-efficacy. According to family, career decision-making self-efficacy ( $r = 0.523$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and by dimensions as well where self-appraisal ( $r = 0.466$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), occupational information ( $r = 0.471$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), goal selection ( $r = 0.477$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), planning ( $r = 0.477$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and problem-solving ( $r = 0.491$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) were significantly correlated.

Furthermore, perceived social support from friends shows a positive significant relationship with career decision-making self-efficacy ( $r = 0.440$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and all dimensions of CDMSE ( $r = 0.377$  to  $r = 0.44$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Moreover, perceived social support from significant others also shows a positive significant relationship between CDMSE ( $r = 0.422$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and its dimensions ( $r = 0.311$  to  $r = 0.442$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Therefore,  $H_02$  to  $H_04$  were rejected.

Table 5

*Correlation between Perceived Social Support and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy according to Dimensions (n=359)*

	CDMSE	SA	OI	GS	P	PS
<b>Perceived Social Support</b>	0.522** (0.000)	0.479** (0.000)	0.483** (0.000)	0.474** (0.000)	0.432** (0.000)	0.511** (0.000)
<b>Family</b>	0.523** (0.000)	0.466** (0.000)	0.471** (0.000)	0.477** (0.000)	0.477** (0.000)	0.491** (0.000)
<b>Friends</b>	0.440** (0.000)	0.396** (0.000)	0.432** (0.000)	0.382** (0.000)	0.377** (0.000)	0.418** (0.000)
<b>Significant others</b>	0.422** (0.000)	0.403** (0.000)	0.379** (0.000)	0.391** (0.000)	0.311** (0.000)	0.442** (0.000)

Note: \*\*Correlation is significant at the level of 0.01 level (2-tailed)

SA= Self-Appraisal, OI = Occupational Information, GS = Goal Selection, P = Planning, PS = Problem-Solving

#### *Predicting Factors of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE)*

The results shown in Table 3 revealed that the overall model was significant, with an  $R^2$  of 0.446, explaining 44.6% of the variance in career decision-making self-efficacy scores ( $F = 143.429$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This is a considerable value, as Falk and Miller (1992) suggested that for the variance explained to be considered appropriate,  $R^2$  values should be equal to or greater than 0.10. According to Cohen (1988),  $R^2$  values are categorized as follows: 0.26 (substantial), 0.13 (moderate), and 0.02 (weak). As indicated in Table 6, the result shows that proactive personality and perceived social support from family are factors that influence the career decision-making self-efficacy of final-year undergraduate students at public universities in Selangor. Proactive personality was the most important variable that influenced the level of career decision-making self-efficacy ( $\beta = 0.502$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) followed by the family dimension of perceived social support ( $\beta = 0.240$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ).

Table 6

*Multiple Regression Analysis of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (n=359)*

Variable	B	$\beta$	t	Sig.(p)
Proactive Personality	0.474	0.502	10.533	0.000***
Family	0.702	0.240	5.041	0.000***

F 143.429

R 0.668

$R^2$  0.446

Adjusted  $R^2$  0.443

Note: B=Unstandardized coefficient;  $\beta$ =Standardized coefficient; t=t-value; Sig. (p)=Significant t-value

## Discussion

### *Relationship between Proactive Personality and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE)*

The results above indicate there is a significant positive relationship between proactive personality and CDMSE among final-year students. Besides, there are also positive relationships between proactive personalities with the dimensions of CDMSE which are self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning, and problem-solving among the respondents. This shows that a proactive personality will influence career decision-making self-efficacy among undergraduate students.

Bateman and Crant (1993), believe that having a proactive mentality will lead to motivated, proactive actions that help define one's professional objectives. Supported by the study by Xin et al (2021), individuals with stronger proactive personalities developed more confidence in making career decisions. The emergence of flexible and fluid jobs has led to a constant flux in the work environment as well as individual interests, objectives, and values. As a result, people must continue to take the initiative to advance their careers by establishing certain standards for success (Xin et al., 2021). Besides, according to Preston and Salim (2019), career decision-making self-efficacy positively correlates and has a significant relationship with proactive personality indicating that students who behave proactively may have higher self-efficacy when comes to career decision-making. Taylor and Betz (1983) mentioned that CDMSE can be defined as an individual's belief to successfully perform the tasks related and important to the career decision-making process. Due to the hypothesis that a high CDSE may result in favourable outcomes for people, including professional satisfaction, strategic career conduct, and career success, existing research has concentrated on CDSE and its constituent aspects (Kim & Park, 2017). Both career- and organization-related constructs heavily depend on the proactive personality attribute. A proactive personality positively predicted professional achievement, organizational commitment, and career commitment. These findings imply that proactive personalities benefit a wide range of people in numerous ways connected to their careers.

### *Relationship between Perceived Social Support and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE)*

The above results indicate there is a positive significant relationship between perceived social support with CDMSE among final-year students. Career decision-making is an essential phase for persons who are studying at a high school or a university. Until the end of their lives, career selections will have a significant good or bad impact on people. The professional process is often a hardship, and many are already stressed-out young people. They so require assistance from their social networks, which include their families, their places of education, and their jobs (Kocak et al., 2021). One of the most important factors when making job decisions is family influence. In their study, a significant positive correlation was observed between CDSE and family influence. Most of the research examines the family as a coping strategy during job selections, and there is a favourable correlation between family impact and CDSE.

According to other studies, perceived social support and career decision-making self-efficacy (CDSE) were significantly correlated. In Angeline and Rathnasabapathy's (2020), study, there was a positive significant relationship between CDSE and social support among adolescents. This could be due to the parents having more control over their children's choice of career and choice of life including marriage as well. Usually, the whole family takes part in

giving suggestions when comes to career decision-making. Besides, Wasif et al. (2020) study also showed a significant positive relationship between the PSS and CDMSE. Their finding confirmed that the relationship between an individual and their family, friends, and significant others helps them to make career decisions and family members help in playing an important role by providing self-esteem, and emotional and informational support.

#### *Predictor Factors of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE)*

The analysis of factors influencing career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE) among final-year undergraduate students at public universities in Selangor presents compelling insights. The overall model demonstrates significant predictive power with an  $R^2$  value of 0.446, indicating that 44.6% of the variance in CDMSE scores can be explained by the variables included in the model.

Among the predictors, proactive personality emerged as the most influential factor. This suggests a strong positive relationship between having a proactive personality and higher levels of CDMSE. Students who exhibit proactive behaviours are likely to take initiative, seek out opportunities, and engage actively in career-related decision-making processes. This finding aligns with the literature suggesting that proactive individuals are better at navigating their career paths due to their forward-thinking and self-starting nature.

The second significant predictor was perceived social support from the family. Family support appears to play a crucial role in students' confidence in making career decisions. This support can manifest in various forms, including emotional encouragement, financial assistance, and the provision of resources or information pertinent to career choices. The influence of family support underscores the importance of a nurturing and supportive home environment in bolstering students' self-efficacy regarding career decisions.

However, looking into the predictors of career decision-making self-efficacy, it cannot be denied that other factors can also predict career decision-making self-efficacy. Besides the two factors researched in this study, career decision-making self-efficacy can be influenced by other factors such as family background, emotional intelligence, personality and even ethnicity which are considered demographic factors. Furthermore, career decision-making is always related to career preparedness or career maturity but due to time constraints, it was not researched. Thus, this is one of the limitations of the study.

#### **Conclusion**

The study highlights the significant role of proactive personality and perceived social support from family in predicting career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE) among final-year undergraduate students. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors that empower students in their career decision-making processes and offer actionable insights for enhancing support systems both within and outside the educational context. The results have practical implications for career counseling and educational interventions aimed at improving CDMSE. Career counselors and educators should consider incorporating strategies that foster proactive behaviors and leverage family support systems. Interventions could include workshops and training programs to enhance students' proactive skills, such as goal setting, problem-solving, and decision-making exercises. Additionally, involving families in career-related activities and providing them with tools to support their children can further

enhance CDMSE. Future research should explore additional factors influencing CDMSE and examine the interplay between these predictors across diverse student populations.

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