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

Rahmi Ramadhani1*, Puji Lestari Suharso2
1 Department of Psychology, University of Indonesia, Depok 16424, Indonesia
2 Department of Psychology, University of Indonesia, Depok 16424, Indonesia
*rhami.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 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 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; Svent & 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

An 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 to 6.
The reliability of the scale is 0.91.

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.

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

Table 2

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

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. 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 4**

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

| Coef | SE | p   |
|------|----|-----|
| PA (X) | \(a_2\) | 0.185 | 0.017 | 0.000* |
| PP (M) | \(-\) | - | - | - |
| Constant | \(i_1\) | 3.759 | 0.688 | 0.000 |

\(R^2 = 12.52\)

F (1.756) = 108.178, p = 0.000

| Coef | SE | p   |
|------|----|-----|
| CDSE (Y) | \(c'_2\) | 0.048 | 0.013 | 0.000* |
| | \(b_2\) | 0.425 | 0.025 | 0.000* |
| i_2 | 2.365 | 0.114 | 0.000 |

\(R^2 = 33.23\)

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 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.

**Acknowledgement**

This research was supported in part by a grant Directorate of Research & Community of University Indonesia in the form of the International Scientific Publication Index of Master Degree Students (PITMA B).

**References**

[1] Ashby, J. S., & Schoon, I. (2010). Career success: The role of teenage career aspirations, ambition value and gender in predicting adult social status and earnings. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 77*(3), 350–360. [https://doi.org/10.1177/014920630002600304](https://doi.org/10.1177/014920630002600304)

[2] Bateman, T. S., & Crant, J. M. (1993). The proactive component of organizational behavior: A measure and correlates. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 14*(2), 103–118. doi:10.1002/job.4030140202

[3] Crant, J. M. (2000). Proactive behavior in organizations. *Journal of Management, 26*(3), 435–462. doi:10.1177/014920630002600304

[4] Betz, N. E., Klein, K. L., & Taylor, K. M. (1996). Evaluation of a short form of the career decision-making self-efficacy scale. *Journal of Career Assessment, 4*(1), 47–57. doi:10.1177/106907279600400103

[5] Di Fabio, A. D., Palazzeschi, L., Asulin-Peretz, L., & Gati, I. (2013). Career indecision versus indecisiveness: Associations with personality traits and emotional intelligence. *Journal of Career Assessment, 21*(1), 42–56. doi:10.1177/1069072712454698

[6] Dietrich, J., & Salmela-Aro, K. (2013). Parental involvement and adolescents’ career goal pursuit during the post-school transition. *Journal of Adolescence, 36*(1), 121–128. doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2012.10.009

[7] Ginerva, M. C., Nota, L., & Ferrari, L. (2015). Parental support in adolescents’ career development: Parents’ and children’s perceptions. *Career Development Quarterly, 63*(1), 2–15. doi:10.1002/cdq.2015.00091.x

[8] Gravetter, F. J., & Forzano, L. A. B. (2012). *Research methods for the behavioral sciences* (4th ed.). Cengage Learning.

[9] Guan, P., Capezio, A., Restubog, S. L. D., Read, S., Lajom, J. A. L., & Li, M. (2016). The role of traditionality in the relationships among parental support, career decision-making self-efficacy and career adaptability. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 94*, 114–123. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2016.02.018

[10] Keller, B. K, & Whiston, S. C. (2008). The role of parental influences on young adolescents’ career development. *Journal of Career Assessment, 16*(2), 198–217. doi:10.1177/10690772707313206
An Interdisciplinary Journal

Review Article

[11] Kim, H. S., & Park, I. J. (2017). Influence of proactive personality on career self-efficacy. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 54*(4), 168–182. doi:10.1002/joec.12065

[12] Madrid, H. P., Patterson, M. G., Birdi, K. S., Leiva, P. I., & Kausel E. E. (2014). The role of weekly high-activated positive mood, context, and personality in innovative work behavior: A multilevel and interactional model. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 35*(2), 234–256. doi:10.1002/job.1867

[13] Oebaidilah, S. (2018). Siswa Butuh Bimbingan Karier. Retrieved from https://mediaindonesia.com/read/detail/147051-siswa-butuh-bimbingan-karier

[14] Oettingen, G., & Zosuls, K. M. (2006). Culture and self-efficacy in adolescents. In T. Urdan & F. Pajares (Eds.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents* (pp. 245–265). Information Age Publishing.

[15] Papalia, D. E., & Feldman, R. D. (2012). *Experience human development* (12th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

[16] Parker, S. K., Bindl, U. K., & Strauss, K. (2010). Making things happen: A model of proactive motivation. *Journal of Management, 36*(4), 827–856. doi:10.1177/0149206310363732

[17] Santrock, J. W. (2013). *Life span development* (14th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

[18] Santrock, J. W. (2016). *Adolescence* (5th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

[19] Sawitri, D., Creed, P. A., & Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J. (2013). Parental influences and adolescent career behavior in a collectivist culture setting. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance, 14*(2), 161–180. doi:10.1007/s10775-013-9247-x

[20] Sovet, L., & Metz, A. J. (2014). Parenting style and career decision-making among French and Korea adolescents, *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 84*(3), 345–355. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2014.02.002

[21] Van den Akker, A. L., Dekovic, M., Asscher, J., & Prinzie, P. (2014). Mean-level personality development across childhood and adolescence: A temporary defiance of the maturity principle and bidirectional associations with parenting. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 107*(4), 736–750. doi:10.1037/a0037248

[22] Xing, X., & Rojewski, J. W. (2018). Family influence on career decision making self-efficacy of Chinese secondary vocational students. *New Waves: Educational Research and Development, 21*(1), 48–67