

The Impact of Self-Efficacy on Career Choices of Generation Z: The Mediating Role of Decision-Making Difficulties in DKI Jakarta

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ABSTRACT

The Generation Z population is the largest demographic group in Indonesia currently entering the workforce. However, data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) indicates that youth unemployment remains a critical issue in the employment sector. The increasing open unemployment rate among Generation Z can be attributed to an imbalance between labor demand and supply, as well as career decision-making processes during school or university periods. This study aims to analyze the factors influencing OUR among Generation Z, specifically through the career decision-making process before entering the workforce. Furthermore, this research examines the influence of Self-Efficacy in Career Decision-Making on Career Decisions through the mediating variable of Career Decision-Making Difficulties. The methodology employed is a survey, with data collected via questionnaires distributed to 104 respondents who meet the study criteria. The instruments used include the Career Decision Scale (CDS), the short-form Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE-SF), and the Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ). The findings reveal an indirect influence of Self-Efficacy in Career Decision-Making on Career Decisions, mediated by Career Decision-Making Difficulties among Generation Z individuals entering the workforce in DKI Jakarta.

ABSTRAK

Populasi Generasi Z merupakan kelompok demografi terbesar di Indonesia yang saat ini memasuki dunia kerja. Namun, data Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) menunjukkan bahwa pengangguran kaum muda masih menjadi permasalahan penting di sektor ketenagakerjaan. Meningkatnya angka pengangguran terbuka di kalangan Generasi Z dapat disebabkan oleh ketidakseimbangan antara permintaan dan penawaran tenaga kerja, serta proses pengambilan keputusan karir selama masa sekolah atau universitas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi OUR pada generasi Z, khususnya melalui proses pengambilan keputusan karir sebelum memasuki dunia kerja. Selanjutnya penelitian ini menguji pengaruh Self-Efficacy dalam Pengambilan Keputusan Karir terhadap Keputusan Karir melalui variabel mediasi Kesulitan Pengambilan Keputusan Karir. Metodologi yang digunakan adalah survei, dengan pengumpulan data melalui kuesioner yang disebarkan kepada 104 responden yang memenuhi kriteria penelitian. Instrumen yang digunakan meliputi Career Decision Scale (CDS), Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE-SF), dan Career Decision-Making Sustionnaire (CDDQ). Temuan penelitian menunjukkan adanya pengaruh tidak langsung Self-Efficacy dalam Pengambilan Keputusan Karir terhadap Keputusan Karir yang dimediasi oleh Kesulitan Pengambilan Keputusan Karir pada individu Generasi Z memasuki dunia kerja di DKI Jakarta.

INTRODUCTION

Unemployment is one of the main challenges faced by developing countries, including Indonesia, which is still struggling to find effective solutions to this problem. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in August 2022 showed that the open unemployment rate in Indonesia reached 5.86%. This means that out of every 100 workers in Indonesia, about 5 to 6 people do not have jobs [1][2]. Further demographic analysis shows that the age group 15-19 years has the largest contribution to the open unemployment rate, with a percentage reaching 29.08% of the total unemployed. The age groups 20-24 years and 25-29 years also consistently rank among the top three groups with the highest unemployment rates since 2020 [5]. According to BPS data and research from sources such as Ng et al. [7] and Pew Research [8], these three age groups are part of Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012.

Youth unemployment is a global issue and an important problem in employment [9]. The causes of high youth unemployment rates, apart from being due to the imbalance between labor demand and supply [10], are also influenced by the career decision-making process during school or university experienced by prospective job seekers [11][12][13]. This is consistent with previous research by Santosa and Himam [14], which stated that the higher the unemployment rate, the more it can be used as an indicator to assess the level of weakness in career planning during school. Duru [15] also stated that when the number of workers and the unemployed is compared, it becomes clear why proper career decision-making is vital.

Career decision-making is important to undertake but at the same time is a complex and difficult process, especially for young adults in building their future career paths [16]. Therefore, Amini and Salim [17] stated that career development from an early age is one way to prevent individuals from making the wrong career choices. Specifically, young people need support to effectively carry out the career decision-making process as they understand that the decision-making process is a challenge that requires the use of the right methods to resolve it and thus solve the difficulties associated with future career planning [18]. Problems due to lack of individual readiness, reluctance to commit to the process, lack of information and knowledge about career decisions, and conflicts will result in low career decision status for individuals [19].

Difficulties in career decision-making can be caused by an increase in the number of job pathways, majors, and college courses, career specializations, types of professional training, and various types of jobs, making individuals overwhelmed in planning their professional futures [20]. In deciding a career, it is highly likely that problems will arise from various factors that need to be considered, many uncertainties about the individual and the world of work, many career decisions that demand compromise, and social barriers [20]. Another problem that arises in the decision-making process is anxiety, making individuals feel various emotional burdens, lack confidence, and are unsure of their abilities regarding the targeted career, referred to as career decision-making self-efficacy [11].

Belief in one's ability regarding the targeted career, or Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy, has a direct or indirect impact on behaviors that can be used to predict individual career choices and goals [21]. With the information obtained from the influence of career decision-making self-efficacy to predict individual career choices, it will facilitate making new career decision changes or minimize difficulties in making career-related decisions [21].

In an effort to address the high open unemployment rate among Generation Z in Indonesia, this study innovates by analyzing the career decision-making process, an aspect rarely explored in previous unemployment studies. This study will use three key variables: Career Decision, Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy, and Career Decision-Making Difficulties. This research offers a new approach by focusing on individuals' beliefs in their

abilities to make career decisions and how these factors influence the outcomes of those decisions. Furthermore, this study will also examine the influence of disruptions or obstacles faced during the decision-making process and how this is affected by self-efficacy and its impact on career decision outcomes.

This approach provides new insights into how individual psychological aspects and external obstacles contribute to unemployment rates. By understanding these dynamics, research can offer more effective recommendations for education strategies and labor policies aimed at Generation Z. This opens up opportunities for more targeted and effective interventions that can reduce youth unemployment rates, especially in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Career Decision

In individual career decision-making, a complex process is carried out in managing information about individuals and future careers, which is not easy to do because various factors or obstacles arise during the process [2][22]. Individuals will seek information about themselves (interests, personality types, vocational identity, and feelings about obstacles) then information about the scope of work they are interested in or will take in the future, and later all the information obtained will be combined to achieve career decisions for the individuals concerned [2]. According to Saka et al. [22], many young adults find it difficult to make career decisions due to difficulties in determining between various career choices and personal considerations, which are also accompanied by uncertainty, stress, or worry about future regrets.

The ability to measure career decision-making can use the Career Decision Scale (CDS) instrument, which is based on two career determination dimensions, as applied in the research by [2][23][24]. CDS is an instrument developed by Osipow and Barak (1976), initially used to identify students' perceptions of obstacles that interfere with their ability and confidence to make decisions about college and future careers [24]. CDS has two dimensions: (1) certainty scale and (2) indecision scale, with a total of 19 items that can be used to measure individual career decisions [25][26].

Career Decision-Making Difficulties

The Career Decision-Making Difficulties (CDD) model, developed and introduced by Gati, Krausz, and Osipow [27], aims to facilitate the career determination process by identifying the difficulties individuals experience in career determination so that they can easily find the solutions needed [22][27]. Identifying the causes of difficulties in career determination is one of the first steps that individuals must take to overcome career indecision [28].

CDD is a result of the development of decision theory, which plays an essential role in understanding all processes of career decision-making [21][22]. Gati et al. [27] introduced a taxonomy of Career Decision-Making Difficulties, which has been tested with various constructs also related to career decisions in young adults, such as locus of control, self-efficacy, career indecision, career decision ambiguity tolerance, and extraversion [21]. Career Decision-Making Difficulties consist of 10 difficulty categories divided into 3 clusters to analyze potential difficulties experienced by career decision-makers in the career decision-making process: Lack of Readiness, Lack of Information, and Inconsistent Information [20][21][22][28][29]. All these difficulty categories are summarized in a research instrument, the Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ), to measure individual career decision-making difficulties [29].

Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy

The theory of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE) is a development of general self-efficacy theory introduced by Bandura [30] and the first version of career decision-making self-efficacy theory by Hackett and Betz [31]. Taylor and Betz [32] conducted research aimed at developing a method to assess the relationship between self-efficacy and career decision-making, and then examined the relationship between career decision-making self-efficacy and career indecision.

Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy is defined as an individual's belief in their ability to complete tasks and engage in behaviors that affect success in making career decisions [21][30]. CDMSE by Taylor and Betz [32] has five dimensions: Accurate Self-Appraisal, Gathering Occupational Information, Goal Selection, Making Plans for The Future, and Problem Solving.

Entire Dimensions of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy can be measured through the CDMSE-Scale instrument, which is often used as a measuring tool in career counseling and vocational guidance. The CDMSES consists of 50 items used to analyze respondents' levels of self-efficacy regarding career decision-making [33]. Until the latest version developed by Betz et al. (1996), known as the CDMSE-Short Form, the total number of items in the instrument has been reduced to 25 items without changes to the dimensions within the latest version of the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy variable [34][35].

Research Hypotheses

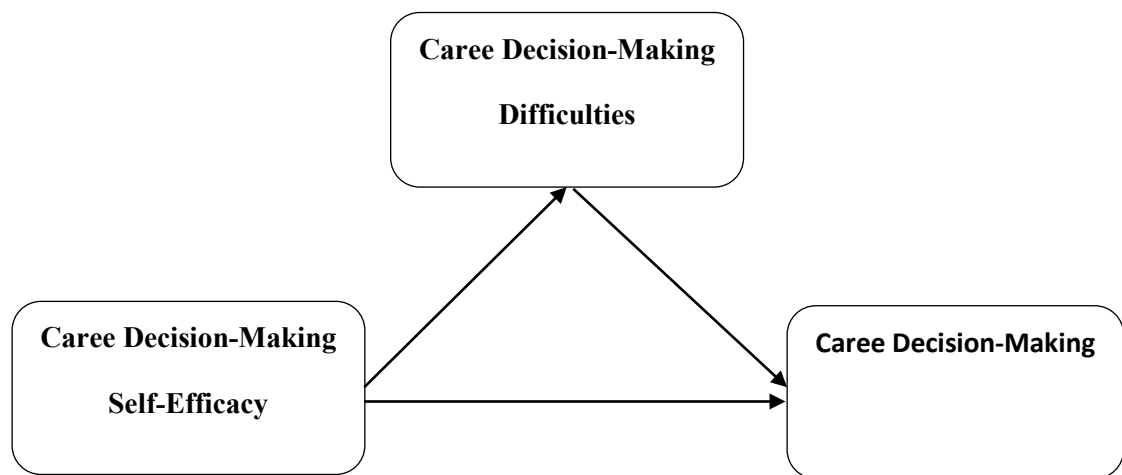


Figure 1 Research Framework

Based on the above framework, there are four (4) hypotheses that can be formulated in this study:

- H1: There is a significant influence of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy on Career Decision-Making.
- H2: There is a significant influence of Career Decision-Making Difficulties on Career Decision-Making.
- H3: There is a significant influence of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy on Career Decision-Making Difficulties.
- H4: There is an indirect mediating effect of Career Decision-Making Difficulties on the relationship between Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy and Career Decision-Making

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is a quantitative approach with a survey design to examine the associative relationship between variables. This study aims to identify the relationship between independent, dependent, and intervening variables. Data collection was conducted on the Generation Z population in DKI Jakarta, including individuals aged 15 to 26 years. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2022, the population that meets the criteria for this study is 1,693,325 individuals.

Data analysis was carried out using statistical software SPSS version 25 and SmartPLS 3.0. The sampling technique applied is purposive sampling, where the sample selection is based on the age and domicile criteria of respondents relevant to the research objectives. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with an error rate of 10% considering the large population size. Based on these calculations, a minimum sample size of 100 respondents was required for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Respondents

The target population for this study consists of residents aged 15-26 years living in DKI Jakarta. Of the 178 respondents who filled out the questionnaire, three were excluded because they did not pass the screening questions, and 71 responses had to be removed after outlier testing using SPSS 25. Thus, 104 respondent answers were used as data for this study. The majority of respondents were aged 21-23 years, with a percentage of 63%. More than half of the respondents were female. Additionally, 45% of respondents had the highest level of education between elementary school and high school, while the rest had the highest education level at the diploma and bachelor levels.

Data Description

This study used three (3) research instruments, resulting in a total of 80 statements distributed to respondents via a questionnaire. The researchers analyzed the responses from all respondents by analyzing the scores from the ordinal measurement scale obtained from the Likert scale questionnaire for each variable. In this study, the researchers used a 1-5 ordinal scale, with the lowest score indicating "Does Not Describe Me Well at All" and the highest score indicating "Describes Me Very Well." Based on respondents' answers on the three instruments, it can be concluded that respondents have high self-efficacy but simultaneously experience high levels of difficulty and uncertainty regarding their future career decisions. This interpretation was obtained from several previous studies by Rodriguez [25], Duru et al. [36], Alibhai et al. [37], and others. Additionally, if analyzed based on the average score per statement, another conclusion is that respondents have issues related to motivation for making career decisions early, even though they know that making career decisions is very important.

Instrument Testing and Classical Assumption Testing

Researchers used SPSS 25 to perform instrument testing. The results showed that all the instruments used in this study, namely the Career Decision Scale (CDS), Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDDQ), and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy - Short Form (CDMSE-SF), were valid and reliable for use. Therefore, researchers could proceed to classical assumption testing. From the classical assumption test results, also conducted using SPSS 25, it was found that the research data were normally distributed, and there were no multicollinearity or heteroscedasticity characteristics in the research data used in this study.

Linear Regression Test

The linear regression test conducted in this study aimed to determine the direction of influence from the Independent Variables on the Dependent and Mediator Variables, as well as the direction of influence from the Mediator Variable on the Dependent Variable. Therefore, two models of linear regression were performed in this study: Multiple Linear Regression and Simple Linear Regression.

Table 1. Multiple Linear Regression Test Against Career Decision-Making (Y)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardize d Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tol.	VIF
1	(Constant)	-36,524	13,332		-2,740	0,007		
	Total X	0,433	0,147	0,247	2,945	0,004	0,763	1,310
	Total Z	0,415	0,067	0,522	6,235	0,000	0,763	1,310

Source: Processed Primary Data (2023)

The results in Table 1 can be interpreted as follows: when Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy increases, Career Decision-Making also increases. Similarly, when the Difficulty in Career Decision-Making increases, Career Decision-Making also increases. Based on Table 2, it can be concluded that when Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy increases, the Difficulty in Career Decision-Making also increases

Table 2. Simple Linear Regression Test Against Career Decision-Making Difficulties (Z)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tol.	VIF
1	(Constant)	29,895	10,342		2,891	0,005		
	Total X	1,051	0,100	0,721	10,521	0,000	1,000	1,000

Source: Processed Primary Data (2023)

The results in Table 2 indicate that when Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy increases, the Level of Difficulty in Career Decision-Making also increases.

Mediation Variable Test

The mediation test in this study was conducted using the SmartPLS 3.0 tool, with significance criteria based on comparing the T-Stat values with the T-Table values. Additionally, a comparison of P-Value against an alpha of 0.05 was performed.

Table 3. T-Stat Values and P-Values of Independent and Mediator Variables Against Dependent Variable

Direct Effects	T-Stat	P Values	Description
Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy → Career Decision-Making	2,34	0,020	Significant
Career Decision-Making Difficulties → Career Decision-Making	8,622	0,000	Significant

Source: Processed Primary Data (2023)

Based on **Table 3**, Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy and Career Decision-Making Difficulties have direct effects on Career Decision-Making. Therefore, it can be inferred that individual career decisions are influenced by both the individual's self-efficacy regarding career decision-making and the challenges or difficulties faced in the career decision-making process. Based on the findings, **H1 and H2 are accepted**.

Table 4. T-Stat Values and P-Values of Independent Variables Against Mediating Variable

Direct Effects	T-Stat	P Values	Description
Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy → Career Decision-Making Difficulties	10,785	0,000	Significant

Source: Processed Primary Data (2023)

Based on **Table 4**, Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy has a direct effect on Difficulty in Career Decision-Making. This indicates that the level of difficulty individuals face in the career decision-making process is directly influenced by their self-efficacy regarding career decision-making. Therefore, **H3 is accepted**.

Table 5 T-Stat Values and P-Values of Independent Variables Against Dependent Variable Through Mediating Variable

Direct Effects	T-Stat	P Values	Description
Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy → Career Decision-Making Difficulties → Career Decision-Making	6,660	0,000	Significant

Source: Processed Primary Data (2023)

Based on **Table 5**, Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy has an indirect effect on Career Decision-Making through Difficulty in Career Decision-Making. Therefore, it can be concluded that Difficulty in Career Decision-Making serves as a partial mediator, as it partially mediates the relationship between the Independent Variable and the Dependent Variable. Based on the findings, H4 is accepted.

Discussion of Research Results

The Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy variable as an Independent Variable has a significant influence on the Career Decision-Making variable as a Dependent Variable, consistent with previous research by Soejanto and Rahmawati [23], and Kurnia [38]. Based on the regression results, it is known that Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy has a positive influence on Career Decision-Making, indicating that an increase in individual self-efficacy facilitates the determination of career decisions. The process occurs such that when individuals have high self-efficacy, they are more aware of their abilities to achieve a career, predict career choices easily, and even alter career decisions more smoothly [21][38][39].

The significant influence of the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy variable as an independent variable on the Career Decision-Making variable as a dependent variable can also be supported by the theory developed by Crites (1978) as elaborated by Storme et al. [40]

concerning the 5 stages of efficient career decision-making. Based on the five stages mentioned by Crites (1978), which have also been compared with the five dimensions of the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy variable by Taylor and Betz [32], it can be concluded that to achieve accurate and efficient career decisions, individuals are expected to enhance their level of career decision-making self-efficacy. The increase in an individual's self-efficacy regarding their career decisions will enhance the career decision outcomes that will be formed by the individual.

It can be concluded that enhancing self-efficacy in career decision-making not only influences the decisions made but also enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of the decision-making process itself. When individuals have higher confidence in their ability to assess, collect, evaluate, and commit to career decisions, the outcomes tend to be more stable and satisfying. Furthermore, increased self-efficacy helps individuals confront challenges and obstacles that may arise during the decision-making process. This directly influences career satisfaction and long-term career adaptation, forming the basis for more informed and reflective career decisions. Therefore, reinforcing self-efficacy in career contexts is crucial and should be a focus in career education and professional development, especially for younger generations like Gen Z entering the workforce.

The Career Decision-Making variable is also influenced by the Career Decision-Making Difficulties variable, consistent with research conducted by Soejanto and Rahmawati [23], and Bacanli [41]. Based on the regression results, it is found that the Career Decision-Making Difficulties variable has a positive influence on the Career Decision-Making variable, meaning that higher levels of difficulty experienced will enhance the outcomes of individual career decisions. This finding aligns with the regression test results by Soejanto and Rahmawati [23].

The explanation regarding the relationship between these two variables can be explained based on the explanation by Gati et al. [27], who state that in making career decisions, individuals must make decisions from various career alternatives accompanied by various attributes and aspects that must be considered after comparing and evaluating each alternative. Gati et al. [27] developed the concept of the ideal career decision-maker, who is an individual who not only recognizes the need to make good and appropriate career decisions but also has the willingness and ability to conduct a deep evaluation of various career alternatives and their attributes. In this context, the level of career decision-making difficulties refers not only to barriers or obstacles in the process but also to the complexity of information to be processed and the critical evaluation to be done.

Higher levels of difficulty in career decision-making prompt individuals to engage more deeply in the process. This intensive and thorough process often results in a better understanding of personal preferences and priorities, as well as a more accurate assessment of the suitability of various career options. As a result, decisions made tend to be more mature and well-considered. Moreover, individuals facing higher levels of difficulty in career decision-making and successfully overcoming such challenges often develop greater resilience to future failures and disappointments. They learn to adapt to uncertainty and manage the pressures associated with complex and risky career choices.

The Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy variable is also found to have a significant influence on the Career Decision-Making Difficulties variable. Various studies also provide similar research results, that an individual's career decision-making self-efficacy significantly affects the level of difficulty faced in making career decisions, such as research conducted by Lam and Santos [42], and by Bullock-Yowell et al. [43]. Based on the regression results, it is known that the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy variable has a positive influence on the Career Decision-Making Difficulties variable. This finding is consistent with the regression tests by Soejanto and Rahmawati [23]. The process that occurs is that when individuals feel confident

in their ability to accomplish tasks related to their chosen career, they are more likely to accept tasks with higher and more challenging targets related to their chosen career [44]. Self-efficacy helps individuals organize and determine the direction of actions needed based on their belief in their ability to achieve the expected type of performance and serves as the basis for personal achievement, well-being, and self-motivation [45]. Based on this theory, individuals with higher self-efficacy can anticipate challenges they will face and prepare themselves to solve these challenges effectively [44]. The higher the level of individual self-efficacy, the more likely they are to accept higher challenges to demonstrate their confidence in their ability to solve higher-level problems [46]. According to Wastuti [47], self-efficacy guides individuals to set challenging goals and enables them to persevere through difficulties encountered in achieving those goals.

Lastly, there is an indirect influence between the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy variable and the Career Decision-Making variable through the Career Decision-Making Difficulties variable as a mediator. According to research findings and regression analysis consistent with the study by Soejanto and Rahmawati [23], self-efficacy does not directly influence career decisions. Instead, its effect manifests through its influence on how individuals face difficulties that arise in the decision-making process. Based on the regression results obtained, if illustrated clearly, individuals with high self-efficacy tend to choose more challenging tasks. They believe they can overcome higher levels of difficulty. Therefore, they are more likely to encounter greater obstacles in the career decision-making process. Although these challenging tasks have the potential to disrupt or become obstacles in career decision-making, high self-efficacy provides psychological encouragement for individuals to enhance their abilities to align with their expectations. This indirect influence can be illustrated through a mediation model where self-efficacy first influences the level of difficulty faced by individuals. This difficulty influences how and when career decisions are made. Conceptually, this indicates that although self-efficacy does not directly determine career choices, it influences the context and conditions under which these decisions are made. This means that career training and development programs should not only focus on developing technical skills or industry knowledge but also on strengthening self-efficacy. Strengthening self-efficacy will help individuals not only in choosing more challenging careers but also in overcoming difficulties that may hinder them.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results obtained, self-efficacy in career decision-making demonstrates a significant positive influence on career decisions. Self-efficacy facilitates individuals in assessing their abilities to accomplish tasks related to specific careers. Furthermore, it was found that the higher the level of career decision-making difficulties faced by individuals, the more significant the improvement in the quality of career decisions produced. Higher self-efficacy enables individuals to believe that they can tackle greater challenges, thereby increasing the level of difficulty they are capable of and the challenges in career decision-making. Moreover, self-efficacy in career decision-making also indirectly influences career decisions through mediating the level of career decision-making difficulties. This mediating effect indicates that self-efficacy can modify how individuals face and overcome challenges in their careers. Further research is recommended to apply this research model to different subjects with adjustments to the framework and sampling techniques used. Future researchers are also advised to add other variables related to individual career decisions and use larger samples with longer study durations. This is expected to provide a broader and deeper understanding of the dynamics of self-efficacy and career decisions in different contexts.

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