



The effect of resilience and self-efficacy on career orientation through social support

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Article Info	Abstract
Keywords: Career orientation, resilience, self-efficacy, social support, vocational students.	Career orientation is crucial for students' future, but many do not understand career choices in line with their interests and talents. This research attempted to analyze the effect of resilience and self-efficacy on career orientation through social support. Such thing urged the present research to be conducted using an ex post facto method by involving 214 vocational high school students whose data were collected through a validated questionnaire. Based on path analysis resilience and self-efficacy positively affected career orientation, with social support mediating this relationship. Students with high resilience and self-efficacy and strong social support perceived better career orientation. Finally, it is concluded that increasing resilience, self-efficacy, and social support are significant for improving students' career orientation at vocational high schools in Semarang City.
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Introduction

Adolescence is a period when a person starts to prepare himself to face early adulthood. Everyone who enters this period must do developmental tasks related to planning their future. Various choices in life will surely be the main concern here, including choices that lead to the future and are a must for teenagers to clearly plan their future career Zhou & Santos (Andreou et al., 2020). Career choices, visions of the future and motivation to pursue these ideals are inseparable from the role of the environment around the teenager. Teachers, parents, and peers have an important role in career development in teenagers Gottfredson & Richards (Clark et al., 2020).

Vocational high school students are aged between 15-18 years and already have an interest in work. It is manifested in the process of forming orientation, interests, and individual future (Rabei et al., 2020). Career orientation is significant for them because it helps them understand and plan their future. However, many still do not attain a clear understanding of career choices that suit their interests and talents. Career orientation is a crucial aspect in students' self-development, especially for Vocational High School (SMK) students who are expected to be ready to enter the workforce after graduating. Effective career development is greatly influenced by various psychological factors, such as resilience and self-efficacy, as well as social support received by students Santrock (Behrens et al., 2022).

Career orientation can be influenced by resilience. It is stated in research which explains that resilience has an influence on adolescent career maturity (Parikh-Fox et al., 2020). Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their ability to achieve a certain goal. Here, the student's objective is confidence in choosing a career to achieve the desired future Bandura (AL-Qadri et al., 2024). Social support, including support from family, friends, and teachers, can mediate the relationship between resilience, self-efficacy, and students' career orientation. Previous research has shown that social support can increase the positive effects of resilience and self-efficacy on career outcomes.

Even though previous studies have investigated the relationship between resilience, self-efficacy, and career orientation, there are still few studies that jointly examine these three variables in the context of vocational high school students in Indonesia. Most studies have also not explored the mediating role of social support comprehensively in this relationship. Therefore, the current research attempted to fill this gap by exploring how social support mediates the effect of resilience and self-efficacy on career orientation in grade X vocational high school students.

This study strived to examine the influence of resilience and self-efficacy on career orientation through social support. Its hypothesis was that resilience and self-efficacy have a positive effect on students' career orientation, and social support functions as a mediator in this relationship. Generally, this research was expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions in understanding the factors that affect vocational high school students' career orientation as well as implications for educational interventions and career counselling.

Method

The population in this study were private vocational high school students in Semarang city (SMK Nurul Barqi, SMK Teuku Umar, SMK Pelita Nusantara 1, and SMK LPI) with a total population of 515 students. Randomization was done to ensure diversity and representativeness in the research findings. For more, the number of respondents in this study was 224 grade X students who were randomly selected from the four schools.

The resilience instrument in this study functioned to measure the level of individual resilience to various pressures and challenges. It consists of 35 question items and was measured using the 4-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). In terms of validity test, 30 items were valid, while 5 others were not with a validity value of 0.235 to 0.708. Meanwhile, its alpha reliability value was 0.917.

The self-efficacy instrument in this study was meant to measure individual beliefs in their ability to complete tasks or face certain challenges, such as attitudes, values, and beliefs related to their career choices and development. This instrument consists of 30 question items with the 4-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). The validity test resulted in the value of 0.265 to 0.590, while the alpha reliability was 0.743.

The career orientation instrument has 40 question items. The Likert scale used to measure has 4 points from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). In terms of validity test, 5 items were found invalid with a validity value of 0.260 to 0.539. Meanwhile, alpha reliability obtained 0.494.

The social support instrument was used to measure the level of support received by individuals from those around them, including family, friends, and the school environment. It has got 33 question items measured using the 4-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). The results of the validity test of this instrument showed 3 items were invalid and 30 were valid with a validity value of 0.286 to 0.605, while the alpha reliability was 0.824. A correlational research design with path analysis techniques was employed in this research. Moreover, the questionnaire data collection process was carried out by giving questionnaires directly to respondents

Results and Discussion

The present research had two independent variables, one dependent variable, and one intervening variable. The independent variables were resilience and self-efficacy, the dependent variable was career orientation, and the intervening variable was social support. Following the analysis using SPSS version 26, the mean of resilience was in the medium category ($M = 90$, $SD = 9.27$), self-efficacy was in the medium category ($M = 86.62$, $SD = 12.29$), career orientation was in the medium category ($M = 86.28$, $SD = 10.64$), and social support was in the medium category ($M = 63.76$, $SD = 7.90$). All data are presented in table 1 below

Table 1. Mean, SD, and Variable Categories

Variable	M	SD	Category
Resilience	90.24	9.27	Medium
Self-efficacy	86.62	12.29	Medium
Career orientation	86.28	10.64	Medium
Social support	63.76	7.90	Medium

To determine the effects between variables, path analysis was conducted and resulted data in table 2.

Table 2. Path Test Results

Predictor	β	t	p	R	R ²	F	p
Social Support Criterion				0.261	0.068	7.659	< 0.05
Resilience	0.177	3.260	< 0.01				
Self-efficacy	0.085	1.560	< 0.05				
Career Orientation Criterion				0.428	0.183	9.641	< 0.05
Resilience	0.128	2.545	0.011				

Predictor	β	t	p	R	R ²	F	p
Self-efficacy	0.353	7.081	0.000				
Social support	0.143	2.883	0.004				
Mediator	Coef.	Z	SE				p
Resilience social support	0.03	2.16	0.01				< 0.05
career orientation							
Self-efficacy social support	0.02	1.36	0.01				< 0.05
career orientation							

Of this analysis, it was found resilience had an effect on social support ($\beta = 0.177 > 0.05$), self-efficacy had an effect on social support ($\beta = 0.085 > 0.05$), resilience had an effect on career orientation ($\beta = 0.128 > 0.05$), self-efficacy affected career orientation ($\beta = 0.353 > 0.05$), and social support had an effect on career orientation ($\beta = 0.143 > 0.05$). The mediator of social support between resilience and career orientation had a significant effect ($p < 0.05$). It has proven that social support mediated the relationship between resilience and career orientation with a significant effect. The mediator of social support between self-efficacy and career orientation had a significant effect ($p < 0.05$) as well, meaning social support mediated the relationship between self-efficacy and career orientation with a significant influence. Based on these results, it was assumed there was an effect between resilience and self-efficacy on career orientation, an effect of social support on career orientation, an effect between resilience on social support and there was no significant influence between self-efficacy on social support.

Resilience theory emphasizes that individuals who are able to adapt effectively to pressure, adversity, and challenging circumstances are more likely to maintain positive psychological functioning and pursue their long-term goals. Previous research has highlighted the relationship between resilience and career-related psychological resources, suggesting that resilience plays an important role in helping individuals manage career transitions and uncertainty (Santilli et al., 2020). Furthermore, Xu et al. (2025) demonstrated that resilience contributes to the relationship between parental career support and career adaptability among adolescents. The findings of the present study are consistent with these perspectives, indicating that students with higher levels of resilience demonstrated clearer and more directed career orientations. Students with greater resilience may be better equipped to overcome career-related challenges, maintain confidence when facing uncertainty, and develop realistic career plans. These findings reinforce the importance of psychological resilience in supporting adolescents' career development and preparation for future occupational transitions (Leung et al., 2022; Santilli et al., 2020).

The findings revealed a significant direct relationship between self-efficacy and career orientation. Students with higher levels of self-efficacy tended to demonstrate clearer and more directed career orientations, suggesting that confidence in one's capabilities plays an important role in career decision-making and future career preparation. This finding is consistent with Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, which emphasizes that self-efficacy beliefs influence individuals' cognitive, motivational, affective, and behavioral processes. Furthermore, Social Cognitive Career Theory explains that self-efficacy contributes to career interests, choices, and goal-directed behaviors, particularly when individuals evaluate their capabilities and anticipated outcomes (Lent et al., 1994). Empirical research has also demonstrated positive associations between self-efficacy and career-related developmental outcomes, supporting the importance of personal confidence in navigating career decisions and transitions (Rudolph et al., 2017). Accordingly, adolescents with stronger self-efficacy beliefs may feel more capable of evaluating career alternatives, making informed decisions, and pursuing career goals aligned with their interests and abilities.

Directly, there was a significant influence of resilience on social support. Individuals with high resilience tended to receive more social support. This might be because resilience equipped them with better interpersonal skills and ability to establish positive relationships with others. This finding supports the theory that resilience plays an important role in helping individuals face life challenges and build positive social relationships. Resilience allows individuals to remain optimistic, think positively, and seek support from others when facing difficulties, which in turn increases the social support they receive. Researches mention that resilience helps individuals strengthen their social networks (AL-Qadri et al., 2024; Behrens et al., 2022). Further, the present research adds that individuals with high resilience tend to be more proactive in seeking support when facing stress. This result is in line with this finding which shows a positive effect of resilience on social support.

There was no direct significant effect between self-efficacy and social support. A person's ability to believe in their own abilities (self-efficacy) had no significant or large relationship to the level of social support they receive. In other words, changes in a person's level of self-efficacy would not significantly affect how much social support they got from others. Their research found that although self-efficacy, mindfulness, and social

support are important for mental health, self-efficacy does not have a significant effect on social support in the context of students in Switzerland (Owens-Thomas et al., 2019; Ozdemir & Kaplan, 2025) .

Social support could increase students' self-confidence and motivation in planning their future. Students who got support from family, friends, and teachers appeared to have a clearer vision of their careers and were more motivated to achieve them. Researches revealed that social support from family and teachers significantly influenced students' career decisions in high school. Emotional and informational support from parents and teachers helps students plan their career paths (Gnilka & Novakovic, 2017; Martinez et al., 2017).

The findings of the present study have several practical implications for the implementation of guidance and counseling services in schools, particularly in strengthening students' career orientation, self-efficacy, and social support. Schools are encouraged to improve the effectiveness of their counseling programs by providing structured, evidence-based career guidance interventions that facilitate students' career exploration, decision-making, and future planning (Wang et al., 2024). Furthermore, fostering positive relationships between school counselors and students may contribute to a supportive learning environment that promotes students' psychological development and career readiness (Whiston et al., 2011).

School counselors can provide individualized counseling sessions to assist students who experience difficulties in developing self-efficacy, overcoming personal barriers, and establishing realistic career goals. Previous research has demonstrated that structured career interventions can improve career decision-making self-efficacy among high school students (Chiesa et al., 2016). In addition, peer-based guidance activities can be incorporated to encourage students to share experiences, exchange career-related information, and provide mutual emotional support. Such interactions may strengthen students' confidence in making career decisions, as peer support has been positively associated with career decision-making self-efficacy and career adaptability (Salim et al., 2023). Therefore, integrating individual counseling, structured career guidance, and peer support activities may provide a comprehensive approach to promoting students' career development and psychological well-being.

Regarding the description above, the combination of individual resilience and self-efficacy contributed to how a person planned and pursued their career goals, with social support as a factor that strengthens this relationship. In other words, social support played an important role in strengthening the effects of resilience and self-efficacy on career orientation.

Conclusion

According to the findings several conclusions are drawn. First, resilience and self-efficacy jointly affect one's career orientation mediated by social support, meaning that a person with high resilience and self-efficacy is supposed to have better career orientation, and even much better when social support is there. Second, social support holds a significant role in reinforcing the relationship between resilience and self-efficacy on career orientation, indicating that a supporting social environment can help individuals plan and achieve their career goals. Other than the conclusions, recommendations are addressed to the future researchers. First, they can examine various intervention to increase resilience and self-efficacy. Second, an investigation can be made to explore the specific role of social support in achieving career orientation. Third, variable expansion is recommended given other factors, such as intrinsic motivation and family conditions which are vital to gain further career orientation.

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