



Research article

Employability of students in vocational secondary school: Role of psychological capital and student-parent career congruences

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ABSTRACT

The main problem of vocational secondary school graduates is unemployment or inactive youth. Apart from developing their ability, external support, particularly from their parents, is also important for students in a collectivistic country like Indonesia. Therefore, this study aims to predict the role of psychological capital and perceived student-parent career congruences to the employability development of vocational secondary school students. Participants were 317 final-year students from rural private vocational secondary schools in Indonesia, 46.23% male and 31.76% female. They were 17–19 years old, mean age of 17.21 and standard deviation of 0.64. The data were analyzed by hierarchical regression analysis. We found that psychological capital and student-parent career congruences were indeed significantly correlated with employability development in the vocational secondary school students. These findings are beneficial for vocational schools in preparing the school program to improve students' psychological ability and work readiness. The results also give some insights for parents to provide facilitative support for their children to make them more employable as vocational graduates.

1. Introduction

1.1. Unemployment and vocational school

The high unemployment rate in Indonesia is a major ongoing problem the government faces. When compared with other lower-middle-income countries (e.g., Myanmar, Philippines, Cameroon, Cambodia, India, Bolivia), where the unemployment rate of youth (between 15 and 24 years old) is at 12.2%, it was the highest in Indonesia at around 18% [1]. Further, one of the common issues is the high level of young people who are 'inactive,' i.e., those who are not employed, not studying (education), and not attending training. Across several middle or low-middle-income countries, including Indonesia, the proportion of inactive youth is relatively high [1].

Therefore, the Indonesian government focused its 2019 program mainly on the development of human resources, in particular, vocational education [2]. Indonesia and the lower-middle-income countries face the same issue of inactive youth. The government chose the vocational school to minimize the youth unemployment rate [3], reflecting that UNESCO and the World Bank have begun to prioritize vocational education [4]. Vocational education provided during secondary schooling reduces unemployment risks in the first years after labor market entry. It offers young school leavers with skills and ability of immediate value in the workplace and initially

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increases their employability [5,6]. Yet, there is much discussion about the challenges of students' transitions from school into employment and the 'employability gap' [7,8].

1.2. Employability

Employability is related to an individual's capability to compete in career and future work and gain the job they want [9,10]. The concept of employability has been developing over the decades, specifically in a psychological approach, where self-perceived employability is emphasized. Today, the idea of employability is not only about the ability or skill itself. Still, it is defined as the individual perception of having the capability to gain initial employment, maintain employment and obtain new employment if required [10–14].

Many employability research explored employability as a final outcome of individual ability after graduation from education. Perspectives on employability need to be reoriented to encompass a conception of self-development rather than simply viewing the concept as an object they possess upon graduation. A good employability level is required to compete in the labor market. The student needs to draw upon self-development because it can increase their ability to cope with the challenge of the labor market and make them more employable [15].

We used the employability development model perspective [16] which affords an alternative for students to organize their employability development plans for the future. Employability Development Profile (EDP) is a model of employability that has the developmental purposes of mapping students' employability, considering their strengths and areas for improvement. This model can be integrated with employability factors, life-long learning for individual development, not only for students during school but also for their entire work life. EDP is different from other perspectives of employability. EDP can be used practically by students. It can ensure that students recognize early on their educational experience that employability is not just about getting a job, which can wait until their final year of study. They are then in a much better position to take advantage of the many learning opportunities on offer while studying. Those opportunities will help them to develop their employability throughout their degree studies [17].

EDP has five elements, i.e., career development learning, experience (work and life), academic performance and study skills, generic skills, and emotional intelligence [16]. First, career development learning is the activity that helps students become more self-aware to give real consideration to the things that they enjoy doing for work, are interested in. It will also motivate them and suit their personalities to consider their future careers [18]. Second, work & life experience relate to students' activities from paid or voluntary work. It is also essential to allow students to develop their ability to adapt to the work environment. Third, academic performance and study skills. This element describes how the students complete their study, mastery the skill, and understand the subject area of their study. Fourth, the generic skills represent any discipline's core skills, which can potentially transfer to workplace contexts. Last, emotional intelligence is the capacity for recognizing our feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships [19].

Study in employability topic mostly was in a higher education setting [7,10,11,18,20–28]. Meanwhile, students in vocational secondary school differ in characteristics from that in higher education graduates. During their three years in school, they gain more technical competence (occupation-specific skills) than personal resource development [29]. There is no specific program that helps them grow their personal resources in terms of generic competencies.

Moreover, most of the previous studies in vocational secondary school employability mostly focused on competencies and hard skills as factors that contributed to graduates success [30–34]. However, the specific hard skills will not have their advantage in the longer run [6]. In particular, it has been argued that the occupation-specific skills carried by initial education bear the risk of becoming outdated over time, as labor market demands and occupational requirements are constantly changing, for example, due to today's digital technology developments [35]. Meeting and exceeding expectations in today's hypercompetitive work are becoming increasingly difficult. Hence, as young people, vocational school graduates require "dynamic capabilities" for lifelong learning, and it cannot and should not depend solely upon the what they know, what they can do or what the hard skill they have.

The perspective of the youth development approach envisions young people as a resource. The students of vocational secondary school are viewed as a critical asset. It also emphasizes students' potentialities and aspirations for their future [36]. It is essential for young people to become capable adults who lead productive lives, increase skills and promote their positive outcomes [37]. Hence, the vocational school graduates should be grow and develop for their career and future work.

Their employability should be seen in developmental senses as "who you are capable of becoming" in the future. They need positive psychological resources to actualize and develop their potential (i.e., attaining "the best possible self or selves" [38] to achieve competitive advantages as graduates. Our study points out the importance of positive psychological resources as intangible personal capital of humans in making the students more employable. Referring to some previous studies, it is known that personal psychological resources are very important as factors that determine employability [39–42].

1.3. Psychological capital

The personal psychological resource we focused on here is psychological capital, which refers to an 'individual's positive psychological state of development, characterized by the following psychological resources: (a) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (b) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (c) persevering toward a goal and, when necessary, redirecting the path to that goal (hope) to succeed; and (d) being beset by problems and adversity, but sustaining and bouncing back even beyond (resiliency) to attain success [43].

Graduate capital model presents a new way of understanding graduate employability, which addresses the challenges of facilitating

graduates’ transitions and early career management [44]. The forms of capital outlined are conceived as critical resources that confer benefits and advantages onto individuals. Some researchers argued that psychological capital might also play a relevant role in the employability of graduates [45–48]. Psychological capital influences the learning process by which individuals acquire employability skills [49]. Psychological capital can act as one of the individual characteristics to enhance the ability of graduates to work. The impact of psychological capital is essential but has received very little attention in empirical studies related to employability of vocational graduates.

Psychological capital works throughout the life span, including in adolescence. The graduates from vocational secondary school are aged 17–19 years, which is the late adolescent stage [50]. It is crucial to explore personal life and job interest in that late adolescent period of age [51], it is important for young people to feel optimistic about their future. The statement is related to the components of psychological capital. For those who have experienced a difficult time while growing up, this is when they get the opportunity to direct their lives in a more positive direction. This period is important for them to find the work path they want and relevant to their personal capital.

1.4. Student–parent career congruencies

Parents also play a significant role, and their supervision of students’ activities and academic efforts is essential to their career choice [50]. Parents need to support students in getting a job after finishing their vocational school [52]. They have a significant effect on the students’ vocational expectation and identity, career optimism, and their decision for work [52–55].

Our study also introduces the role of parents toward students’ employability, specifically in a collectivist culture country like Indonesia, which is different from other cultures. People living in a collectivistic country generally find it necessary to meet the parents’ wishes for their career and work choices. Usually, parents are in day-to-day contact with their children, have the opportunity to observe their development, and discuss career, educational progress, and work choice [55]. Perceived congruence in a career with parents is especially salient for young people from this country, as they rely heavily on their parents and respect obedience [56]. Having a greater degree of congruence helps these students to develop a higher level of confidence in their ability to successfully carry out career-related tasks [57,57]. The students will then make sufficient effort to develop their employability.

Therefore, this study aimed to explore the prediction of the psychological capital and student-parent career congruencies to students’ employability development in vocational secondary school (see Fig. 1). Accordingly, this study proposes a different model from the previous findings, regarding the development of employability for students in vocational secondary schools, especially in a collectivist country like Indonesia. We would like to suggest that vocational graduates need skills, but building their psychological capital is crucial to enhancing their workability, getting a job and sustaining the employability. It also needs to be accompanied by the support of parents who can direct the children in developing their abilities. It becomes an essential model to empower the vocational graduates from the perspective of individual psychological resource and from their most important social support (parents). Hence, our research question is: to what extent are psychological capital and parent congruence predict the employability development of vocational secondary school students?

2. Method

2.1. Procedure

First, approval from the school principal was obtained. The data collection was carried out in the student classroom after school hours. Ethical review and approval was not required for this study in accordance with the institutional requirements, whilst according

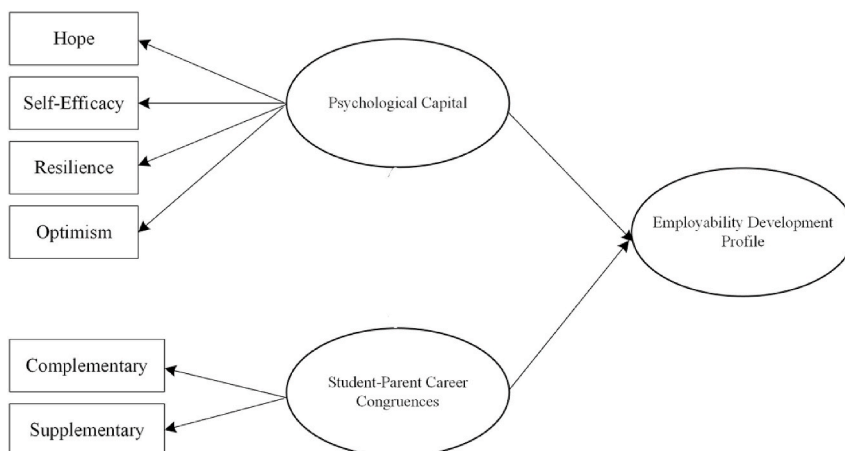


Fig. 1. Research model.

to Indonesian Psychology Code of Ethics, the informed consent is obligated in psychology research survey [58]. The informed consent used consists of (1) the purpose of the research, expected duration, and procedures; (2) their right to decline to participate and to withdraw from the research once participation has begun; (3) any prospective research benefits; (4) confidentiality; (5) incentives for participation; and (6) whom to contact for questions about the research and research participants' rights [58,59]. We directly explained how the respondent participate in our study. We asked the students for their consent by filling and signing the informed consent form. All the students who filled out the informed consent stated their willingness to participate in this study. Then, we administered the questionnaire in a classroom and guided each part of the questionnaire directly to students. Participants spend about 15–20 min completing the questionnaire. They received school stationery (pencil, ballpoint, and eraser) as a reward for their participation.

2.2. Participant

The population of this study is final year students (Grade 12) from six rural private vocational secondary schools in Sumedang, Indonesia. The vocational secondary school graduates is the most significant contributor to the unemployment rate in Indonesia in the last five years [60]. The private vocational school specifically in rural area dominated the total number of vocational education. We chose the participant in final year student as they face the school-work transition after graduation. We determined the minimum sample size using a general rule of thumb for sufficient power in regression and factor analysis. The minimum sample size needed is 300 participants [61,62]. We used convenience sampling to select the participant. About 317 participants were involved in this study.

2.3. Measures

2.3.1. Psychological capital

We assessed Psychological Capital using the scale developed by Ref. [63] adapted in an Indonesian version. There are four subscales, i.e., Self-Efficacy, Hope, Resilience, and Optimism. As the original psychological capital scale was developed for individuals who are employed, we changed the wording of the original items to make the scale more general and suitable for students in vocational secondary school. For example, in the self-efficacy sub-scale, we changed the item "I feel confident helping to set targets/goals in my work area" to "I feel confident to set goals for my future job." In the hope subscale, we changed the items "I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals" to "I can think of many ways to reach my current goal in school", and "If I should find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out of it" to "If I should find myself a jam at school, I could think of many ways to get out of it." In the Resilience subscale, we changed the item "I usually manage difficulties one way or another at work" to "I usually manage the difficulties one way or another at school." In the Optimism subscale, we changed the item "I'm optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work" to "I'm optimistic about what will happen to me about my future work." All items were assessed using a 6-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree). High total scores reflect high levels of psychological capital. We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis to ascertain its factor structure and used a cut-off criterion of 0.5 [64] to consider whether the item should be dropped or not. It is led to 10 remaining items, two items for efficacy, two items for hope, three items for resilience, and three for optimism. All the items loaded reasonably well, ranging from 0.52 to 0.64. Psychological Capital model fit indexes were tested using the multi-likelihood method. We used model fit cut-off criteria suggestion from which includes using the maximum likelihood (ML)-based standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) and supplementing it with CFI, RNI, and RMSEA [65]. SRMR value is 0.08 (cut-off value close to 0.08), CFI value is 0.93 (cut-off value close to 0.95), RNI value is 0.90 (cut-off value close to 0.95) RMSEA value is 0.07 (cutoff value close to 0.06). We can conclude a relatively good fit between the hypothesized model and the observed data (Table 2). We also calculated the internal consistency of the psychological capital questionnaire for the remaining items in the present sample and the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was reasonable ($\alpha = 0.73$), which is acceptable.

Table 1
Demographic data of respondents.

Demographic data			
Gender	Male	146	46.23%
	Female	101	31.76%
Age	16–17 years old	222	70.03%
	18–19 years old	95	29.97%
Organizational Experience	No Experience	177	51.63%
	Experienced	190	48.37%
Accreditation Grade	Grade A (Very Good)	178	56.15%
	Grade B (Good)	139	43.85%
Study Field	Engineering	186	58.68%
	Administration & Accounting	86	27.13%
	Pharmacy	31	9.78%
	Multimedia	14	4.42%

2.4. Adolescent – parents career congruence

Adolescent – Parents Career Congruence was assessed by the Adolescent – Parent Career Congruence Scale [66] in an Indonesian version. The reliability of the questionnaire was good ($\alpha = 0.87$ in the present sample). The Adolescent – Parent Career Congruence regards two domains, complementary congruence, and supplementary congruence. The scale for complementary congruence has seven items that capture the situation where students perceive their needs in exploration, planning, and goal setting to be met by parents, and their perception that parents are satisfied with their progress. A sample of the item is “*My parents encourage me to explore the career areas I am interested in.*” The supplementary congruence domain has five items that capture the situation when adolescents believe that they possess similar or matching perceptions as their parents regarding their job interests, values, plans, and goals. A sample of an item includes “*My parents want the same career for me as I want for myself.*” All items were assessed using a 6-point Likert scale from (1) Strongly Disagree to 6 (Strongly Agree). High total scores mean high congruence in adolescents’ perception of their career choices and their parents. All the items loaded reasonably well, ranging from 0.40 to 0.82. Student-Parent Career Congruences model fit indexes were tested using the multi-likelihood method. The model fit indexes was concluded using the multi-likelihood method. SRMR value is 0.08 (cut-off value close to 0.08), CFI value is 0.95 (cut-off value close to 0.95), RNI value is 0.93 (cut-off value close to 0.95) RMSEA value is 0.06 (cutoff value close to 0.06). In Table 2, we can conclude that the model is considerably fit.

2.5. Employability development profile

Employability development of the students was assessed by Career EDGE Employability Development Profile [67]. This tool consists of five factors, e.g., Emotional Intelligence, Academic Performance & Study Skill, Career Development Learning, Generic Skills, and Work & Life Experience. We adapted this tool in the Indonesian version using guidelines from International Test Commission [68].

We follow several steps. First, obtain the necessary permission from the Career EDGE Employability Development Profile author. Second, we collected evidence based on test content [69] and evaluated the construct’s definition and scope measured by the test and the item content in the populations of interest. The item content was by the research team discussion to check its relevance in a vocational school context. Based on these evaluations, we added and changed some items. We added one sentence before the introduction section of the questionnaire, i.e. “As students in vocational school” to bring them into a vocational context when they started to fill the questionnaire. We conducted a forward-backward translation and examined each item’s relevance, ensuring the translation and adaptation processes consider linguistic, psychological, and cultural differences in the intended populations through the choice of experts in the employability area. Samples for items are: for the Emotional Intelligence “*I am able to adapt easily to new situations*” and “*I am able to manage my emotions effectively*”; for the Academic Performance & Study Skills, “*I am satisfied with my academic performance so far*”; for the Career Development Learning, “*I know what I want to do when I finish my vocational school*”; for the Generic Skill, “*I am good at solving problems*”; and for the Work & Life Experience, “*I have a lot of work-relevant experience.*” We used a 6-point Likert scale from (1) Strongly Disagree to 6 (Strongly Agree). Next, we administered the questionnaire to six students from one of the vocational schools and asked them to view the final Indonesian version and comment on readability.

Third, we provided evidence based on internal structure and reliability analysis of the adapted version of the test in the intended populations. Based on these evaluations, a final pool of 25 questions remained. We found that each item in the Employability Development profile had a standard loading factor ranging from 0.50 to 0.763. We have kept one item in the questionnaire, although its loading factor was below 0.5, because of the importance of the content. Career EDGE Employability Development Profile model fit indexes was concluded using the multi-likelihood method. In Table 2, we can conclude that the model is considerably fit (CFI 0.95, RNI 0.95, SRMR 0.06, RMSEA 0.06). We also checked the reliability coefficient in the present sample and showed that the Employability Development questionnaire has good reliability ($\alpha = 0,80$).

2.6. Statistical analysis

Mean scores, standard deviations, scale reliabilities (Cronbach’s alpha), and Pearson correlations were computed for all variables. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was executed for assessing evidence-based content validity to each construct. Structural Equation Modelling (LISREL) was used to test our study. To evaluate the goodness of fit of the different models, CFI, SRMR, and RMSEA were

Table 2
Summary of goodness of fit indexes.

Variable	The goodness of fit criteria			
	CFI	RNI	SRMR	RMSEA
1 Psychological capital	0.93	0.90	0.08	0.07
2 Student–parent career congruencies	0.95	0.93	0.08	0.06
3 Employability development	0.95	0.95	0.06	0.06
4 One factor model	0.71	0.70	0.06	0.06
5 Two factor model	0.98	0.96	0.06	0.06

Note: CFI = robust comparative fit index (*cut-off value 0.9), RNI = Relative Noncentrality Index (*cut-off value 0.9), SRMR = robust standardized root-mean-square residual (*cut-off value 0.08), RMSEA = robust root mean square of approximation (*cut-off value 0.06).

Table 3
Means, standard deviations and correlations among the study variables.

Correlation	M	SD	1	1a	1b	1c	1d	2	2a	2b	3	3a	3b	3c	3d	3e
Age	17.21	0.64														
1 Psychological Capital (PC)	52.90	6.18	1													
1a Self-Efficacy	12.85	2.01	0.729**	1												
1b Optimism	9.88	2.53	0.600**	0.306**	1											
1c Hope	13.32	1.99	0.727**	0.510**	0.246**	1										
1d Resilience	16,85	2,87	0.790**	0.354**	0.345**	0.371**	1									
2 Student – Parent Career Congruencies	45.58	7.36	0.387**	0.240**	0.183**	0.348**	0.318**	1								
2a Supplementary	16.92	3.88	0.381**	0.175**	0.190**	0.283**	0.275**	0.910**	1							
2b Complementary	28.65	4.29	0.312**	0.254**	0.135**	0.341**	0.296**	0.888**	0.617**	1						
3 Employability Development	107.71	13.06	0.637**	0.497**	0.330**	0.522**	0.470**	0.492**	0.406**	0.475**	1					
3a Career Dev. Learning	23.29	3.59	0.467**	0.333**	0.250**	0.427**	0.331**	0.446**	0.330**	0.465**	0.759**	1				
3b Work & Life Experience	12.56	2.66	0.405**	0.341**	0.210**	0.334**	0.280**	0.425**	0.383**	0.382**	0.743**	0.548**	1			
3c Generic Skill	12.36	2.17	0.557**	0.474**	0.272**	0.464**	0.388**	0.388**	0.316**	0.378**	0.767**	0.527**	0.539**	1		
3d Academic Perf. & Study Skill	20.31	3.65	0.460**	0.354**	0.214**	0.366**	0.365**	0.341**	0.285**	0.326**	0.796**	0.426**	0.511**	0.557**	1	
3e Emotional Intelligence	39.16	4.61	0.579**	0.447**	0.321**	0.443**	0.441**	0.348**	0.296**	0.328**	0.822**	0.468**	0.442**	0.538**	0.573**	1

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.001.

M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation.

calculated.

3. Result

3.1. Demographic data

Based on Table 1, the proportion of female and male participants who participated in this research was nearly equal; most were 17 years old. They came from an accredited vocational school in a variety of disciplines. The accreditation rank indicates the level of quality assurance for the school (A level for “Very Good”, B level for “Good”). About 56.15% of the participant were from A-level accredited schools. There are 48.37% of participants have experience in school organizations, while 51.63% of participants were never involved in the non-academic organization at school. Most of them took computer engineering as a skill specialization, and others took office administration, accounting, motorcycle engineering, pharmacy, multimedia, and light vehicle engineering.

3.2. Descriptive statistic

Table 3 gives an overview of the study variables, including mean scores, standard deviations, and correlations between the study variables. Psychological capital and student-parent career congruence were significantly correlated with employability development, although in a moderate level ($r \geq 3$). All the dimensions of psychological capital and student-parent career congruences were correlated considerably with employability.

3.3. Structural model

We estimated the one factor model of Psychological Capital, Student-Parent Congruences and Employability Development Profile. We also estimated the two factor model. Fig. 2 shows the two factor structural model of Psychological Capital, Student – Parent Career Congruences and Employability Development Profile. We tested our models (Fig. 2) by means of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The SEM analysis was conducted with the mean scores of the scales, instead of the scale items. We used the threshold recommended by Hu and Bentler [65]. Model 1 shows CFI (0.93) closed to the cut-off value, RNI (0.86) and is below the cut-off value, SRMR (0.041) below the cut-off value, RMSEA (0.11) exceeds the cut-off value. Model 2 for the total sample has a good fit compared to the thresholds.

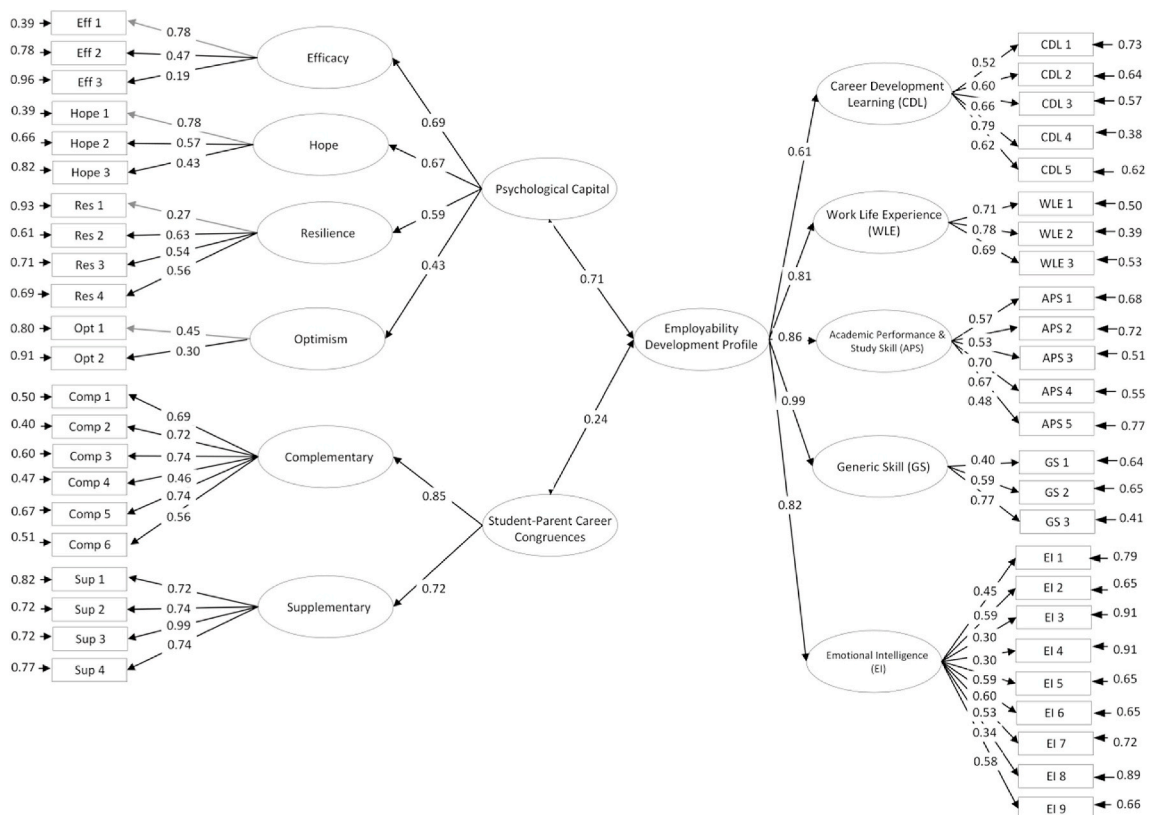


Fig. 2. The structural model.

The CFI (0.98), RNI (0.96), closed to the cut-off value of 0.9. The SRMR (0.061) and is close to the cut-off value (0.08). The RMSEA (0.063) closed to the cut-off value (0.06). In terms of CFI, RNI, SRMR and RMSEA fit indices, Model 2 is better than model 1 (Tabel 2). In Model 2, a significant positive relationship was found between psychological capital and employability development profile ($\beta = 0.71$). Student-parent congruences also contributed significantly to the employability development profile ($\beta = 0.24$). Compared to other indicators, optimism found the lowest standardized factor loading (<0.5) and was statistically not significant.

4. Discussion

The present study aimed to investigate the role of psychological capital and student-parent career congruence to employability development in vocational secondary school students. This study found that psychological capital and student-parent career congruence predicted the employability development in vocational secondary school students. The findings support the model of psychological resource in employability model context [45,46,48,70]. The model highlights the role of psychological capital in enhancing psychological capital, which is considered an essential determinant of the ability to work. Our research novelty adds the student-parent congruences as an essential factor to students' employability model, specifically in vocational students in the collectivist country. This model gives the strong implication for theoretical development of employability, as a new alternate perspective and a more comprehensive view of Employability Development Profile/EDP.

First, psychological capital, and its dimensions, including self-efficacy [43], play a significant role in making themselves more employable [70]. We also found that congruence between what their parents expect and the student's career is essential in students' employability development. Personal attributes of individuals can make graduates more likely to gain employment and succeed in their chosen job [71]. Clarke [41] developed an integrated model that incorporates internal (human capital) and external (social capital) factors and career processes to help explore graduates' employability.

Our findings give a specific contribution to previous studies. The psychological capital is critical for vocational secondary school students, which emphasizes occupation-specific skills. As several previous studies stated, it is far from evident that the specific hard skills retain their advantage in the longer run, especially at this time where digital skills and the world of work are disrupted rapidly. It can cause the emerging of other crucial impacts, in economic perspectives, that secondary vocational education leads to considerably lower income prospects [72]. Therefore, vocational secondary school needs to prepare the students for lifelong learning in the labor market.

We found that hope is the most important aspect for students in vocational secondary school. By having this capital, they can always think about alternative actions that effectively make them more competent in their vocation. Hope is the cognitive process allowing individuals to plan for and execute the pursuit of goals [73,74]. Students with clear goals about their employment or work choice will direct internal motivation for better employability development. They can conjure up plans to reach the go and initiate and sustain action toward developing themselves until they can be employed as they desire [75].

The school environment can stimulate hope through a higher track on learning. The higher track emphasis stimulating problem solving and cognitive activating instruct. The teacher also plays a crucial role in providing students with challenging and stimulating tasks that promote their independent thinking [76]. It will empower the students to be more active and achieve academic success. Consequently, they will have a lower average probability of becoming unemployed [77]. Considering that the vocational track often attracts students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, these students are most at risk, and the opportunity to employ is the most important outcome.

Self-efficacy allows one to deal with uncertainty and obstacles [78]. There is an abundance of support for the impact of self-efficacy on employability [42,79,80]. However, this study highlights the efficacy of the different perspectives of employability. The students should have good efficacy, especially in the intensity of work competition. This capital will instill the motivation to keep students grow and develop along their journey to deal with the uncertainty regarding employment in today's labor market [21].

We found that efficacy is necessary to successfully execute tasks during school and take some course or work-related experience to improve or develop employability. Turner [81] also stated that one of the fundamental beliefs that need to be fostered to develop student self-belief in employability is efficacy. Students with high self-efficacy will be convinced about their abilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and course of action. Efficacy also contributes to employability orientation in employees [82], which is a relevant concept of employability development.

Another significant capital is resilience, reflecting personal adaptability in employability [83]. Resiliency research puts several crucial positive youth attributes squarely on the psychological map [35]. Resilience is also necessary to prepare graduates for a dynamic working environment characterized by uncertainty and change [84]. When the students can bounce back from adversity, difficulties, or failure, they will be more mature as vocational school graduates. When they fail, they are also expected to be able to evaluate themselves so that they learn more in solving problems, both in the vocation scope and other general challenges as vocational school graduates. Through resilience, they will better manage failures with stable emotions and plan every action systematically and open the suggestion for their self-development. They can persevere despite the difficulties they have faced [84].

The last domain of psychological capital is optimism, which enables an individual to view change as a challenge—a learning experience that is intrinsically valuable [83]. Optimistic students are likely to perceive numerous opportunities to view career changes (e.g., changes in work structures, fast-growing technology, and its impact on opportunity for work) as challenges. When students do not care about the changes, they will not be challenged to improve their ability for work. If continuous learning is weak, so is the employability development.

Second, the career congruence of the parents is perceived as a strong correlation to students' employability development level. The critical element in this phase is the career process, such as guidance seeking [15]. It is relevant to career social support concept for

students, including information and advice about career planning, comfort and encouragement for unsuccessful job searches [85], and other resources that individuals can obtain from their social networks, such as parents [86]. Guidance and support is necessary for students, so they drive and navigate themselves to the world of work, specifically in Indonesia, which is culturally collectivist [56]. When a person growing up in a collectivist context makes a career decision that aims to satisfy parents, the decision will likely please the individual as well. Adolescents (e.g., students) from these societies should be aware of the expectation of their parents, including selecting a job. Then, it will also affect themselves to undertake the kind of activities that will develop their ability to gain employment.

Being congruent with parents regarding career issues, besides the positive capital of the students, is influential and is likely to be another driver of boosting students' development to achieve readiness in facing the labor market [66]. An important contextual factor for work, career, and vocational identity is the family. When student's career orientation aligns with the expectations of their parents, they tend to be more confident with the work choices they will make after graduating from vocational school, improving their prospects of finding employment [87].

Even though fulfilling parental wishes for choice of work may be seen as an excellent and normative thing by some parents or in some cultures, if personal interests are not also fulfilled, then satisfaction and performance regarding the work choice could be lower [88]. Unlike those of previous generations, today's students have learned more from digital media. They are digital native generation they can search much information easily from the internet, including information related to specific jobs they are interested in, online skill training, self-development training, or other methods to enrich their ability for work. They have different characteristics from their parents, who came from generation X or even baby boomers. Even more, when students came from a family with lower-middle socioeconomic status [77]. It also affects the quality of career support for their children. Parents may have limited knowledge about the growing job choices in today's digital era, leading to a gap in career expectations conveyed to children.

We can state that, at adolescent stages, students from the vocational school, at least in Indonesia, still need support and facilitative effort from parents (e.g. complementary) to make them more assured and confident to explore their career and find work that suits their personality [55]. This is an initial process that enables them to take other actions to improve their skill and knowledge regarding their field of vocation [89].

5. Limitation and future research

There are several limitations to this study. First, participants are from only one province of Indonesia (West Java); therefore, the generalization of the results should be taken with caution. Second, since the participants were selected using non-probability sampling, the generalizability of our results is also limited. Future studies should employ random sampling techniques. Third, we only examined the students' perspectives of adolescent-parent career congruence. It would be interesting if future studies could collect data from the parents' perspective and compare this with the students' perspective. Future studies should also incorporate external factors as the type of school, type of study program, and industrial internship, which might contribute to the employability development level of the student.

Future research might employ longitudinal design to check the influence of students' employability development: e.g., whether or not the students got the job or to what extent their employability developed. In addition, it is necessary to investigate career literacy as a term to describe career education and information, which both students and parents should have. It is an important part for students in selecting a job or making decisions about their careers.

6. Practical implication

The study has implications for all collectivistic nations where parent play important role in deciding their child career. Given the limitations and because all aspects of psychological capital can be developed [21,90], we suggest cautiously that schools focus on occupation-specific skill development and initiate programs to develop the students' psychological capital (hope, resilience, and efficacy). It can be a collaborative action between teachers, school psychologists, parents, and students. We suggest that a program might be developed to raise the parents' awareness of their children's careers and increase their knowledge about job choices and the labor market. This kind of program can be presented in the first year of school. Parents' knowledge also might be further developed along with the varying demands of their child's current job. Furthermore, the specific training can be done to enhance the students' psychological capital, such as developing the positive expectancy, implementing obstacle planning, building confidence, modeling others, etc.

7. Conclusion

Our new findings show that, as vocational education students, they may be better prepared for their psychological capital (hope, resilience, and efficacy) as an alternative way to develop their employability better. Furthermore, in a collectivist country like Indonesia, the congruence of career orientation between students' and parents' expectations is crucial. Parental support in this respect can make the student successful in improving their ability to work.

Author contribution statement

Rezki Ashriyana Sulistiobudi, M. Psi., Psych: Conceived and designed the experiments; Performed the experiments; Analyzed and interpreted the data; Contributed reagents, materials, analysis tools or data; Wrote the paper.

Anissa Lestari Kadiyono: Analyzed and interpreted the data; Contributed reagents, materials, analysis tools or data; Wrote the paper.

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Data availability statement

Data associated with this study has been deposited at <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5819248>.

Declaration of interest's statement

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data related to this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e13214>.

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