

Gender Differences in Career Decision-making Self-Efficacy

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Abstract

High school students are at a crucial phase because they will experience the transition from school to college or work, requiring them to have the ability to make career decisions. Regarding this issue, the present study aimed to determine gender differences in career decision-making self-efficacy in grade twelve students at SMA Negeri 1 Gringsing, Batang Regency. It used a quantitative approach with a descriptive-comparative design. In terms of sample, the study involved 246 students selected using purposive sampling technique. The students career decision-making self-efficacy data were collected using the career decision-making self-efficacy scale and analyzed using the independent sample t-test. Findings revealed that there was no difference in career decision-making self-efficacy in terms of gender in general. However, the differences were found in the 2 subscales, namely occupational information and problem solving. Thus, it is concluded that female students are more concerned with career issues. The implications of this study are counselors are expected to be able to provide career counseling services to increase career decision-making self-efficacy, especially for male students because the career decision-making self-efficacy of them was lower than female students.

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INTRODUCTION

Career decision-making is a prominent process that obviously happens in a person's life. To do so, one needs self-efficacy due to its significant correlation (Ogotu et al., 2017). Self-confidence in making career decisions is known as career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE). Students' career understanding is greatly influenced by career decision-making self-efficacy (Akhsania, et al., 2020). It includes behaviors, such as: (a) accurate self-assessment, (b) job information collection, (c) goal selection, (d) future plans making, and (e) problem solving (Betz & Luzzo, 1996).

Individuals with high career decision-making self-efficacy will be successful in making the right decisions (Enstin et al., 2020). It is so since they are able to find what they need, such as understanding relevant career information (Khoeriyah et al., 2022). Taylor & Betz in Sugiharto & Sunawan (2019) consider career decision-making self-efficacy important in influencing individual career decision-making. Self-efficacy in career plays an important role in career decision-making, generating interests and deciding career goals (Arghode et al., 2021). By having this ability, individuals can better understand various changes related to themselves, adjust career behavior and have stronger resolutions to difficulties (Chen et al., 2021).

A previous study by Chiesa et al. (2016) found that students with high levels of career decision-making self-efficacy exhibit higher average levels of career exploration. Moreover, Wang et al. (2010) argue individuals with high levels of career decision-making self-efficacy tend to be more active and positive in making career decisions. Meanwhile, Park et al., (2018) state individuals with high levels of career decision-making self-efficacy can make successful career decisions and be successful in their careers.

Unfortunately, not all students attain high career decision-making self-efficacy. A study by Bullock-Yowell et al. (2014) shows that 58% of students have low career decision-making self-efficacy. Similarly, Rismawan & Gading (2021)

in their study revealed that there are 144 grade 12 high school students who have very low levels of career decision-making self-efficacy. Individuals with low levels of career decision-making self-efficacy tend not to engage in career exploration, for fear that they may not be able to make decisions (El-Hassan & Ghalayini, 2020). Then, according to Wolfe & Betz (2004), students with low career decision-making self-efficacy necessitate interventions that focus on building self-efficacy in relation to self-exploration and the environment.

Gender role identity is an important factor in career decision-making self-efficacy, especially in problem solving, planning, self-assessment, and career exploration activities (Gianakos, 1995). Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) puts forward a number of factors that can influence an individual's career decision-making self-efficacy, such as personal variables (e.g. age and gender), contextual variables (e.g. perceived support and barriers from family, peers, and society) and experience variables (Xing & Rojewski, 2018).

Several previous studies deduce that there are differences between the level of career decision-making self-efficacy of male and female students. Chen et al., (2021) study shows that the career decision-making self-efficacy scores of male students are significantly higher than female students. In addition, Abdinoor's study (2020) indicates that the career decision-making self-efficacy of female adolescents is higher than that of male. However, other studies show no significant difference in the level of career decision-making self-efficacy between women and men (Chung, 2002; Bolat & Odacı, 2017; Wu et al., 2020; Pandang et al., 2022).

Regarding the previous descriptions, the present study attempted to examine differences in career decision-making self-efficacy of high school students in terms of gender. It was expected that its findings can contribute to students' understanding of career decision-making self-efficacy and become a reference for school counselors in developing students' career decision-making self-efficacy which can be provided through guidance and counseling

services in individual, group or classroom formats.

METHODS

The samples in this study were grade twelve students at SMAN 1 Gringsing, Batang Regency in the 2023-2024 academic year, consisting of 108 male students and 138 female students selected using a purposive sampling technique. Their data were collected using a scale adapted from Betz, Klein, & Taylor (1996), namely the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale-Short Form (CDSES-SF) which has 25 items.

The instrument was developed by the researchers and previously has been adapted to the conditions of high school students in Indonesia, resulting the elimination of one item from 35 to 34. It covers five aspects, namely: 1) self-appraisal, 2) occupational information, 3) goal selection, 4) planning, and 5) problem solving with a validity score of 0.203-0.718 and

reliability $\alpha=0.884$. This scale uses the Likert method with a score range of 1 to 5 to test differences in students' career decision-making self-efficacy based on gender. Data analysis was carried out using an independent sample t-test with the help of the SPSS 25 program.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the descriptive analysis, the mean of self-appraisal aspect was (M=3.72; SD=0.51), occupational information aspect was (M=3.75; SD=0.54), goal selection aspect was (M=3.79; SD= 0.56), planning aspect was (M=3.64; SD=0.56) and problem solving aspect was (M=3.16; SD=0.68).

Table 1. Independent Samples t-Test

Variable	Total		M		F		t	P
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Self-Appraisal	3.72	0.51	3.69	0.48	3.74	0.53	-0.82	>0.05
Occupational Information	3.75	0.54	3.65	0.53	3.83	0.54	-2.69	<0.05
Goal Selection	3.79	0.56	3.84	0.50	3.75	0.60	1.25	>0.05
Planning	3.64	0.56	3.60	0.57	3.67	0.56	-0.90	>0.05
Problem Solving	3.16	0.68	3.08	0.74	3.23	0.63	-1.70	<0.05

With regard to the data analysis, it was known that (1) there was no significant difference in the self-appraisal aspect in terms of gender (t=-0.82; p>0.05), (2) there was a significant difference in the occupational information aspect in terms of gender (t=-2.69; p<0.05), (3) there was no significant difference in the goal selection aspect in terms of gender (t=1.25; p>0.05), (4) there was no difference significant in the planning aspect in terms of gender (t=-0.90; p>0.05), (5) there was a significant difference in the problem solving aspect in terms of gender (t=-1.70; p<0.05).

From the data analysis results, the significant differences between male and female laid on the aspects of occupational information and problem solving where female students tended to be more adaptive in dealing with career issues. Both male and female students took self-assessment, selected goals, and planned careers, but the females were more active in collecting career information and solving career problems.

The findings of this study are in line with a study by Gianakos (2001) that career decision-making self-efficacy scores are related to gender, namely females attain greater self-efficacy in gathering job information.

In addition, a study focusing on giving an intervention done by Scott & Ciani (2008) resulted an effective result in increasing career decision-making self-efficacy in the aspects of self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning and problem solving. However, the males did not experience an increase in the problem solving aspect.

Females experience a higher increase in career decision-making self-efficacy than males (Kostko; 2015; Abdinoor, 2020; Ulas-Kilic et al., 2020). Furthermore, Coetzee & Harry's (2015) study shows that gender can influence career adaptability and females gain a much higher level of career adaptability than males. The males rely more on positive feedback and encouragement from their parents than females who are relatively more active at school and do their assignments well.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings, it can be concluded that there is no significant differences in the mean of career decision-making self-efficacy between male and female students in general. However, when closely reviewed a pretty significant differences take place in the subscales of occupational information and problem solving aspects. Besides the findings, this study is limited in terms of the involvement of samples that were from high school students in both gender, for the future studies may investigate other factors with other samples, such as vocational high school students or university students. Lastly, school counselors are expected to develop career counseling programs to improve students' career decision-making self-efficacy.

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