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The Impact of Career Adaptability and Social Support on Job Search Self-Efficacy: A Case Study in Malaysia

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Abstract

The objective of the current study is to examine the effect of career adaptability (conceptualized as a multidimensional construct: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence) and social support on job search self-efficacy and career outlook among students in higher education institutions in Malaysia. Graduates' employability is of great concern to policymakers as it impacts the economic and social development. It is crucial to enhance students' career-related skills as well as their adaptability competencies towards the fast-paced changing dynamic of the job market demand. Data were collected from a convenient sample of 358 respondents from final and second final year students representing several disciplines. To validate the model we used the covariance structural equation modeling with maximum likelihood estimation. Several fit indices have been used: chi-square index (χ^2), normed-fit chi-square, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), and Comparative Fit Index (CFI). The analysis revealed that career adaptability and social support have positive effects on job search self-efficacy and career outlook. The findings suggest that students' perceived concern, control, curiosity and confidence as dimensions of career adaptability and social support from family, friends and peers, are critical factors in predicting their career outlook and their ability to find career opportunities.

Keywords: Career Adaptability, Social Support, Self-Efficacy, Career Outlook, Malaysia

JEL Classification Code: J64, N35, O15

1. Introduction

The unemployment rate in Malaysia has become a big concern due to its negative impact on society's economic and social structures. The unemployment rate in Malaysia may not be too high, in 2019 it was around 3.3% and this increased in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Statista, 2020a). However, it should be noted that unemployment rate among young people is higher and keep on ascending, reaching its peak in the year 2020 with 11.72% (Statista, 2020b). The number of graduates is increasing year by year and the job market is becoming more competitive, which results in less job prospects and opportunities. Transitioning from schools to the job market is becoming challenging (Tolentino et al., 2019). The way graduates look at the job market is not as bright as they expect as they realize it is getting tougher to land a decent job. The competency gap in the labor market exists between the mismatch of what the current quality of education can produce in the current graduates and the demand of competencies from the labor market (Le et al., 2020). The competency gap generally refers to a lack of necessary capability to satisfy the job requirements. It can be seen from the perspective of both employers and employees to be measured either objectively or subjectively. Students understand what skills are demanded

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in the labor market. However, satisfaction with the level of undergraduate skills may not be sufficient if the same approach is applied (Le et al., 2020). Further, their ability to search for opportunities and their capacity to recognize them seem less effective. With limited resources, students may perceive they lack such as career knowledge and skills, and accessing job information and professional networks may hinder their job search abilities. As such, young people confront many career challenges and therefore, it is important to foster a positive career outlook as well as instill confidence in them (Tolentino et al., 2019).

Career adaptability (including the dimensions of concern, control, curiosity and confidence) and social support could be crucial factors that help students confront such challenges. Both concepts define an individual's ability and potential to attain a job, maintain the job, make proper transitions, that results in leading to higher career satisfaction. Positive career outlook dimensions such as career knowledge, career planning, career optimism, and career decisiveness are found to be positively correlated with career adaptability (Johnston, 2018). The dimension of career adaptability and social support involve perceptions of an individual's confidence in the ability to become successful in completing tasks of career planning and making decision that is reflected by their career self-efficacy. The concepts of career adaptability and self-efficacy are significant toward student well-being, start-up behavior and career outlook. The social support is aligned as well as it has a positive correlation with career outlook. In terms of social support, it is how the undergraduates get helps from others (i.e., how to draft curriculum vitae and resume). Past research discovered that career support given by working professionals toward future graduates is positively linked with career planning and job search intentions among them. (Renn, Steinbauer, Taylor, & Detwiler, 2014). The interest in career exploration helps to shape new goals and ambitions along their career. By being curious, an individual tends to understand more future changes in the industry, career prospects and upcoming challenges regarding future occupational choices (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

As it is acknowledged that career adaptability and social support are important in enhancing graduates' positive career outlook and efficacy in recognizing opportunities, yet this has not been given due attention in Malaysian graduates' context. Therefore, this study addresses this gap. The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of career adaptability dimensions and social support on both job search self-efficacy and career outlook among university students in Malaysia.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Career Outlook

It is vital for graduates in the 21st century to be equipped with a set of employability skills in order for them to

cater to the latest industrial demand for labor force as the job market scene is progressively competitive overtime especially after the recent economic downturn due to the Covid-19 pandemic that affected the way people adapted to the changes. Employability skills are a combination of achievements, understandings, and personal attitudes or qualities that classify workers as potentially more capable of achieving the desired job and of making a good career choice. Graduates ought to have good qualifications and abilities to be hired. Thus, graduates' knowledge and skills concerning their future career decision-making is vital to be recognized when they are still studying so that they are flexible to adapting with all the required skills prior to entering the real job market.

Johnston (2018) categorized career outlook under the adaptability responses in which is resulted from the execution of adaptability resources circulating the dimensions of career adaptability. In other words, it is the positive perspective perceived by oneself of their future career development such as career planning, career optimism, and career decisiveness. Career adaptability is believed to contribute better to the school-to-work transition for students to have a positive optimism of their future career (Savickas, 2005). Furthermore, support from family and teachers is needed to confirm students to have better preparation for their career (Keller & Whiston, 2008).

2.2. Job Search Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is often explained as a way of an individual to have the ability to manage and perform a certain behavior. In other words, it is a factor that drives someone to act or execute a certain task on their own. We can also interpret self-efficacy as a sustained power that can coordinate and authorize someone's life. A strong efficacy is also believed to have an effect in augmenting social networks, which affect one's happiness as well (Ansari & Khan, 2015). When someone is equipped with career adaptability resources including concern, control, curiosity, and confidence, it is most likely for the individual to have better self-efficacy in job searching process (Phillips & Blustein, 1994). Social support is also vital in encouraging higher level of self-efficacy and improved self-esteem (Vinokur & Van Ryn, 1993). Self-efficacy soft skills include oral communication, written communication and teamwork, while technical self-efficacy skills include judgment, research and understanding skills. Subjective norm is the most dominant factor influencing students' intention to become Certified Sharia Accountants as a choice of career (Kholid et al., 2020). In a study of determinants of social entrepreneurship intention among Vietnamese Students, it is found that social capital plays the important role in shaping social entrepreneurial self-efficacy, perceived desirability, and social entrepreneurial

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intention (Ha et al., 2020). So, in order to promote social entrepreneurship and innovation, policymakers and educators should find solutions to improve students' social capital. Students also should build social network by themselves, which is important for their future business venture. Social entrepreneurial self-efficacy has a significant effect on perceived desirability and social entrepreneurial intention. The authors suggest that the external environment can play an important role in enhancing the students' self-efficacy. Not only social entrepreneurial self-efficacy and perceived desirability affects directly social entrepreneurial intention, but also it mediates the link between social capital and social entrepreneurial intention (Ha et al., 2020).

2.3. Career Adaptability

Career construction theory, which indicates the outline that constructs the existence of career adaptability dimensions focusing on specific behavior, opinion and capabilities that affect the genuine problem-solving plans and manages behaviors that persons use to integrate their career self-concepts with the job positions. Therefore, the adaptive person is hypothesized as a developing concept about the career future and enhancing the own control over one's career potential. Furthermore, it also is showing a curiosity by discovering a potential self and future situations and strengthening the confidence to engage in ones' desires (Savickas, 2005).

Career adaptability is a psychosocial framework that signifies the resources of a person to deal with actual and expected responsibilities, changes and traumas in their career positions that change their social integration to a significant or small degree (Savickas, 1997; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). It requires four dimensional competencies or psychosocial tools (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012), looking forward to one's future (concern), recognizing what profession to seek (control), looking around at choices (curiosity), and possessing the self-efficacy to perform tasks required to achieve career goals (confidence). Adaptive plans and behaviors aimed at achieving adaptation goals are influenced by work adaptability opportunities (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012) and, hence, assist people navigate career transitions (Savickas, 2005). The key to all four dimensions is that they are treated as abilities that can be learned (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Therefore, career adaptability is a vital source to expand one's purpose profession, in the effort of attaining individual career ambitions.

Previous studies have revealed the job search self-efficacy, which describes the trust in one's ability to execute the behaviors necessary to achieve a latest occupation provides as the essential to one's behavior supply in the profession exploration method (Kanfer & Hulin, 1985). Constructed on the discoveries, we claim that as career adaptability provides growth to the overall observation that one is decent at occupation preparation, taking switch of the occupation expansion procedure, receiving admission to several occupation chances, and founding confident anticipation for their forthcoming, all these four features will use constructive inspiration on the exact area of self-efficacy in job exploration. Therefore, these broad sources will connect constructively to job search self-efficacy, which in turning to adjust persons' job pursuit performance and ultimately lead to encouraging job pursuit outcomes.

On the other hand, career adaptability is found to be corresponding to career outlook according to past studies. Researchers found out that there is a strong relationship between adaptability resources, which include all the four dimensions of career adaptability such as concern, control, curiosity as well as confidence, and future outlook, which includes adaptability responses and results (Johnston, 2018). The positive career outlook such as career knowledge, career planning, career optimism, and career decisiveness are found to be positively correlated with career adaptability.

H1: *Career adaptability is positively related to students' career outlook.*
H2: *Career adaptability is positively related to students' job search self-efficacy.*

2.4. Social Support

Previous studies give conflicting views in defining social support. From various definitions outlined by researchers, it can be inferred that five categories of definition are used to define social support theory. The categories are the kind of support given, linked to receivers' perception, attitude of the support giver, an exchange of values between giver and receiver, and in terms of social network (Hupcey, 1998). All the definitions explain some type of good communications or supportive attitudes to the person who need support (Rook & Dooley, 1985).

Past studies found that those who get less support from their network and family, suffer more from ill-health, lack self-esteem, and need to visit the doctor more often than those who received great support from their family and social groups (Linn, Sandifer, & Stein, 1985). Maddy, Cannon, and Lichtenberger (2015) also found that self-efficacy and self-esteem can decrease due to receiving less support from close friends and spouse. This finding supported Bandura's (1997) argument in which the author argued that family and friends can promote one's self-efficacy growth during hard times. This shows that there exists a relationship between social support and self-efficacy in general. Other than that, social support also enhances the feeling of self-efficacy as well as job search capacity (Vinokur & Van Ryn, 1993). Researchers found the relationship between

social support and the two variables in the past. Maddy et al. (2015) also reported that there is a positive relationship between social support and job search self-efficacy among unemployed. In a study of students' choice of becoming certified Sharia accountants, it was found that social norms as well as attitude and self-efficacy predict their intention to be certified Sharia accountants. Self-efficacy is divided into two types, technical skills self-efficacy and soft-skills self-efficacy (Kholid et al., 2020). Social norms predict other behaviors such as purchasing behavior (Salem & Chaichi, 2018) and social attributes lead to entrepreneurship intention (Rokhman & Ahmad, 2015).

In a study that investigates factors affecting Industry 4.0 adoption in the curriculum of university students, it was found that social influence, perceived usefulness, relative advantage, facility conditions, and occupation relevance are important predictors of Industry 4.0 adoption in the curriculum of university students (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020). Industry 4.0 is a name given to the current trend of automation and data exchange in manufacturing technologies. It includes cyber-physical systems, the Internet of Things, cloud computing, and cognitive computing. Universities are not only faced with employability challenges, but also working toward managing societal challenges. Therefore, Education 4.0 has to develop ethical business and nurture technology leaders for the future. Occupation relevance refers to individual's perception regarding the degree to which the target system is applicable to the individual's job. It is a function of the important within one's job of the set of tasks the system is capable of supporting. Facility conditions refer to technical and organizational facilitators that help users to overcome obstacles related to the use of technology. Social Influence refers to the degree to which an individual believes that other people whose opinion is important to them think the same way about using a new system. Social influence has an impact on the student's individual perception since the students themself as well as integrated technology are often regarded as a status symbol. Perceived usefulness refers to the extent to which persons believe that technology will enhance their productivity or job performance. It is the perceived likelihood that the technology will benefit the person in the performance of some tasks. Relative advantage identifies how improved an innovation is over the previous generation.

Furthermore, social support improves the sentiments of efficacy as well as job search competency, which enhance the positive outlook of one's career (Ellis & Taylor, 1983; Vinokur & Van Ryn, 1993). The support also can help people coping with their difficulties by prompting constructive behaviors such as improved engagement in the online support communities (Turner, Grube, & Meyers, 2001). One of the contexts in our study, job search, can be enhanced through the supportive message received (Holmstrom, Russell, &

Clare, 2015). Garcia et al. (2015) show that social support especially from parents, family and teachers is found to be contributing a positive impact toward one's career outlook.

H3: *Social support is positively related to students' career outlook.*
H4: *Social support is positively related to students' job search self-efficacy.*

3. Methods

Using a convenience sampling procedure, a total of 358 undergraduate university enrolled in various programs have participated in this study. They come from universities around Malaysia, with 36.6% of the responses coming from Management & Science University (MSU), 24.3% from International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), 12% from University of Technology MARA, and 27.1% from other universities. The majority of the respondents are male (54.7%). The survey is answered mostly by Malay (86.3%) followed by Chinese, Indians and other communities. A vast majority (346 respondents) is Malaysian by nationality. As this study focused on undergraduate students' attributes, most of the respondents are aged between 22 to 25 years old with 67.3% of the respondents coming from that age range. Most of the respondents are final-year students (61.4%), followed by second final-year students (27.1%). Out of 358 respondents, 43% of them are from the group with 3.50–4.00 CGPA, while 41.6% are from 3.00–3.49 CGPA group (Table 1).

To measure the study constructs, we adopted validated scales from various sources. The survey was conducted online through Google Forms and the link for the questionnaire forms were distributed through WhatsApp and Instagram. A five-point Likert scale with the range of 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree was used. See Table 2 for a summary.

4. Results

Means, standard deviations and interconstruct correlations are presented in Table 3. Correlations among the study constructs show high significant associations (Table 3). The highest correlation was between career outlook and social support ($r = 0.664$) and lowest correlation was observed between social support and the control dimension of career adaptability (0.481).

To validate the study model and test the hypothesized relationships, we used the covariance structural equation modeling with maximum likelihood estimation. Several fit indices have been used to assess the quality and adequacy of the model: chi-square index (χ^2), normed-fit chi-square, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), and Comparative Fit Index (CFI). For TLI and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), results greater

Table 1: Demographics Characteristics of the Respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	196	54.7%
	Female	162	45.3%
Ethnicity	Malay	309	86.3%
	Chinese	24	6.7%
	Indian	12	3.4%
	Others	13	3.6%
Nationality	Malaysian	346	96.6%
	Non-Malaysian	12	3 .4%
Age Group	18–21	108	30.2%
	22–25	241	67.3%
	26 and above	9	2.5%
University	Management and Science University	131	36.6%
	International Islamic University Malaysia	87	24.3%
	University of Technology MARA	43	12%
	Others	97	27.1%
Years	2021	220	61.4%
	2022	98	27.4%
	2023	30	8.4%
	2024 and above	10	2.8%
CGPA	3.50–4.00	154	43%
	3.00–3.49	149	41.6%
	2.50–2.99	50	14%
	2.49 and below	5	1.4%

Table 2: Summary of Study Measures

Variable	Measurement Scale	No. of Item	Alpha	Source/Year
Career Adaptability	Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS)	24	concern ($\alpha = 0.86$)	(Savickas & Porfeli, 2012)
			control ($\alpha = 0.86$)	
			curiosity ($\alpha = 0.83$)	
			confidence ($\alpha = 0.84$)	
Job Search Self-Efficacy	Work Self-Efficacy Scale (WSES)	5	JSSE-B ($\alpha = 0.89$)	(Saks et al., 2015)
Support	Career Futures Inventory-Revised (CFI-R)	4	Social Support ($\alpha = 0.76$)	(Rottinghaus et al., 2017)
Positive Career Outlook	Career Futures Inventory-Revised (CFI-R)	4	Positive Career Outlook ($\alpha = 0.78$)	(Rottinghaus et al., 2017)

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Table 3: Means, Standard Deviations and Interconstruct Correlations

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Concern	4.36		1						
Control	4.30		0.550**	1					
Curiosity	4.35		0.648**	0.625**	1				
Confidence	4.27		0.646**	0.661**	0.690**	1			
Social Support	4.23		0.517**	0.481**	0.488**	0.558**	1		
Job Search self-efficacy	4.20		0.590**	0.517**	0.639**	0.651**	0.532**	1	
Career Outlook	4.23		0.571**	0.632**	0.568**	0.661**	0.664**	0.635**	1

than 0.90 and 0.95 and less than 0.08 or 0.06 for the RMSEA indicate adequate and excellent model fitting (Isaac et al., 2019; Salem & Alanadoly, 2020; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Prior to fitting the entire model, we have tested the dimensionality of career adaptability construct. In this step, few items were removed due to their low loadings and contribution to the bad fit of the model. Three items from "concern", three items from "control" and two items from curiosity were removed. The second-order confirmatory factor analysis was conducted, and model fit was achieved (χ^2 = 342.727, df = 100, CFI = 0.924, and RMSEA = 0.080). then a full measurement model comprising all the study constructs (concern, control, curiosity and confidence as dimensions of career adaptability, social support, job search self-efficacy and career outlook) was tested. The model fit was not achieved and, thus, we have removed two items from job search self-efficacy and one item from social support based on mediation indices available in Amos software. The procedure has resulted in a good model fit (χ^2 = 800.818, df = 289, CFI = 0.912, and RMSEA = 0.070). Construct reliability and validity are presented next.

Convergent is achieved when factor loadings is greater than ≥0.50, ideal if it is ≥0.70. Further, composite reliability should be greater than 0.70 and average variance extracted (AVE) is greater than 0.50. Discriminant validity is established when AVE was more than the maximum shared variance (MSV), and square root of AVE should be greater than the interconstruct correlations (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). All of the reliability and validities have been achieved in this research (Table 4).

Consequently, as depicted in Figure 1, the full structural model was tested, and model fit was achieved (χ^2 = 870.989, df = 288, CFI = 0.900, and RMSEA = 0.075). The hypothesized relationships were supported (Table 5). Career adaptability has a significant positive effect on career outlook (β = 0.67, z = 11.183, p = 0.000), and job search self-efficacy (β = 0.66, z = 10.656, p = 0.000), supporting H1 and H2. Social support has also positive effects on both effect on career outlook (β = 0.43, z = 8.628, p = 0.000), and job search self-efficacy (β = 0.21, z = 4.209, p = 0.000), thus supporting H3 and H4.

5. Discussion

The main objective of the current study was to examine the effect of career adaptability and social support on university students' job search self-efficacy and career outlook. For this purpose, data were gathered from 358 undergraduate students from different universities in Malaysia. Prior to hypothesis testing, we examined reliability and validity of the study model. First, we confirm the multi-dimensionality of career adaptability based on the first order and second ordered analyses performed using Amos. Career adaptability comprises four dimensions, namely, concern, control, curiosity, and confidence (Rudolph et al., 2017; Urbanaviciute et al., 2019). Second, a full measurement model was tested and subsequently full structural model. Results show that both constructs, career adaptability and social support, are important predictors of job search self-efficacy and career outlook. Overall variance explained by the two predictors on career outlook and job search self-efficacy is .63 and .48 respectively.

The findings highlight how personal career adaptabilities are in determining how students perceive the job market and their abilities to look for opportunities and apply for them. The unemployment rate in Malaysia is generally below 4% even with the Covid-19 pandemic. However, it is higher among young people, where it can reach 10%. Yet, students look positively to their future career and believe they can search and find jobs. The influence of career adaptability on job search self-efficacy is due to the strong perceived personal agency shown by students to influence their career development and social relationships (Tolentino et al., 2019). Our findings are in line with previous research that found adaptability to positively affect job search self-efficacy, job satisfaction, job engagement career exploration and career decision-making (Guan et al., 2015; Johnston et al., 2013; Maggiori et al., 2013). Career adaptability also was found to have a positive effect on career competency (Safavi & Bouzari, 2019), subjective well-being (life satisfaction, positive and negative affect) (Rudolph et al., 2017) among other job outcomes. Due to technology advancement and industrial revolution, keep disruptions will occur, however,

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Table 4: Factor Loadings, Reliability and Validity

Constructs	Factor Loadings	CA	CR	AVE
Career Adaptability (Concern)		0.839	0.840	0.590
Preparing for the future	0.88			
Becoming aware of the educational and career choices that I must make	0.75			
Planning how to achieve my goals	0.78			
Career Adaptability (Control)		0.809	0.810	0.539
Taking responsibility for my actions	0.76			
Sticking up for my beliefs	0.70			
Counting on myself	0.75			
Career Adaptability (Curiosity)		0.770	0.778	0.569
Looking for opportunities to grow as a person	0.70			
Investigating options before making a choice	0.78			
Observing different ways of doing things	0.83			
Probing deeply into questions I have	0.72			
Career Adaptability (Confidence)		0.899	0.900	0.600
Performing tasks efficiently	0.74			
Taking care to do things well	0.78			
Learning new skills	0.79			
Working up to my ability	0.76			
Overcoming obstacles	0.82			
Solving problems	0.76			
Social Support		0.806	0.809	0.586
Friends are available to offer support in my career transition	0.81			
I receive encouragement from my peers to meet my career goals	0.74			
Others in my life are very supportive of my career	0.74			
Job-Search Self-Efficacy		0.880	0.886	0.722
Prepare resumes that will get you job interviews	0.89			
Use a variety of sources to find job opportunities	0.87			
Search for and find good job opportunities	0.73			
Career Outlook		0.879	0.881	0.651
It is likely that good things will happen in my career	0.85			
I have the energy to pursue my career goals	0.82			
I am confident my career will turn out well in the future	0.71			
Thinking about my career interests me	0.78			

Notes: CA: Cronbach's Alpha; CR: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average variance extracted.

it still creates more opportunities to be seized. Thus, current graduate employees will have to be able to prepare themselves in adapting with the constant changes in every industrialization period (Le et al., 2020). Lifelong learning comes first, followed by creativity and innovation, foreign languages, expertise and digitalization, adaptability, and finally, organizing and managing ability. Critical thinking and problem-solving were perceived to have the biggest gap.

The social support construct is also found to exert strong effect on how students look at their career outlook and
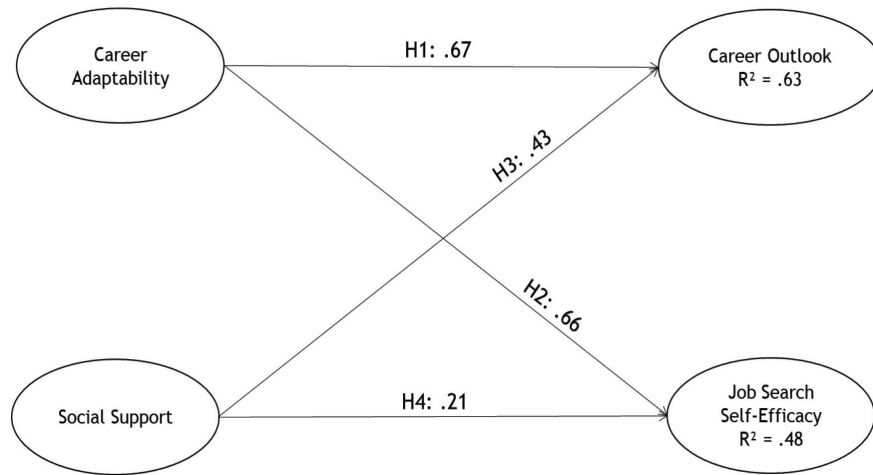
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Figure 1: The Structural Model

Table 5: Summary of Hypotheses

Path	Estimates	Critical Ratio	*P* Value	Decision
Career adaptability → career outlook	0.67	11.183	<0.001	Supported
Career adaptability → job search self-efficacy	0.66	10.656	<0.001	Supported
Social Support → career outlook	0.43	8.628	<0.001	Supported
Social Support → job search self-efficacy	0.21	4.209	<0.001	Supported

job search self-efficacy. This confirms that social circles that individuals identify with shape the way they see the career prospects and efficacy in reaching to desired life and job outcomes such as life satisfaction and positive affect (Diaz & Bui, 2017), interest in self-employment (Caines et al., 2019). Our findings is in line with previous studies, which revealed that social support received from parents and teachers has a positive effect on students self-efficacy and, in turn, on students' academic engagement (Pan et al., 2017). Similarly, supervisors and family support reduced related to work-family conflict and psychological strains but increased job and family satisfaction (Drummond et al., 2017). In a recent study (Wilson et al., 2020), found that perceived social support is significantly and positively related to greater mindfulness, self-compassion and subjective happiness, but negatively related to depression and perceived stress. The effect of social support on many outcomes may be based on several theoretical grounding; for example, it is conceptualized as a subjective norm in the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norm refers to whether people would approve or disapprove one's action and also whether those closer circles such as family members, peers and friends think he/she should engage in a particular activity, in this case finding a job and working to achieve career prospect. Another way to look at may come from the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Self-determination theory posits that people have three innate psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When these needs are satisfied, positive outcomes results. Relatedness one of these needs that refers to how individuals" themselves to be socially accepted and connected to group of people they regularly interact with such as family members, peers and colleagues, managers, and teachers, etc. (Al-Jubari, 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Individuals tend to accept values and practices of those whom they feel connected to or they want to be connected to as their own and, thus, feel a sense of belonging. For instance, relatedness is associated deeply with how students' feelings about how their teachers genuinely respect and value them and that feeling lead them to be more involved in their studies more that those students who feel disconnected or rejected by their teachers (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). Further, it was found that relatedness is positively associated with workplace engagement and negatively associated with emotional exhaustion (Klassen et al., 2012).

6. Conclusion

Career adaptability and social support are important determinants of job search self-efficacy and career outlook. The study lends support to career adaptability multidimensionality. It also highlights the role of social

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surroundings in giving support to students to enhance their perceptions. Identifying with social groups and feeling a sense of belonging can have a positive effect on people's perceptions and opinions. There are few limitations to be acknowledged in this study. First, the study is cross-sectional and collected data based on convenience sampling technique. This may hinder the generalizability of the findings to all university students in Malaysia. Future study may consider adopting bigger sample size with probability sampling procedure. Second, when assessing the model's adequacy and validity using Amos, we had to remove few items. Though we have used validated measures, to avoid this in the future, researcher should pilot the study measures prior to the full-scale data collection.

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