ANTECEDENT FACTORS OF VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS’ READINESS FOR SELECTING CAREERS: A CASE IN INDONESIA

Tuatul Mahfud1*, Ibnu Siswanto2, Danar Susilo Wijayanto1, Putu Fajar Puspitasari4
1Balikpapan State Polytechnic, Indonesia
2Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia
3Sebelas Maret University, Indonesia
4SMK N 1 Abung Selatan, Indonesia
*e-mail: tuatul.mahfud@poltekba.ac.id

Abstract: Vocational graduates’ readiness for selecting careers is an important topic for vocational education research. Although there have been many studies on vocational student career selection readiness, there are only few studies on the roles of teaching quality, social capital, and psychological capital in shaping vocational students’ readiness for selecting careers. This study aims to examine the antecedent factors of high school students’ readiness for career selection which involve teaching quality, psychological capital, and social capital factors. This study employed the quantitative approach with ex-post facto design. The data were randomly collected from 279 vocational high school students in North Lampung-Indonesia by means of online questionnaires. SEM analysis was carried out in this study to see the effects among variables. The results show that readiness for selecting careers is influenced by teaching quality and psychological capital, as social capital does not directly influence student readiness. Besides, psychological capital is influenced by teaching quality and social capital. Then, social capital is influenced by teaching quality. Social and psychological capitals together mediate the effect of teaching quality on the readiness for selecting careers. The research findings present some implications for vocational education practitioners wishing to make further improvements.

Keywords: teaching quality, social capital, psychological capital, readiness for selecting a career

FAKTOR ANTESEDEN KESIAPAN PEMILIHAN KARIR SISWA SMK: KASUS DARI INDONESIA

Abstrak: Kesiapan pemilihan karir lulusan SMK merupakan topik penting untuk penelitian pendidikan kejuruan. Meskipun telah banyak studi tentang kesiapan pemilihan karir siswa SMK, masih terbatas studi yang membahas peran kualitas pembelajaran, modal sosial, dan modal psikologi pada pembentukan kesiapan pemilihan karir siswa SMK. Studi ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan faktor antecedent kesiapan pemilihan karir siswa SMK dengan melibatkan faktor kualitas pembelajaran, modal sosial, dan modal psikologis. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan jenis penelitian ex-post facto. Data dikumpulkan secara acak dari 279 siswa SMK di Lampung Utara-Indonesia melalui kuesioner online. Analisis SEM digunakan untuk melihat pengaruh antar variabel. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa kesiapan pemilihan karir dipengaruhi oleh kualitas pembelajaran dan modal psikologis karena modal sosial tidak memengaruhi kesiapan pemilihan karir siswa SMK secara langsung. Modal psikologis juga dipengaruhi oleh kualitas pembelajaran dan modal sosial. Modal sosial dipengaruhi oleh kualitas pembelajaran. Selain itu, modal sosial dan psikologis bersama-sama memediasi pengaruh kualitas pembelajaran pada kesiapan pemilihan karir siswa SMK. Temuan penelitian ini menawarkan beberapa implikasi bagi praktisi pendidikan kejuruan yang ingin melakukan perbaikan lebih lanjut.

Kata Kunci: kualitas pembelajaran, modal sosial, modal psikologis, kesiapan pemilihan karir

INTRODUCTION

The study of the career choice readiness of graduates of vocational education is essential in vocational psychology research, primarily to analyse the suitability of students’ vocational field choices while in school (Indana, 2018; Richardson, 2010; Song & Chathoth, 2011). This is based on a theoretical framework which
states that vocational education prepares and develops individuals’ work capacities (Billet, 2011; Wolf, 2011). Therefore, vocational education graduates must have a career choice readiness that is suitable for their vocational academic field. Several experts have discussed studies of career choice readiness (Chan, 2018; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994; Okayama & Kajii, 2011). Specifically, the Social Cognitive Career Theory/SCCT (Lent & Brown, 2006; Lent et al., 1994) states that career choice can be formed through interactions between learning, person, and contextual experience factors. SCCT is often used as a model approach to determine how to process individuals’ intentions to choose their work (Chan, 2018; Cunningham, Bruening, Sartore, & Fink, 2005; Sudiyatno, Wu, Budiman, Purwantoro, Mahfud, & Siswanto, 2019). Many studies have examined the readiness of career choices. However, we still find limited literature that discusses the career choice readiness of vocational students by collaboratively involving the teaching quality, person, and contextual aspects.

There are also many theoretical and practical gaps in vocational education research about student career choice. Theoretically, Billet (2011) stated that vocational education can develop individuals’ work capacities according to their interests. However, empirically, many vocational school graduates are not working in the field of their vocational choice. For example, Indana (2018) revealed that most (90%) graduates of the Vocational High School in Trenggalek (Indonesia) did not work in their educational fields. Specifically, graduates of the hospitality school, who should have a career in the hospitality sector, typically sought other types of work (Richardson, 2010; Song & Chathoth, 2011). Richardson (2010) stated that as many as 50% of the students examined in his study had thought about working outside the hospitality industry because of the negative views obtained from previous work experience and distrust toward the career prospects in their various fields (Richardson, 2010). A case study by Masdonati, Fournier, & Lahrizi (2017) showed that one individual changed his career choice after starting work because of a desire to get a better job and in accordance with his needs. These cases show that vocational schools have not been able to develop the students’ confidence and readiness of their career choices optimally.

Career choice readiness is considered as readiness to decide on career plan choices (Savickas, 1984). Someone who has career readiness usually has equipped the knowledge and skills related to their career preferences (Levinson, Ohlers, Caswell, & Kiewra, 2011). Based on this understanding, students tend to approach the task of making a career choice through their future expectations and their sensitive career preference plans (Savickas, 2005). Savickas & Porfeli (2011) claimed that personal career choice readiness could be explained through several attributes: concern, curiosity, confidence, and consultation about career choice. Lent & Brown (2006), in their SCCT, stated that career choices are influenced by two aspects, namely more distal influences and proximal influences. Although proximal sets of influences are stronger predictors than more distal influences (Lent et al., 2001), the role of more distal influences (e.g., learning experience) is also vital for cultivating the career choice readiness for vocational students. According to Lent et al. (1994), the development of individual career choices needs to consider three important things namely personal, contextual, and experience/learning factors. Hence, separating these three aspects will weaken one’s career choice readiness. However, previous studies have not examined the extent of the influence of these three dimensions on the formation of career choices for vocational students. In this study, the three aspects of SCCT are represented by the factors of teaching quality, social capital, and psychological capital. These three factors have an essential role in shaping the career choices of vocational students.

Previous studies have revealed the importance of improving the teaching quality to cultivate career choice readiness. According to Spanjaard, Hall, & Stegemann (2018), experiential learning and teaching quality plays a major role in determining student career choice readiness. Teaching quality is an essential component in achieving student learning outcomes, including academic achievement and career preferences (Okayama & Kajii, 2011). Teacher’s ability to determine a suitable instructional strategy is crucial and relates significantly to a student’s career interests and choices (Mahfud, Indartono, Saputro, & Utari,
which indicates that a good instructional will provide a positive
student learning experience and thus support a
vocational student’s career choice readiness.
Empirically, student learning experiences
affect individuals’ beliefs in their career choice
readiness (Williams & Subich, 2006).

Other predictors of career choice
readiness are contextual factors (for example,
social aspects) (Lent & Brown, 2006; Lent et
al., 1994). Previous studies have shown that
career choices are influenced by social support
and psychological capital (Chan, 2018; Lent &
Brown, 2006; Lent et al., 1994). Chan (2018),
social support has a positive relationship with
career choice readiness, while other studies
reveal that social support is not related to career
choice readiness, and the perception of social
support has an insignificant direct relation to
career choice readiness (Chan, Chen, Lin, Liao,
& Lin, 2016; Suryadi, Sawitri, Hayat, & Putra,
2020). In addition, positive psychological capital
will drive increased productivity and ultimately
have an impact on individual career success
(Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007).

Psychological capital (PsyCap) is often
associated with self-efficacy, hope, optimism,
and resilience (Luthans et al., 2007). PsyCap
can improve individual performance and
career success readiness (Luthans, Youssef,
& Avolio, 2007). The development of
psychological capital requires proper education
and training intervention, as has been discussed
previously. The method of increasing individual
psychological capital through focused training
and development sessions can encourage
individuals to associate themselves with social
networks (Jackson, Firtko, & Edenborough,
2007). This intervention serves as a driver
for enhancing the career and employment
opportunities of individuals, compared to
those who have never received the training and
development of psychological capital. The role
of psychological capital factors from previous
studies reinforces the assumption that fostering
career choice readiness involves not only
external aspects (e.g., social capital), but also
internal elements such as students’ psychological
capital. However, previous studies have not
discussed the extent of the role of social capital
and psychological capital as mediators on the
effect of teaching quality on the career choices
of vocational students.

Based on previous study, it can be
understood that the teaching quality, social
capital, and psychological capital plays an
important role in the development of vocational
students’ career choice readiness. This study
explores the joint effects of teaching quality,
social capital, and psychological capital on the
career choices readiness for vocational high
school students. This study also examines the
mediation role of social capital and psychological
capital in the relationship between teaching
quality and students’ career choice readiness.
Specifially, this study examines (1) the
influence of each antecedent factor consisting of
the teaching quality, psychological capital, and
social capital on the career choices readiness for
vocational students.; (2) the influence of each
antecedent factor consisting of the teaching
quality and social capital on the psychological
capital of vocational school students; (3) the
effect of teaching quality on the social capital of
vocational school students; and (4) the role of
joint mediation (social capital and psychological
capital) on the effect of the teaching quality on
vocational students’ career choice readiness.

METHODS
This type of research uses a quantitative
approach. This study does not control or treat the
independent variables directly because the event
has occurred, so this research is an ex-post facto
study (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1985).

Participants
This study targeted vocational high school
students, especially those following the culinary
arts, hospitality, accounting, and computer
engineering study programs. The sampling
method was a simple random sampling technique
using an online questionnaire, which was
distributed to 925 students of Public Vocational
Schools in North Lampung, Indonesia. The
sample of 279 students (100 males and 179
females) was considered acceptable (Yamane,
1967). The respondents consisted of 79 culinary
arts students, 49 hospitality students, 27
accounting students, and 124 technical computer
students (see Table 1).
Table 1. Background of Participants (N=279)

| Attribute     | Categories       | N   | %  |
|---------------|------------------|-----|----|
| Gender        | Male             | 100 | 36 |
|               | Female           | 179 | 64 |
| Degree        | 1st grade        | 103 | 37 |
|               | 2nd grade        | 134 | 48 |
|               | 3rd grade        | 42  | 15 |
| Study program | Culinary art     | 79  | 28 |
|               | Hospitality      | 49  | 18 |
|               | Accounting       | 27  | 10 |
|               | Computer engineering | 124 | 44 |

Instrument

Career Choice Readiness
The career choice readiness of students in vocational school is measured using the Career Maturity Inventory (Savickas & Porfeli, 2011). The original scale of career comprises four constructs: concern, curiosity, confidence, and consultation. The internal consistency of the four sub-scales was .62, .74, .78 and .69, respectively. This study selected two of the four constructs that relate highly to the research purpose: concern (6 items; e.g., “There is no point in deciding on a job when it is uncertain”) and confidence (6 items, e.g., “Choosing a job is something that you do on your own”). This study uses a 5 Likert scale (strongly disagree - strongly agree).

Teaching Quality

Instructional Quality Questionnaire (Wagner, Göllner, Helmke, Trautwein, & Lüdtke, 2013) was used to measure students’ perceptions of the teaching quality of the teacher. This questionnaire consists of five indicators: motivation (two items, e.g., “Sometimes my teacher makes me very enthusiastic about the topic of the lesson”); understandable (four items, e.g., “Students are clear and understandable to me”); student involvement (five items, e.g., “The teacher responds to our suggestions”); structure (3 items, e.g., “At the beginning of the lesson, my teacher outlines what will be discussed”); and class management (two items, e.g., “My teacher makes students pay attention to the whole lesson”). We use five Likert scales (1 = strongly disagree - 5 = strongly agree). This questionnaire has a Cronbach alpha value for the quality of the teaching subscale from .77 to .89.

Social Capital
We use the Social Capital Questionnaire to measure social capital (Paiva et al., 2014), which comprises four constructs: school cohesion (four items, e.g., “My school stays together”); friendship school (three items, e.g., “Students in my school have fun together”); neighborhood social cohesion (two items, e.g., “I trust my neighbors”); and school/neighborhood trust (three items, e.g., “The teachers in my school are sympathetic and give us support”). This questionnaire uses a 5 Likert scale (strongly disagree - strongly agree). This questionnaire has a Cronbach alpha value of .71.

Psychological Capital
We use The Psychological Capital (PsyCap) Questionnaire (Luthans et al., 2007) to measure students’ psychological capital. The PCQ measures self-efficacy (6 items, e.g., “I feel confident in analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution”); optimism (6 items, e.g., “If I find myself in a clock, I could think of many ways to get out of it”); resilience (6 items, e.g., “I usually manage one way or another during training”); and hope (6 items, e.g., “When things are uncertain for me in class, I usually expect the best”). The items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (agree strongly), and the internal consistency of self-efficacy, optimism, resilience, and hope were .75, .79, .72, and .76, respectively.

Data Analysis
Data analysis uses structural equation modelling (SEM), which allows the relationship between variable constructs—both exogenous and endogenous variables—to be tested while taking into consideration the account measurement errors (Bollen, 1989). In this study, the teaching quality factor is an exogenous variable. Meanwhile, social capital, psychological capital, and career choice readiness factors are endogenous variables. Data analysis in this study uses Amos 18 software support. In addition, the bootstrapping confidence interval was estimated to analyze the mediation significance in this study model. We used 2,000 bootstrap samples, with a confidence level of 90%.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results
Mean, Validities, and Reliabilities Instruments in This Study

Before testing the SEM analysis, a Pearson correlation and Cronbach alpha test were conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the instruments of teaching quality, social capital, psychological capital, and career maturity utilized in this study. One item of psychological capital was eliminated because it has an insignificant value of validity (-.162). Finally, the instruments to measure the four variables were valid (.343** ~ .790**) and reliable (.742 ~ .925) (see Table 2). It indicated that the four measurement tools are accurate enough to measure students’ perceptions of the vocational teachers’ teaching quality, social capital, psychological capital, and their readiness to choose a preferable career as well. And overall, the perceptions of vocational students towards teaching quality and psychological capital showed good results (mean = 4). Meanwhile, the social capital factors and career choice readiness showed moderate results (mean = 3).

Table 2. Correlations among the Variables (N = 279)

| Variable                  | Mean | SD  | Validity       | Reliability |
|---------------------------|------|-----|----------------|-------------|
| Teaching quality          | 3.79 | .58 | .534** ~ .790** | .925        |
| Social capital            | 3.36 | .47 | .343** ~ .696** | .808        |
| Psychological capital     | 3.56 | .49 | .389** ~ .731** | .919        |
| Career choice readiness   | 3.39 | .65 | .577** ~ .746** | .742        |

Note. ** = significant (p = .01)

The Systematic Structure of Variables Influencing Career Choice Readiness

The results of the first model test show that the fit model value of the conceptual model cannot be assessed because the model is identified as a “just identified” model, thus hypothesis 5 is not supported. SEM requires an “over-identified” model to assess the model fit. Thus, we modified the model by eliminating the path that has the largest p-value, namely the social capital path on the career choice readiness (p = .228). The modified model test results showed that the structural model has a good fit (Chi-square = 1.451; GFI = .997; AGFI = .974; RMSEA = .040), which supported the hypothesized model (Byrne & Campbell, 1999) see Figure 1.

Figure 1. SEM Analysis Results

Before testing the model, testing the effect of teaching quality on career choice readiness showed a significant impact (.476***; see Table 3). However, after the two mediators—social and psychological capital—were presented in the model, the standardized estimate value declined (.209**); however, this pathway remained significant at the .01 level, and thus supported hypothesis 1. Similarly, teaching quality shows a significant direct effect (.534***) on social capital (hypothesis 2 was supported), which simultaneously affects the psychological capital (.302***; hypothesis 4 was supported). Finally, the teaching quality has a direct influence on the psychological capital of vocational students (.477***; hypothesis 3 was supported), which simultaneously affects career choice readiness (.420***; hypothesis 6 was supported).

Table 3. Path Analysis among Variables

| Path                  | Estimate | SE   | CR    | p    |
|-----------------------|----------|------|-------|------|
| TQ → CC (before)     | .476     | .022 | 9.035 | ***  |
| TQ → CC (after)      | .209     | .027 | 3.275 | .001**|
| TQ → SC              | .534     | .031 | 10.527| ***  |
| TQ → PC              | .477     | .062 | 9.253 | ***  |
| SC → PC              | .302     | .104 | 5.861 | ***  |
| PC → CC              | .420     | .022 | 6.592 | ***  |

Note: TQ = teaching quality; CC = career choice readiness; SC = social capital; PC = psychological capital
Table 4 shows the mediation role test. The findings reveal that social capital and psychological capital jointly mediate significantly in the relationship of teaching quality and career choice readiness of vocational students (.268, $p = .001$, CI = .169 – .395), thus supporting hypothesis 4 (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Additionally, social capital significantly partially mediates the relationship between teaching quality and psychological capital, thus supporting hypothesis 2 (.161, $p = .001$, CI = .101 – .239). Partial mediation means that there is not only a significant relationship between the mediator variable and the dependent variable but also that there is a direct relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Other findings, social capital has an indirect effect on career choice readiness through the psychological capital of vocational students, thus supporting hypothesis 3 (.127, $p = .001$, CI = .073 – .193). A full mediation implies that the direct effect of the independent variable (social capital) on the dependent variable (career choice readiness) is not significant and is only significant through the indirect effect of psychological capital (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This finding highlights that the development of social capital and psychological capital is significant in schools. Both of these mediators also play a role in maximizing the learning process in the classroom to improve the career choices of vocational students. Additionally, teaching quality, social capital, and psychological capital are essential antecedents of vocational students’ inclinations toward their future careers.

Table 4. Results of Bootstrapping for Testing the Mediator Path

| Path     | TQ → CC | TQ → SC | TQ → PC | SC → PC | PC → CC | SC → CC |
|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Standardized direct effect | Estimate | .209 | .534 | .477 | .302 | .420 |
| p-value  | .019 | .001 | .001 | .001 | .001 | .001 |
| Standardized indirect effect | Estimate | .268 | .161 | .638 | .302 | .420 |
| p-value  | .001 | .001 | .001 | .001 | .001 | .001 |
| Standardized total effect    | Estimate | .476 | .534 | .638 | .302 | .420 |
| p-value  | .001 | .001 | .001 | .001 | .001 | .001 |

Note: TQ = teaching quality; CC = career choice readiness; SC = social capital; PC = psychological capital

Discussion

Previous studies highlighted that an individual’s readiness to decide on a suitable career for their future is influenced by their educational experiences and surrounding environment. Thus, this study assessed the role of teaching quality, social capital, and psychological capital on the career choice readiness of vocational students. Besides, we also examine the mediating role of social capital and psychological capital in the relationship between teaching quality and career choices for vocational students.

Antecedent Factors of Career Choice Readiness for Vocational Students: Teaching Quality, Social Capital, and Psychological Capital

The findings of this study broadly support the hypothesis that teaching quality plays a crucial role as an antecedent of an individual’s career choice readiness. This finding reinforces the survey conducted by Okayama & Kajii (2011), which revealed that teaching quality significantly influences individuals’ career interests and choices. Therefore, students’ career goals need to be supported by school learning and teaching interactions that relate to their career goals. The teacher must understand the students’ career interests when developing learning activities in the classroom. Learning in various work situations will provide students with learning experiences that relate to their future career choices. This finding is similar to the general thinking that education facilitates individuals to achieve more knowledge and skills and subsequently affects the development of their career path. Theoretically, students’ knowledge and skills can encourage increased vocational student career choice readiness (Levinson et al., 2011). Besides, involving students in tasks related to their careers will strengthen their career goals (Rogers, Creed, & Praskova, 2016).

Students “learning experiences with industry also shape students” career choice
readiness, especially when they are industry interns. However, a unique finding of this study is that third-grade students who have participated in industry internships tend to have a negative perception of career choices, especially in the academic vocational field. It can be seen from the different perceptions of career choice readiness at each grade level. When referring to theory, the longer students spend on their learning experience, the more mature are their career choices. However, there is a decrease in career choice readiness in the third grade, which could be caused by the negative views obtained by students when doing their industry internships. This reasoning follows Richardson’s (2010) statement that previous work experience can have a negative impact on the distrust of career prospects in their various fields. Additionally, students’ perceptions of the teaching quality are different at each grade level. For example, at the third-grade level, students have a lower perception of the teaching quality of teachers compared to those in earlier grades; this drop in perception typically occurs because students have high expectations of the teaching quality after returning from their industry internships. However, the teaching quality in schools is not in accordance with their expectations. Vocational students feel that the teaching they receive in schools is not in line with the needs of the workforce.

Besides, this study also shows that social capital does not influence the career choices of vocational students. This is because aspects of school cohesion, friendship in the school environment, cohesion in the social environment, and trust in the social environment, which means that teachers, friends, and neighbors have not demonstrated adequate positive support for students’ career choices readiness. These findings are similar to studies conducted by Chan et al. (2016), who claimed that social capital does not correlate with career choice readiness. Most vocational students receive their social capital from friends, teachers, family, and neighbors who offer little career support. However, the relationship of the social environment, such as support and perceptions of career development of parents, is important for defining a student’s career goals (Lim & You, 2017; Rogers et al., 2016).

Other findings show that psychological capital has a direct influence on the career choice readiness of vocational students. This means that strengthening students’ psychological capital will influence their career choice readiness. Psychological capital is a personal factor that can strengthen the formation of individual behavior. This finding is following previous studies (Bandura, 1986; Luthans et al., 2007; Savickas, 2005; Seligman, 1998; Snyder, 2000) which state that individuals who have good self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience will integrate motivation, cognition, and action to achieve their career success. In other words, forming career choice readiness for students needs to pay attention to strengthening their psychological capital.

The Effect of Teaching Quality and Social Capital on Psychological Capital

The results of this study explain that teaching quality has a significant influence on the formation of the psychological capital of students. Instilling psychological capital strengthening through learning patterns is considered very appropriate. Because basically, training and development interventions are believed to shape individuals’ psychological capital (Luthans, Avey, & Patera, 2008). The aim of teaching is to not only focus on student learning achievement in the form of good test scores but also consider other achievements such as the formation of students’ social and psychological capital. Teachers must understand the right teaching strategies to instill good self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience in vocational students. These four aspects are needed when students will enter the workforce.

Similar findings are also shown on the effect of social capital on psychological capital. This study revealed that students’ social capital was able to strengthen their psychological capital. The results of this study also reveal that the formation of psychological capital is not only influenced by teaching quality, but also by social capital. Positive student perceptions about school cohesion, school friendships, neighborhood social cohesion, and school/neighborhood trust can encourage the strengthening of self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience.
The Mediation Role of Social Capital and Psychological Capital

This study also found that teaching quality has a higher indirect impact on vocational students’ career choice readiness via social and psychological capital. Our study revealed that social capital and psychological capital partially mediates the effect of teaching quality on career choice readiness, which means that teaching quality has both a direct and indirect influence on the career choice readiness of vocational students. This finding highlights the importance of social and psychological capital in determining individuals’ career inclinations. Individuals who have excellent social capital will be better able to build networks and develop the social resources needed for developing their career interests (Granovetter, 1973). Social support, which includes school friendships, school cohesion, social trust, and neighborhood social cohesion, will develop their social capital and enable them to develop careers after graduation. The stronger their social capital, the more likely they will be to get a job in line with their interests. By contrast, psychological capital is students’ internal capital, which is formed during the learning process and includes optimism, self-efficacy, resilience, and hope. The findings of the mediating role of PsyCap also support previous studies, which state that PsyCap can predict the abilities and interests of individuals associated with proactive behavior and career goals (Carless & Bernath, 2007).

Although social capital and psychological capital act as partial mediators in the relationship of teaching quality and career choice readiness, this study finds that social capital also significantly mediates the effects of teaching quality on psychological capital. This finding means that building career support from the school environment, friends, and neighbors in the learning process is significant for cultivating the psychological capital of students when developing their career choice readiness. Finally, this study also reveals that psychological capital significantly mediates the relationship between social capital and career choice readiness, which indicates that building students’ psychological capital will strengthen the influence of social capital on the career choice readiness. This finding followed the findings of previous studies (Bandura, 1986; Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007; Savickas, 2005; Seligman, 1998), which states that individuals who have good psychological capital will integrate cognition, motivation, and action to achieve their career success. In other words, to develop students’ career choice, it is necessary for the teacher to focus on the social and psychological capital of each student.

This finding confirms that aspects of quality teaching are essential aspects of preparing vocational students to be skilled and ready in their career choices. Improving the teaching quality can be provided through the teacher professional development program (Abdella, Reddy, & Carl, 2018). Although the quality of teaching is an essential factor in shaping the career choice readiness of vocational students, it is not the only important aspect of preparing a student for their career. The teaching process needs to collaboratively integrate other vital elements such as the support of teachers, friends, neighbors, and student psychology. In the learning process, teachers also need to understand students’ career needs and preferences. This is needed to match students’ learning assignments to their career choices. This is consistent with William (2013), who stated that the learning process needs to focus on what the learner needs and identifying how to achieve it. Teachers therefore need to optimize and enhance the role of students’ social and psychological capital in the teaching process to develop their career choice readiness. Finally, the findings of this study support the SCCT, which states that educational, personal, and contextual factors are essential in shaping individuals’ career choice readiness.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that teaching quality, social capital, and psychological capital are essential antecedents to instill career choices readiness for vocational students. Teaching in schools must pay attention to the planting of social capital and psychological capital to maximize the strengthening of students’ career choice readiness. But directly, social capital does not influence the career choices of readiness for vocational students. Besides, this study reveals that psychological capital is influenced by teaching quality and social capital. We also found that teaching quality has a positive influence on the social of vocational students.
Finally, social capital and psychological capital significantly mediate the effect of teaching quality on the career choices of vocational students. These findings reinforce the theory that successful learning and teaching must focus on the characteristics and needs of students. Finally, vocational education practitioners should improve the teaching and learning quality by optimizing the social and psychological capital of students to achieve good learning outcomes and develop their career choice readiness.

**LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

This study used self-reported data so there is potential for bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003); therefore, subsequent research needs to involve other respondents such as teachers or peers to obtain more objective results. This study also examined the role of mediation using the same model so that the role of each mediator has unclearly influenced the relationship of teaching quality to career choice readiness. Therefore, future studies could compare the role of each mediator of social and psychological capital using a separate model. Thus, the role of the mediator is most significant and influential. The study of career exploration is an essential agenda in future research because the dynamic needs of the workforce affect the changes made to the structuring of work. Workers therefore need to obtain suitable qualifications and have the ability to adapt to changes in the world of work.

**REFERENCES**

Abdella, A. S., Reddy, C., & Carl, A. (2018). Lesson study in Eritrea: Its impact on middle school science teachers’ learning and classroom practice. *Journal of Turkish Science Education, 15*(3), 1-26. https://doi.org/10.12973/tused.10234a.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., & Razavieh, A. (1985). *Introduction to research in education* (6th ed.). New York, NY: CBS College Publishing.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51*(6), 1173-1182. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.51.6.1173.

Billet, S. (2011). *Vocational education: Purpose, tradition and prospects*. New York, NY: Springer.

Bollen, K. A. (1989). *Structural equations with latents variabel*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Byrne, B. M., & Campbell, T. L. (1999). Cross cultural comparison and the presumption of equivalent measurement and theoretical structure. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 30*(5), 555-574. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022199030005001.

Carless, S. A., & Bernath, L. (2007). Antecedents of intent to change careers among psychologists. *Journal of Career Development, 33*(3), 183-200. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845306296646.

Chan, C.-C, Chen, S.-C., Lin, Y.-W., Liao, T.-Y., & Lin, Y.-E. (2016). Social cognitive perspective on factors influencing Taiwanese sport management students career intentions. *Journal of Career Development, 45*(3), 239-252. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845316681643.

Chan, C.-C. (2018). The relationship among social support, career self-efficacy, career exploration, and career choices of Taiwanese college athletes. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education, 22*, 105-109. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2017.09.004.

Cunningham, G. B., Bruening, J., Sartore, M. L., & Fink, J. S. (2005). The application of social cognitive career theory to sport and leisure career choices. *Journal of Career Development, 32*(2), 122-138. https://doi.org/10.1080/0894845305279164.

Granovetter, M. S. (1973). The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology, 78*(6), 1360-1380. https://doi.org/10.1086/227055.
Indana, L. (2018). Evaluasi Keterserapan Kerja Lulusan SMK Program Studi Keahlian Teknik Komputer dan Informatika di Kabupaten Trenggalek. [Job absorption evaluation of graduates of computer and informatics engineering study program in Trenggalek Regency]. (Master Thesis, Yogyakarta State University). http://eprints.uny.ac.id/60113/.

Jackson, D., Firtko, A., & Edenborough, M. (2007). Personal resilience as a strategy for surviving and thriving in the face of workplace adversity: A literature review. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 60*(1), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04412.x.

Lent, R. W., & Brown, S. D. (2006). On conceptualizing and assessing social cognitive constructs in career research: A measurement guide. *Journal of Career Assessment, 14*(1), 12-35. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072705281364.

Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D., Brenner, B., Chopra, S. B., Davis, T., Talleyrand, R., & Suthakaran, V. (2001). The role of contextual supports and barriers in the choice of math/science educational options: A test of social cognitive hypotheses. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 48*(4), 474-483. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.48.4.474.

Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D., & Hackett, G. (1994). Toward a unifying social cognitive theory of career and academic interest, choice, and performance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 45*(1), 79-122. https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1994.1027.

Levinson, E. M., Ohlers, D. L., Caswell, S., & Kiewra, K. (2011). Six approaches to the assessment of career maturity. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 76*(4), 475-482. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcd.1556-6676.1998.tb02707.x.

Lim, S. A., & You, S. (2017). Long-term effect of parents’ support on adolescents' career maturity. *Journal of Career Development, 46*(1), 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845317318666.

Luthans, F., Avey, J. B., & Patera, J. L. (2008). Experimental analysis of a web-based training intervention to develop positive psychological capital. *Academy of Management Learning and Education, 7*(2), 209-221. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMLE.2008.32712618.

Luthans, F., Avey, J. B., Avey, J. B., & Norman, S. M. (2007). Psychological capital: Measurement and relationship with performance and satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology, 60*(3), 541-572. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2007.00083.x.

Luthans, F., Youssef, C. M., & Avolio, B. J. (2007). Psychological capital: Developing the human competitive edge. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Mahfud, T., Indartono, S., Saputro, I. N., & Utari, I. (2019). The effect of teaching quality on student career choice: The mediating role of student goal orientation. *Integratsiya Obrazovaniya = Integration of Education, 23*(4), 541-555. https://doi.org/10.15507/1991-9468.097.023.201904.541-555.

Masdonati, J., Fournier, G., & Lahrizi, I. (2017). The reasons behind a career change through vocational education and training. *International Journal for Research in Vocational Education and Training, 4*(3), 249-269. https://doi.org/10.13152/IJRVET.4.3.4.

Okayama, M., & Kajii, E. (2011). Does the instructional quality of community-based clinical clerkships influence students’ career preferences? *International Journal of Medical Education, 2*, 74-79. https://doi.org/10.5116/ijme.4e4a.d171.

Paiva, P. C. P., de Paiva, H. N., de Oliveira Filho, P. M., Lamounier, J. A., Ferreira, E. F., Ferreira, R. C., ... & Zarzar, P. M. (2014). Development and validation of a Social Capital Questionnaire for Adolescent Students (SCQ-AS). *PLoS ONE, 9*(8), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.
Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J.-Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*(5), 879-903. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879.

Preacher, K. J., & Hayes, A. F. (2008). Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models. *Behavior Research Methods, 40*(3), 879-891. https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.40.3.879.

Richardson, S. (2010). Generation Y’s perceptions and attitudes towards a career in tourism and hospitality. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism, 9*(2), 179-199. https://doi.org/10.1080/15332840903383855.

Rogers, M. E., Creed, P. A., & Praskova, A. (2016). Parent and adolescent perceptions of adolescent career development tasks and vocational identity. *Journal of Career Development, 45*(1), 34-49. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845316667483.

Savickas, M. L. (1984). Career maturity: The construct and its measurement. *Vocational Guidance Quarterly, 32*(4), 222-231. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2164-585X.1984.tb01585.x.

Savickas, M. L. (2005). The theory and practice of career construction. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.). *Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, pp. 42-70.

Savickas, M. L., & Porfeli, E. J. (2011). Revision of the career maturity inventory: The adaptability form. *Journal of Career Assessment, 19*(4), 355-374. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072711409342.

Seligman, M. E. P. (1998). *Learned optimism*. New York, NY: Pocket Books.

Snyder, C. R. (2000). *Handbook of hope*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Song, Z., & Chathoth, P. K. (2011). Intern newcomers’ global self-esteem, overall job satisfaction, and choice intention: Person-organization fit as a mediator. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 30*(1), 119-128. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2010.03.003.

Spanjaard, D., Hall, T., & Stegemann, N. (2018). Experiential learning: Helping students to become ‘career-ready.’ *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ), 26*(2), 163-171. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ausmj.2018.04.003.

Sudiyatno, Wu, M., Budiman, A., Purwantoro, D., Mahfud, T., & Siswoanto, I. (2019). The effect of instructional quality on vocational students’ academic achievement and career optimism. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change, 7*(10), 244-260. https://www.ijicc.net/images/vol7iss10/71023_Sudiyanto_2019_E_R.pdf.

Suryadi, B., Sawitri, D. R., Hayat, B., & Putra, M. D. K. (2020). The influence of adolescent-parent career congruence and counselor roles in vocational guidance on the career orientation of students. *International Journal of Instruction, 13*(2), 45-60. https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2020.1324a.

Wagner, W., Göllner, R., Helmke, A., Trautwein, U., & Lüdtke, O. (2013). Construct validity of student perceptions of instructional quality is high, but not perfect: Dimensionality and generalizability of domain-independent assessments. *Learning and Instruction, 28*, 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2013.03.003.

William, D. (2013). Assessment: The bridge between teaching and learning. *Voices from the Middle, 21*(2), 15-20. https://www.fmos.is/media/skjol/wiliam-grein-2013.pdf.

Williams, C. M., & Subich, L. M. (2006). The gendered nature of career related learning experiences: A social cognitive career
theory perspective. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 69(2), 262-275. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2006.02.007.

Wolf, A. (2011). *Review of vocational education: The Wolf report*. Cheshire, England: Department of Education. http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/1667.

Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An introductory analysis* (2nd ed). New York, NY: Harper and Row.