

CAREER MATURITY AMONG STUDENTS FROM THREE DIFFERENT TYPES OF SCHOOL

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study is to identify the level of career maturity among students in three different types of schools which are SBPI Gombak (full boarding school), SMKA Maahad Hamidah (religious school) and SMK Sri Serdang (daily school) in Lembah Klang, Selangor. This study is an ex-post facto research. The instrument used to examine career maturity is Career Maturity Inventory (CMI) introduced by Crites (1978) which was later translated by Tan Wat Jin (2005). A total of 182 students made up the study by using stratified sampling proportion and sample size calculated by G*Power software. Spearman's Rho Correlation was used to analyse the relationship of the variables in this study while t test and one-way ANOVA was used to determine significant difference at .05 between the variables. The findings showed that there was no relation between socio-economic status and parents' academic achievement to students' career maturity level. In addition, it was found that there was no difference in attitude of career maturity among the schools, but there was a difference in competency of career maturity. The overall results showed that there was no difference in career maturity among the students from the three different types of schools.*

Keywords: *Career Maturity, Correlation, Secondary School Students, Types of Schools*

Introduction

The Trait and Factor theory insists that an individual needs to understand their potential; learn and know about the working environment; and know how to match their personality and ability with the job scope during their career selection process. However, the most important aspect in a career selection process is one's career maturity. According to Erman, Sahan & Balci (2015), an individual who is going through the professional development process and has made the right career decision is an individual who is deemed to have career maturity.

Career maturity consists of the readiness, attitude and efficiency to make career choices with sufficient information and knowledge that help an individual to make a precise career decision that is accurately and perfectly in tune with the his or her personality. Walker (2010) defined career maturity as an individual's readiness to make the right career decision based on sufficient information, realistic expectations or goals, and the selection and determination of their career that is appropriate with their age group (King, 1989; Levinson, Ohler, Caswell & Kiewra, 1998; Powell & Luzzo, 1998; Savickas, 1984).

According to Salami (2008), career maturity has been defined as a condition in which the level of one's achievement is reached in the continuum of vocational development from the exploration stage to the decline stage. While Crites (in Brown, 2002) defined career maturity as a stage where an individual has to understand and master their role and tasks of career development and examine whether their knowledge or attitudes are appropriate with the stage of the career development.

Walker (2010) conducted a study on a total of 347 college students to investigate the relationship between career maturity, career decision-making effectiveness and self-advocacy of college students with and without disabilities. He found that college students who gained high results in the effectiveness of career decision-making and self-advocacy got higher results in career maturity because these three aspects were parallel and had a positive correlation with each other. He also found that students without disabilities obtained a higher mean score than students with disabilities in terms of career maturity. This shows that the maturity of an individual's career vary according to their self-ability and self-concept. However, students who are less mature or immature in their career choices led them to make wrong career decisions and to choose the wrong career path. Therefore, an empirical research on career maturity between the types of secondary schools in Malaysia was conducted to determine the level of career maturity of secondary school students in Malaysia, especially in the Klang Valley area.

Problem Statement

This study needs to be implemented because of the lack of research conducted in boarding schools (SBP) and religious high schools (SMKA). Most of previous studies were conducted among vocational schools (TVET) and daily schools students only. Furthermore, statistics from one of the public universities in Malaysia from 2012 to 2016 showed a mean score of 73 students who changed the program of study, while the mean score of 246 students who quit studies per year for undergraduate students. Although the numbers are relatively small, but it was effected by the career education process they have been through before entering the university program, thereby affecting the level of maturity of students and the level of readiness of students in the selection of field of study. Therefore, this study should be done to measure the level of career maturity among SBP, SMKA and daily school students.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study was to determine the level of career maturity among SBP, SMKA and SMH students. Specifically, the objectives of this study are:

- 1) To determine the relationship between students' socio-economic status and career maturity level among SBP, SMKA and SMH students.
- 2) To determine the relationship between the educational level of parents of the students and career maturity level among SBP, SMKA and SMH students.
- 3) To determine the differences in career maturity according to gender among SBP, SMKA

and SMH students.

- 4) To determine the differences in career maturity attitude among SBP, SMKA and SMH students.
- 5) To determine the differences in career maturity competency level between SBP, SMKA and SMH students.
- 6) To determine the differences of career maturity level among SBP, SMKA and SMH students.

Literature Review

The Relationship between Socio-Economic Status (SES) and Educational Level of Parents with Students' Career Maturity Level

Patton and Lokan (2001) discussed the perspectives of the career maturity construct. They found that SES is a very important dimension in determining a career. However, the result showed a slight correlation or no correlation between SES and career maturity among young school and university students. There are also studies which found that economic background and school attendance play important roles in career maturity compared to race or ethnic background (Ansell & Hansen, 1971; Neely & Johnson, 1981 as cited in See Boon Ping, 2009). A study on the impact of career maturity model for male university students and African-American women conducted by Naidoo et al. (1998 as cited in Patton, Spooner-Lane, and Creed, 2005) found that the attribution model and impact factors in individual career interests only have a modest impact on gender, SES and education level when dealing with career maturity.

In a study on assessing career maturity level by See Boon Ping (2009), 275 final year undergraduate students in higher education of private institutions in Malaysia found that there was no significant difference between the mean of gender, SES and work experience ($p > .05$). This study contradicted a study done by Bozgeyikli, Eroglu, and Hamurcu (2009) who found that there were significant differences between socio-economic status and career maturity. Their study showed that the higher the SES of the students, the higher the level of career maturity.

Research by Walker (2010), with 347 college students studied the relationship between career maturity, career decision-making effectiveness and self-advocacy for college students with and without disabilities. The study found that the level of career maturity attitude scale showed a positive relationship with ethnicity or race ($r = .263$, $n = 64$, $p < .05$) and education level ($r = .264$, $n = 64$, $p < .05$), compared to the other demographic aspects. However, the overall findings of Walker's study concluded that there was no relationship between the level of education and career maturity because the difference obtained was very small. This study is in line with the study by Katoch(2017) which aimed to investigate career maturity among secondary school students found out that there were no significant different between urban groups and rural groups.

A study conducted by Lee and Yi (2010) on 634 high school students in Korea showed that there were no significant differences in the levels of maternal education ($F = 4.341$, $p < .01$), educational level of parents ($F = 7,934$, $p < .001$) and gender ($F = 27,158$, $p < .001$). Overall, students with highly educated parents had a high level of career maturity in the attitude dimension and also had high level of career maturity attitude among female students.

Studies on the Relationship between Gender and Career Maturity

The findings of Mohd Yazid Buntal (1997) in a study of career maturity among secondary school students found that there were significant differences in career maturity between males and females with a t-value of $[t(226) = -3.45, p < .05]$. Similarly, Tekke and A. Ghani (2013) in a study on examining the level of career maturity among Asian foreign students in a public university based on gender and academic achievement, found that there was a significant difference $[t(227) = .002, p < .05]$ of attitude in career maturity between males and females. In addition, there was also a significant difference $[t(227) = .024, p < .05]$ of competency in career maturity between males and females. In Sirohi (2013) research among Indian secondary school students also revealed that females are found to possess higher career maturity than males. Overall, the career maturity level of female students was found to be higher than male students.

However, these findings contradict with the findings by Bozgeyikli et al. (2009) and See Boon Ping (2009) who found that there was no significant relationship between gender and career maturity where the mean score indicated that the level of career maturity of males was higher than females. This finding is also in line with the findings obtained by Birol and Kiralp (2010) and Ozkamali et al. (2013) who found that there was no significant difference between gender and level of career maturity. The findings by Katoch (2017) also found that there were no significant different of career maturity in gender-wise.

Study on the Differences of Career Maturity Level according to School-type

Azijan Dahlan's (1996) study (as cited in Tan Wat Jin, 2005) which aimed to determine the differences between career maturity and the locus of control factor based on the type of school and gender, used the Career Maturity Inventory measurement tool built by Crites and an internal-external control scale. The findings of the study showed that there was a significant difference between different types of school students and their career maturity. Vocational secondary school students obtained higher levels of career maturity compared to daily secondary school students.

This study was supported by Mohd Yazid Buntal (1997) and Chin (1988 as in Tan, 2005) who showed that there were significant differences in career maturity based on the types of schools that were examined. Sirohi's (2013) study which aimed to examine the career maturity of secondary school students, by gender, type of school and vocational guidance among 160 students found out those students of private schools show higher career maturity attitude compared to government schools' students.

However, study by Katoch(2017) which aimed to investigate career maturity among secondary school students found out that there were no significant different between government schools and private schools.

Theoretical Framework

Method

Design

A quantitative research design was employed in this study. According to Chua (2012), quantitative research is associated with numerical data and accuracy which are then analysed by statistical tests. In this study, a set of questionnaires was distributed to students in three different schools to measure their level of career maturity.

Subject

This study was conducted on secondary students of Form 1, 2 and 4 students from three different types of schools. As the exact number of the population is unknown, G * Power 3.1.7 software was used to calculate the sample of the study. The respondents consisted of 182 students who study in three types of secondary schools within the Klang Valley, Selangor; full boarding school, religious school and daily school. For the category of boarding schools, 66 students were selected from Sekolah Berasrama Penuh (SBP) Integrasi Gombak. 52 students from Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama (SMKA) Maahad Hamidiah who represented religious schools. While 64 students from Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Sri Serdang represented daily secondary schools (SMH). The samples were selected by using the random stratified and random cluster sampling technique.

Instrument

The questionnaire consists of two sections: 1) Section A: Demographics of respondents; 2) Part B: Career Maturity Questionnaire. Part A was formed by the researcher to obtain the background information of the respondents. The Career Maturity Inventory questionnaire was used to measure students' career maturity level created by Crites and translated by Tan Wat Jin in 2005.

The reliability and validity of the Career Maturity Inventory according to Tan (2005) is based on the consistency of the Attitude Scale instruments which were tested using Kuder Richardson 20 (KR-20) at .74. As for the Competency Scale, the results were obtained by using the mean KR-20 which is in the range of .58 to .90 and the mean being at .79.

Data Statistics

The data were analysed based on the objectives and hypotheses of this study. Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between students' socioeconomic status with career maturity level and the relationship between the education levels of students' parents with career maturity level. To test the differences, a t-test was used to measure the difference in career maturity between males and females. While the one-way ANOVA was used to determine the differences in career maturity attitude among students in SBP, SMKA and SMH, to determine the difference between the competency of career maturity of students in SBP, SMKA and SMH as well as to determine the different levels of career maturity among students in SBP, SMKA and SMH as found in the demographic section of the questionnaire and Career Maturity Inventory. Statistic Package for the Social Science Version 20.0 (SPSS 2.0) was used to analyse the data.

Results

The Relationship between Students Socioeconomic Status and Career Maturity Level

Hypothesis 1 stated that there was a significant relationship between student socioeconomic status and the level of career maturity among three different groups of students, SBP, SMKA and SMH. The result analysed using Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient indicated [$r(182) = .021, p > .05$], which concludes that there was no significant relationship between students' SES and the level of career maturity among SBP, SMKA and SMH students. Thus, the hypothesis was rejected. Results are as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Spearman's Rho coefficient analysis of the correlation between socio-economic status and career maturity level

Variable	Correlation <i>r</i>	Determination <i>r</i> ²	Sig. <i>r</i> (2-tailed)
Socio economic status	.021	.0004	0.776

Note: Not significant on .05 level

The Relationship between Parents' Education Level and Career Maturity Level

Hypothesis 2 meant to identify the significant correlation between the educational level of parents with career maturity level among SBP, SMKA and SMH students. The results analysed using Spearman's Rho indicated that there is a significant relationship between the level of education of parents and career maturity among SBP, SMKA and SMH students [$r(182) = .102, p > .05$]. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. Results are as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2: Spearman's Rho coefficient analysis of the correlation between parents' education level and career maturity level

Variable	Correlation <i>r</i>	Determination <i>r</i> ²	Sig. <i>r</i> (2-tailed)
Parents' education level	.102	.010	0.171

Note: No significant on .05 level

The Comparison on Career Maturity Level Based on Gender

Hypothesis 3 identified the differences between the levels of career maturity based on gender. The differences were tested by using a t-test. The results showed that the mean level of career maturity is 28.87 for male and 29.74 for female which generated a difference of 0.87 as shown in Table 3. These differences when tested using the t-test analysis showed the results as [$t(182) = -1.203, p > .05$]. With these results, hypothesis 3 was accepted. Therefore, there was no significant difference in career maturity level between male and female students in SBP, SMKA and SMH.

TABLE 3: T-test analysis of the differences of the career maturity level based on gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Career Maturity	M	71	28.87	4.570	180	-1.203	.231
	F	111	29.74	4.837			

Note: Not significant on .05 level

The Comparison on Career Maturity Attitude Level and Type of School

Hypothesis 4 tested the significant differences in scores between students' career maturity attitude and the type of school the students came from namely; SBP, SMKA and SMH. A one-way ANOVA analysis was used and the results indicated that there were no significant differences in scores between students' career maturity attitude and the type of school [$F(2, 179) = .023, p < .05$]. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. Results are as shown in Table 4. However, the mean and the standard deviation of career maturity attitude among students of SBP, SMKA and SMH showed a difference (see Table 5), where SBP ($M = 13.45, SD = 3.617$), SMKA ($M = 13.56, SD = 2.873$) and SMH ($M = 13.44, SD = 3.188$). From the results, SMKA had the highest score in career maturity attitude level, followed by SBP and SMH students respectively.

TABLE 4: One-way ANOVA analysis of the differences between career maturity attitude and students' types of school

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig. F
Between Group	.472	2	.236	.023	.977
Within Group	1838.94	179	10.273		
Total	1839.41	181			

Note: Not significant on .05 level

TABLE 5: Mean and standard deviation scores of career maturity attitude among students' type of school

Types of school	Mean	SD
Sekolah Berasrama Penuh (SBP)	13.45	3.617
Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama (SMKA)	13.56	2.873
Sekolah Menengah Harian (SMH)	13.44	3.002
Overall	13.48	3.188

The Comparison on Career Maturity Competency Level and Type of School

Hypothesis 5 tested the significant difference in scores between the competency of career maturity of SBP, SMKA and SMH students. One-way ANOVA analysis was used and the results indicated that there were significant differences in career maturity competency level scores between SBP, SMKA and SMH students [$F(2, 179) = 3,589, p < .05$]. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Results are as shown in Table 6.

The result was supported by the findings of the mean and the standard deviation of career maturity level of competency among students of SBP which are found to be different than SMKA and SMH students (see Table 7), where SBP ($M = 16.16, SD = 2,955$), SMKA ($M = 16.71, SD = 2.710$) SMH ($M = 15:14, SD = 3.720$). From the results, SMKA has the highest score in career maturity of competency level, followed by SBP and then SMH students.

TABLE 6: One-way ANOVA analysis of the differences between career maturity competency level and students' type of school

Source	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig. F
Between Group	72.758	2	36.379	3.589	.030 *
Within Group	1814.165	179	10.135		
Total	1886.923	181			

Note: * Significant on .05 level

TABLE 7: Mean and standard deviation scores of career maturity competency level among students' type of school

Types of school	Mean	SD
Sekolah Berasrama Penuh (SBP)	16.06	2.955
Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama (SMKA)	16.71	2.710
Sekolah Menengah Harian (SMH)	15.14	3.720
Overall	15.92	3.229

The Comparison on Career Maturity Level and Type of School

Hypothesis 6 tested the significant difference in mean scores between students' level of career maturity and the type of school the students come from; either SMKA, SBP or SMH. One-way ANOVA analysis was used and the results indicated that there was no significant difference in mean scores between students' level of career maturity among SBP, SMKA and SMH students

[F (2, 179) = 1.873, $p > .05$]. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted. Results are as shown in Table 8.

However, the mean and the standard deviation of career maturity level among students of SBP, SMKA and SMH were different (see Table 9), where SBP (M = 29.52, SD = 4.881), SMKA (M = 30.27, SD = 4.442) and SMH (M = 28.58, SD = 4.764). From the results, SMKA has the highest score in career maturity, followed by SBP and SMH students.

TABLE 8: One-way ANOVA analysis of the differences between career maturity level and students' type of school

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig. F
Between Group	83.395	2	41.697	1.873	.157
Within Group	3984.325	179	22.259		
Total	4067.720	181			

Note: Not significant on .05 level

TABLE 9: Mean and standard deviation scores of career maturity competency level among students' type of school

Types of school	Mean	SD
Sekolah Berasrama Penuh (SBP)	29.52	4.881
Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama (SMKA)	30.27	4.442
Sekolah Menengah Harian (SMH)	28.58	4.764
Overall	29.40	4.741

Discussion

The Relationship between Students' Socioeconomic Status and Parents' Education Level with Career Maturity Level

The results showed that there was no significant relationship between students' socioeconomic status (SES) and the level of career maturity from the three types of schools involved. The r^2 value obtained was .0004 which indicates that only 0.04% of students' socio-economic status affected students' career maturity levels. The r^2 value obtained was only .010, and indicated that only 1% of the level of parents' education affected students' career maturity level. This proved that there was no significant relationship between these variables. These findings were consistent with the findings of Patton & Lokan (2001), See Boon Ping (2009), Walker (2010) and Katoch (2017), which showed that there was no significant relationship between socioeconomic status and level of career maturity. However, these findings contradicted the findings of Bozgeyikli et al. (2009) who found that there were significant differences between socio-economic status and level of career maturity. As for the educational level of parents, the results of this study contradicted with the results of Lee and Yi (2010), who found that students who have parents with higher education levels had higher career maturity attitudes, especially among female students.

The Comparison of Career Maturity Level Based on Gender

The results of the data analysis showed that there was no significant difference in career maturity level based on gender. The results of this study were consistent with the studies of See Boon Ping (2009), Bozgeyikli et al. (2009), Birol & Kiralp (2010) and Ozkamali et al. (2013), who found that there were no significant differences between gender and the level of career maturity.

The Comparison of Career Maturity Attitude Level and Type of School

Career Maturity Attitude Level

The results of the analysis found that there was no significant difference in scores between students' career maturity attitude and the type of school the students come from either SBP, SMKA or SMH. This showed that the different types of schools did not affect the attitude of career maturity. However, the mean score for SMKA students was somewhat higher than SBP and SMH students, which showed that there was a slight difference in career maturity attitude level.

Career Maturity Competency Level

Referring to the data analysis, the value indicated that there was a significant difference between the competency of career maturity between SBP, SMKA and SMH students. The total mean score obtained showed that SMKA students obtained a higher mean score compared to SBP and SMH students.

Career Maturity Level

Based on the findings, the one-way ANOVA analysis showed that there was no significant difference in career maturity between the three types of schools; SBP, SMKA and SMH. However, the mean score of SBP students showed a higher level of career maturity compared to SMKA and SMH students. The results obtained contradicted the study of Chin and Azijan Dahlan (as cited in Tan, 2005) as well as Mohd Yazid Buntal (1997), which showed that there were significant differences between career maturity level when examining school grades, gender, ethnicity and academic achievement.

The results of this study however only describe the level of career maturity between types of schools surveyed. Nevertheless, it also includes the number of external factors that influenced students' career maturity level through the demographic data obtained.

Conclusion

This study successfully retained the null hypothesis which was highlighted by the researcher. The results of the data analysis found that there were no significant differences in mean scores of career maturity among SBP, SMKA and SMH students.

This study also found that the students' socio-economic status, parents' education level, students' gender and attitude in career maturity gave no impact on students' career maturity level. Although the competency level had significant differences between the schools involved, overall, the different types of schools do not have a big impact on the level of career maturity.

In conclusion, this study showed that there was no significant difference in the mean score of career maturity among students of the different schools involved. However, the entire sample involved as respondents had a medium level of career maturity. This shows that certain parties need to play a role in changing this condition to improve the quality of career choice and push students toward better career prospects that are in line with their personalities. This not only creates a positive impact on the individuals involved, but it also can have an impact on the society at large for the betterment of the nation as a whole.

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