

How Proactive Personality Mediates the Relationship between Parental Involvement and Career Decision Self-Efficacy

Rahmi Ramadhani^{1*}, Puji Lestari Suharso²

¹ Department of Psychology, University of Indonesia, Depok 16424, Indonesia

² Department of Psychology, University of Indonesia, Depok 16424, Indonesia

*rahmi.ramadhani03@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In this study, the role of a proactive personality as a mediator in the relationship between parental involvement and self-efficacy in high school students' career decisions was examined. The participants included 758 grade 11 students in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi (Jabodetabek). The instrument that used in this study are Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale Short Form (CDSES-SF), Parent Career Behavior Checklist (PCBC), and Proactive Personality Scale (PPS). The results revealed that a proactive personality partially mediates the relationship between parental support and parental action with self-efficacy in career decisions. Furthermore, parental support and parental action directly influence self-efficacy in career decisions.

Keywords

Career decision self-efficacy, high school students, Indonesia, parental support, parental action, proactive personality

Introduction (Times New Roman, bold, 12)

Adolescence is characterized by the search for an identity, which includes the quest for a career or job identity. One of adolescents' developmental tasks encompasses developing career goals regardless of whether they intend pursuing higher education or entering the world of work (Papalia & Feldman, 2012). Career decisions are one of the most challenging tasks adolescents encounter because they need to consider various factors including their skills and competencies, life goals, hopes, and career preferences (Di Fabio, Palazzeschi, Asulin-Peretz, & Gati, 2013).

The Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education explained that 92% of high school students, vocational students, and Madrasah Aliyah students were unable to make their own career choices (Oebaidillah, 2018). Furthermore, Oebaidillah (2018) stated that high school students, vocational students, and Madrasah Aliyah students believe that they are not provided with enough information and comprehensive guidance related to job opportunities and job trends for the following five to 25 years. Consequently, they are unsure about their career choices (Oebaidillah, 2018). This phenomenon illustrates that high school students still experience difficulties making career decisions. Accordingly, this has an impact on career decision self-efficacy.

Career decision self-efficacy may be defined as individuals' belief in their ability to conduct tasks related to career decision-making (Betz, Klein, & Taylor, 1996). Betz et al. (1996) further explained that individuals who demonstrate self-efficacy in career decisions direct their behavior in career decision-making tasks. The tasks needed to be completed by individuals encompass making self-assessments including recognizing interests and understanding one's abilities, strengths, and weaknesses,

gathering information about various types of careers, having goals and making plans, and solving problems. Thus, if

individual complete career decision-making tasks, they will exhibit enhanced confidence in their choices.

Parents may be regarded as a source of self-efficacy in adolescent career decisions. The theory of adolescent development posits that parents are significant others who can provide information about activities related to various careers and guide their adolescent children to choose appropriate fields (Santrock, 2013). Keller and Whiston (2008) noted that parental involvement in the context of career decision-making may be explained as parents' behaviors and actions that are specifically conducted to facilitate their child's career development. This parental involvement can take the form of parental support and parental action. Parental support involves parents' supportive behavior and/or involvement to encourage their children to attempt new things, support the career of their choice, and provide them with psychosocial support (Keller & Whiston, 2008). Parental action, however, is behavior that is more specifically related to adolescents' career development such as active participation in helping them to choose major subjects. This may include finding information via the Internet, arranging for their children to take interest and aptitude tests, facilitating their participation in career development activities, and consulting with school counselors (Keller & Whiston, 2008). Keller and Whiston (2008) explained specifically that parental support and parental action benefit adolescents in their career development so that they can become more confident about their career choices.

Keller and Whiston (2008) revealed that parental support and parental action have an influence on career decision self-efficacy. Their findings concurred with those of several studies (Ginevra, Nota, & Ferrari, 2015; Dietrich

& Salmela-Aro, 2013; Sovet & Metz, 2014; Xing & Rojewski, 2018). However, the involvement of parents in the form of active parental participation, that is, parental action in youth career development has not been assessed in all studies. Keller and Whiston (2008) asserted that parental action is essential for older adolescents, that is, senior high school students to allow them to receive more information related to careers so that they can approach their career decision-making with confidence. Consequently, two forms of parental involvement, namely, parental support and parental action were employed in this study.

When viewed from the perspective of child development, the parents' involvement, specifically parental support and parental action, in their children since childhood can have an effect on personal factors, namely, the child's personality. Researchers have studied a proactive personality, which characterizes individuals who show initiative, are persistent, play a role in solving problems, and are able to make beneficial changes to the surrounding environment (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Bateman and Crant further stated that a proactive personality is linked to extraversion in that new experiences and activities are sought as well as conscientiousness related to goal orientation where individuals tend to be persistent when they want to achieve something is evident. Crant (2000) asserted that proactive individuals exhibit behaviors such as initiative and the ability to survive and adapt to career success.

Parental involvement in the form of emotional support, namely, parental support to children may assist them to become more competent. Van den Akker, Dekovic, Asscher, and Prinzie (2014) explained that parents who provide support and encouragement to their children such as paying attention and being interested in activities that their children enjoy help ensure that their emotions are more stable and their conscientiousness enhanced. Furthermore, this may foster children's positive affect including feeling comfortable, feeling supported, and enthusiasm. If this support and encouragement are given continuously, this may facilitate children to be future-oriented and foster a tendency to be proactive (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). The positive affect experienced by children may also enhance individual motivation. Individuals who are highly motivated tend to have a proactive personality. These individuals endeavor to explore and learn a number of things before making their career choices (Kim & Park, 2017).

Parental involvement in the form of real action is imperative for adolescents who are still confused about choosing a career. Parents can actively participate in their children's process of exploration, for example, helping them by providing career-related information sources, accompanying them to career development activities, and encouraging them to become aware of their abilities and self (Keller & Whiston, 2008). This affords children the opportunity to obtain a great deal of career-related information. Information acquired from exploration may foster adolescents' initiative to explore various possibilities of majors further in relation to their abilities and interests

(Parker et al., 2010; Kim & Park, 2017). The more proactive adolescents are in discovering their interests, abilities, and majors, the more they will know themselves, which will enhance their confidence when making career choices. In other words, they will be afforded confidence in the process of planning and making career decisions.

Accordingly, parental involvement in the form of parental support and parental action may help adolescents to become proactive, which will make them self-efficacious in their career decisions. On the contrary, if parents are less involved in career development, their children may be uncertain about their career decisions. Thus, a proactive personality may act as a mediator in the relationship between parental involvement and self-efficacy in adolescent career decisions. Accordingly, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. A proactive personality plays a role in mediating the relationship between parental support and self-efficacy in high school student career decisions.
2. A proactive personality plays a role in mediating the relationship between parental action and self-efficacy in high school student career decisions.

Methodology

A non-experimental quantitative research design is employed to explore the relationship between two or more variables when the participants are not placed in a treatment condition (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012). In this study, a questionnaire that comprised items of career decision self-efficacy, proactive personality, and parental involvement were employed to collect data.

Participants

The participants included grade 11 high school students in both public and private schools in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi (Jabodetabek). The theory of student career development proposes that students of this age have the developmental task of exploring careers. After the data were collected, there were 819 participants. However, after initial screening of the data, the number of participants was reduced to 758.

Descriptive analysis was conducted to determine the participants' characteristics. The sample comprised 339 females and 419 males between the ages of 16 and 19 years. In relation to the decision-making process, 32% were influenced by their mother, 24% their father, 23% themselves, 15% both of their parents, 4% family other than their parents, and 1% friends.

Measurement

Career decision self-efficacy scale short form (CDSE-SF) was developed by Betz et al. (1996). The CDSE-SF employed in this study was translated into Indonesian by Sawitri (2009). The CDSE-SF includes 25 items that are divided into five sections: self-assessment, job information, goal selection, career planning, and problem-solving. The 25 items are assessed on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1

(very insecure) to 6 (very confident). The reliability of the

scale is 0.91

Table 2

The Role of Proactive Personality in Mediating the Relationship between Parental Support and Career Decision Self-Efficacy

	PP (M)				CDSE (Y)			
	Coef	SE	p		Coef	SE	p	
PS (X)	a_1	0.276	0.023	0.000*	c'_1	0.078	0.018	0.000*
PP (M)	-	-	-	-	b_1	0.421	0.026	0.000*
Constant	i_1	3.14	0.110	0.000	i_2	2.365	0.114	0.000
$R^2 = 15.98$				$R^2 = 33.74$				
$F(1.756) = 143.782, p = 0.000$				$F(2.755) = 192.254, p = 0.000$				

CDSE = Career Decision Self-Efficacy, PS = Parental Support, PA = Parental Action, PP = Proactive Personality

The Parent Career Behavior Checklist (PCBC) was developed by Keller and Whiston (2008). This instrument measures parental involvement, based on the perceptions of their children, in the form of parents' support, encouragement, and active participation. The PCBC comprises 23 items that are evaluated on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 6 (very frequent). While the reliability coefficient of the measuring instrument is 0.93, that of the parental support and parental action subscales is 0.9 and 0.89, respectively.

Proactive Personality Scale (PPS) was developed by Bateman and Crant (1993). The PPS measures an individual's ability to see opportunities, show initiative, take action, and persist until they have achieved their goals. The PPS consists of 17 items that are assessed on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Reliability of the scale ranges from 0.87 to 0.89.

Data Analysis

SPSS version 2.1 was employed to process the data. The first analysis technique used was a descriptive statistical analysis to determine an overview of the research variables. Second, Pearson correlation coefficient was performed to examine the relationship between the research variables. Finally, PROCESS from Hayes was used to test the hypotheses.

Results

The results of testing the first hypothesis, namely, a proactive personality plays a role in mediating the relationship between parental support and self-efficacy in high school students' career decisions are as follows.

Table 1

Correlations between Career Decision Self-Efficacy, Parental Support, Parental Action, and Proactive Personality

	M	SD	1	2	3	4
CDSE	4.57	0.41	-	.34**	.30**	.57**
PS	4.71	0.74		-	.69**	.40**
PA	3.73	0.97			-	.35**
PP	4.45	0.51				-

** Correlation is significant at $p < .01$ (two-tailed)

An examination of Table 1 reveals that career decision self-efficacy correlated more with proactive personality ($r = 0.567$) than parental support ($r = 0.34$) and parental action ($r = 0.30$). The results further revealed that parental support and parental action had a reasonably significant correlation with proactive personality ($r_{ps} = 0.40$ and $r_{pa} = 0.35$). It may be concluded that a proactive personality can mediate the relationship between parental support and parental action with career decision self-efficacy because it was more significantly correlated with career decision self-efficacy than parental support and parental action.

Table 2

The results displayed in Table 2 show that the more parents provided social support for career decisions, the more proactive the students were in planning their career choices ($a_1 = 0.276, p < 0.05$). When students became more proactive, for example, exhibiting high initiative in seeking information related to college majors, their self-confidence related to career decisions increased ($b_1 = 0.412, p < 0.05$). Based on the value of the confidence interval, this revealed indirectly that parental support affected career decision self-efficacy through a proactive personality ($ab = 0.114, 95\% CI: 0.220-0.335$). Thus, the hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Table 3

Total, Direct, and Indirect Effect Proactive Personality in Mediating the Relationship between Parental Support and Career Decision Self-Efficacy

	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
Total effect	0.192	0.001	0.154	0.229
Direct effect	0.078	0.018	0.042	0.113
Indirect effect	0.114	0.029	0.220	0.335

The values presented in Table 3 indicate that a proactive personality acted as a partial mediator so that parental support could directly affect self-efficacy in career decisions. Although a proactive personality acted as a partial mediator, a proactive personality was more likely to ensure

higher self-efficacy in career decisions than the direct effect of parental support on self-efficacy in career decisions.

The results of the testing of the second hypothesis, namely, the role of a proactive personality in mediating parental action and self-efficacy in career decisions follows.

Table 4

The Role of Proactive Personality in Mediating the Relationship between Parental Action and Career Decision Self-Efficacy

		PP (M)				CDSE (Y)		
		Coef	SE	p		Coef	SE	p
PA (X)	a_2	0.185	0.017	0.000*	c'_2	0.048	0.013	0.000*
PP (M)		-	-	-	b_2	0.425	0.025	0.000*
Constant	i_1	3.759	0.688	0.000	i_2	2.365	0.114	0.000
$R^2 = 12.52$				$R^2 = 33.23$				
$F(1.756) = 108.178, p = 0.000$				$F(2.755) = 187.908, p = 0.000$				

An examination of Table 4 reveals that the parents' high involvement including providing information, involving children in interest tests, and inviting children to discuss careers increases their curiosity, which subsequently leads to enhanced initiative to find information related to careers (proactive) ($a_2 = 0.185, p < 0.05$). The more proactive the students, the higher their self-efficacy in student career decisions was ($b_2 = 0.425, p < 0.05$). Based on the value of the confidence interval, this demonstrated indirectly that parental action affected career decision self-efficacy through a proactive personality ($ab = 0.078, 95\% \text{ CI: } 0.059-0.100$). Thus, the hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Table 5

Total, Direct, and Indirect Effect Proactive Personality in Mediating the Relationship between Parental Action and Career Decision Self-Efficacy

	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
Total effect	0.126	0.014	0.098	0.155
Direct effect	0.048	0.135	0.021	0.074
Indirect effect	0.078	0.010	0.059	0.100

The values in Table 5 show that a proactive personality only acted as a partial mediator and thus, parental action influenced self-efficacy directly in career decisions. It may be concluded from the coefficients of the direct and indirect effects that the coefficient of the indirect effect was more significant than the direct effect. Thus, the participants were more likely to be confident in their career choices if they had a proactive personality.

Discussions

The results of the analysis revealed first that parental support given to adolescents can have a positive effect on their development so that it can assist in the formation of their proactive personality, which has an impact on the self-efficacy of their career decisions. Parents' support and assistance helps their children to feel less anxious when they are worried about choosing a career. This sense of comfort provides positive affect to children. Furthermore, children

with a high positive affect are encouraged to show initiative and be more innovative (Madrid, Patterson, Birdi, Leiva, & Kausel, 2014). Parents' positive affect can also facilitate in the development of their children's proactive personality, which will enhance their motivation to explore and learn many things, which will benefit them in career planning and enhance their confidence about their career decisions. Thus, parental support can facilitate the formation of adolescents' proactive personality, which will subsequently affect the self-efficacy of their career decisions.

Second, the results also indicated that parental action affects career decision self-efficacy through a proactive personality. It is imperative that parents encourage and help their children participate in activities that will assist them to have various perspectives on their chosen career (Keller & Whiston, 2008). It is crucial that parents discuss their children's ability with the counseling guidance teacher at school so as to help them find information on their chosen career. Parents should also encourage their children to complete various ability and interest tests so as to become aware of aspects such as their strengths and weaknesses. This may encourage and stimulate individuals to seek more in-depth information on careers in order to ensure their career planning is complete and specific (proactive). Career plans enhance students' confidence about their career choices.

The results also revealed that the mediation model in this study was partial mediation, which implies that parental support and parental action can directly affect career decision self-efficacy. In a collectivist country such as Indonesia, the role of the family is of paramount importance in individual career development. Individuals and groups are not separated in a collectivist culture. Parents usually serve as examples for their children. Furthermore, they are able to help their children to understand goals and accordingly, assist in the planning process to help their children to achieve their goals and ideals (Sawitri, Creed, & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2013). In essence, in a collectivist culture, parents have a relatively strong influence on all aspects of their children's lives (Oettingen & Zosuls, 2006).

Third, the results showed that parental support affected career decision self-efficacy directly. This concurs with Guan et al. (2016) in that parental support is a contextual factor. It contributes immensely to helping children

complete developmental tasks that are not distinct from growth and career exploration. Parental support, which is vital in the development of self-efficacy in adolescents' career decisions, has an effect on their sense of autonomy and ability to execute their personal goals, desires, and freedom in career decision-making.

Fourth, the results also revealed that parental action has an influence on career decision self-efficacy in high school students. This result is in accordance with Keller and Whiston (2008) who found that parental action affects self-efficacy in career decisions significantly. This may be related to social theory, which posits that learning experiences can influence individual beliefs in choosing career choices. Parents may be regarded as a source that can provide learning experiences. One form of activity held in schools such as extracurricular activities involves encouraging activities related to career development. Participating in extracurricular activities can develop individual social interaction skills with those in the school environment. Children are able to have more friends and acquaintances so that they can build a network. This networking may help students when they are in doubt about their career choices. Students can ask questions and/or discover various career-related information from those in their school such as seniors. This will allow students to have confidence in their career decisions.

The results further indicated that 32% of mothers have a more prominent role than fathers in student career choices. This may be related to maternal education: 40% of mothers had completed higher education. Research has shown that the education of parents can affect the expectations of the child (Ashby & Schoon, 2010). Thus, the mother's involvement in the career decision-making process will be even greater. Furthermore, while mother-adolescent interactions are often centered on parenting and teaching activities, father-adolescent interactions often involve recreation (Santrock, 2016). Santrock (2016) also explained that mothers are more responsive when children need help and are a more significant support source than fathers. Consequently, children tend to ask their mother when they experience difficulties in academic matters because they perceive that their mother is responsive.

Conclusion

Based on the results of hypothesis testing, it can be concluded that proactive personality has a role and mediates the relationship between parental support (parental support and parental action) and self-efficacy in career decisions in high school students. However, the proactive personality has a role as a partial mediator. That is, parental support and parental action can affect self-efficacy in career decisions without going through the proactive personality of high school students.

Limitations and Future Studies

The study was limited in that at the time of collecting data on parental involvement, adolescents' perceptions of parental involvement in general and not specifically the

involvement of their parents was considered. It is recommended that future research should examine parental involvement related specifically to career decision-making.

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