CAREER DECISION-MAKING COMPETENCY MODEL FOR STUDENTS EMPLOYABILITY

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Abstract

This study focuses on developing a model of career decision-making competency for students’ employability. It examined the relationship between self-knowledge (SE), occupational exploration (JSI) and career decision-making (CDMSE) among undergraduates’ students. The instruments used were, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Job-Search Intensity Scale, and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale. Participants were recruited using a cluster sampling procedure. The questionnaire is reliable and valid to measure SE, JSI and CDMSE. Data collected from 678 undergraduates students were tested with confirmatory factor analysis to obtain three best-fit measurement models from the three latent variables. Subsequently, the structural equation modeling was applied to test the hypotheses. The results showed a strong relationship between SE and CDMSE, a positive relationship between JSI and CDMSE, and a positive relationship between SE and JSI. Implications of the findings for social work practice such as guidance counsellor, research, theory, policy and education were also discussed.

Keywords: Self-knowledge, Occupational exploration, Career decision-making, undergraduates’ students.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Malaysian employers are generally not happy with the level of soft-skills possessed by graduates entering the workforce. According to them, Malaysian graduates normally were qualified in their area of studies, but they lacked self-confidence and skills in preparation for job-search [1], and their main drawbacks are lack of positive attitude, confidence, and preparation for job-search [2]. In other words there has been lack of soft-skills and competency among newly graduating students (self-confidence, positive attitude, skills of prepare for job-search, and communication skills) in relation to employability. As such, this study aimed to examine the relationship between SE, JSI and CDMSE, among undergraduates’ students and
propose a model of employability for the undergraduates’ students. The hypotheses tested for this study are as follows:

1. Self-knowledge influences the career decision-making.
2. Occupational exploration influences the career decision-making.

2.0 METHODS, PARTICIPANTS, INSTRUMENTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The sample sizes for this research were 678 undergraduates students and adequate for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) techniques [3, 4]. The instruments used in this research were the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the Job Search Intensity Scale- and the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale. This research was a survey-based type and participants were recruited using cluster sampling procedure. This research used the test-re test to determine the reliability of the instrument, and then SEM to test the validity of the constructs.

3.0 RESULTS

Figure 1 presents the empirical results of hypothesized structural relationship model of SE, JSI, and CDMSE. The items for SE indicated three statements related to attitude toward self, feeling about self and thinking about self. These three statements shows the factor loading above .50 [5] indicated that the statements represent the SE indicator. The items for JSI show that six items related to resume preparation, job-search information, send a resumes to potential employers, filling out job application, contacting relevance agency, and using of computer services to locate for job. These six statements also shows the factor loading above .50 [5] indicated that the statements represent the JSI indicator.

The CDMSE components show that twenty five statements related to the five sub-scales. The sub-scales involved are Self-Appraisal (SA) with factor loading .90, Occupational Information (OI) with factor loading .83, Goal Selection (GS) with factor loading .86, Career Planning (PL) with factor loading.86. Finally, Problem Solving (PS) with factor loading .77. The factor loading for all five sub-scales above .50 shows that these sub-scales represent the career decision-making self-efficacy scale.
The results indicate that self-esteem is strongly related to career decision-making self-efficacy among undergraduates’ students. Therefore, it is important for the undergraduates’ students to build up their self-esteem in order to make them more confident in preparing themselves for career. Individuals with high self-esteem are generally confident of themselves, self-directed, decisive, loving and lovable, eager to express idea, assertive and get along well with others. They also accept themselves unconditionally and are willing to take calculated risks [6].

The job-search intensity has a significant relationship with career decision-making self-efficacy. Therefore, it is important for the undergraduates’ students to actively involve with job search behaviour in order to make them more confident in preparing themselves for career. The finding of the research affirms the study done by others researchers [7, 8, 9, 10, and 11] and shows that there is a significant relationship between job-search intensity and career decision-making self-efficacy.

The self-esteem also has a significant relationship with the job-search intensity. Therefore, it is important for the undergraduates’ students to build up their self-esteem in order to make them more productive behaviour. Individuals with high self-esteem tend to be successful in their job searches than those with low self-esteem [6].
The results highlight the relationship between undergraduates’ soft-skills and confidence level as previously reported by UNESCO [12] and feedback by CEOs of large corporations [1, 2]. Such findings are useful in helping undergraduates during the transition process of being a university student to an employee. Such information could lead to an improvement in planning and policy-making for the development of a more effective and efficient counselling and career guidance system in the university settings. Curricula with psychology and soft skills will go a long way in building student confidence in dealing with the work environment.

5.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study examined the relationship between SE, JSI, and CDMSE and to be the validated structural equation model. The findings show that there are significant relationships between SE and CDMSE, between SE and JSI, and between JSI and CDMSE.

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REFERENCES


