

The Nexus of Self-Efficacy and Career Planning on the Work Readiness of Fresh Graduates in Semarang City

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Abstrak

This study aims to examine the influence of self-efficacy and career planning on the work readiness of fresh graduates in Semarang City. The type of research used is a quantitative research method. The population in this study consisted of fresh graduate students from the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Wahid Hasyim, Indonesia, class of 2020, with a sample of 76 respondents. The sampling technique applied was non-probability sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires. The data analyzed using the IBM SPSS version 22 application with multiple linear regression analysis methods. The results of the partial test self-efficacy does not have a significant effect on student work readiness, while career planning has a positive and significant effect on student work readiness. This study concludes that self-efficacy and career planning simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on student work readiness.

Keyword: Self-efficacy, Career Planning, Work Readiness

INTRODUCTION

Workplace dynamics have undergone significant changes with the advent of globalization, marked by increased competition among businesses. In this context, companies are required to continuously improve their competitiveness, resulting in a growing demand for highly skilled individuals who can adapt quickly. Therefore, self-development is crucial for individuals to face rapid change and compete in the workplace (Alifah, 2022).

Challenges in the workplace often differ from those faced in academia, where individuals must face high levels of responsibility, intense competition, and pressure from superiors and the work environment. In facing these challenges, self-efficacy, an individual's belief in their own abilities, is a crucial factor influencing their response and ability to overcome obstacles. High self-efficacy, supported by a positive mindset, can strengthen individuals' resilience, making them better prepared to face difficulties (Violinda & Wahyuningsih, 2023). Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in [Table 1](#) shows that the open unemployment rate in Central Java Province, particularly among higher education graduates, increased from 2022 to 2023.

This emphasizes the importance of work readiness for fresh graduates entering the workforce. However, many new graduates remain underprepared due to inaccurate career planning and low self-efficacy (Sagita et al., 2020). Career planning, which is the process of determining activities to achieve career goals, plays a crucial role in work readiness (Wendling & Sagas, 2020; Winingsih, 2022).

Table 1. Open Unemployment Rate in Central Java Province

Gender	Year	
	2022	2023
Male	4.51%	5.18%
Female	3.07%	5.76%

This study aims to analyze the impact of self-efficacy and career planning on the work readiness of fresh graduates, specifically students from the Faculty of Economics and Business, Wahid Hasyim University, class of 2020 in Semarang. By understanding the influence of these two factors, this study is expected to provide insight into the obstacles students face in the transition from academia to the workforce, as well as strategic recommendations for educational institutions to improve the quality of graduates to better prepare them for competition in the work market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-efficacy was developed by Bandura (1986) within social cognitive theory, which states that human behavior is influenced by the interaction between the individual, the environment, and the behavior itself. Self-efficacy is formed through personal experience, social modeling, verbal persuasion, and emotional states. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to be confident, resilient, and optimistic in facing challenges (Alifah, 2025; Puspitasari & Fadhli, 2024).

Career planning is the process of making decisions about future career paths, including self-assessment, exploring opportunities, setting goals, planning steps, and striving for achievement (Alifah, 2025). Work readiness is the condition in which an individual possesses the combination of skills, knowledge, understanding, and personal attributes that enable them to succeed in the workplace (Violinda & Wahyuningsih, 2024).

Based on previous theories and research, a framework of thought was formulated that self-efficacy and career planning influence the work readiness of fresh graduates, illustrated in [Figure 1](#). The hypothesis can be declare:

H1: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on work readiness

H2: Career planning has a positive effect on work readiness

H3: Self-efficacy and career planning simultaneously influence work readiness

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive and causal approach. The population consisted of 315 students from the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Wakhid Hasyim, Semarang, Central Java, that graduating class of 2020. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error, resulting in a sample size of 76 respondents. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling. Data were collected using a 1-5 Likert-scale questionnaire (Sugiyono, 2019).

Validity and reliability tests were used to validate the research instruments. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression. This is including the t-test (partial), F-test (simultaneous), and coefficient of determination (R^2) using SPSS 22 software.

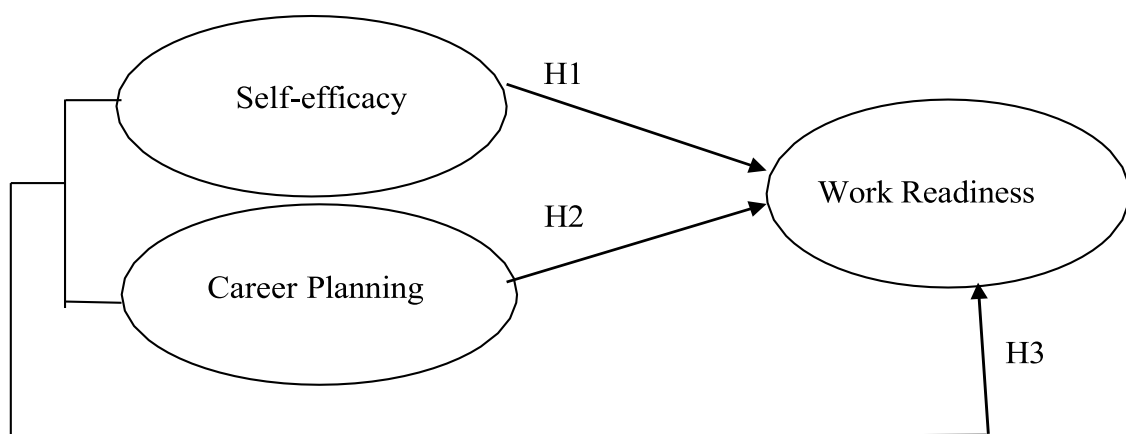


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Based on the primary data in [Table 2](#), it can be explained that 30 respondents (39%) were male and 46 respondents (61%) were female. Based on the primary data, the characteristics of respondents based on age were <21 years of 1 respondent (1%), 21-23 years of 56 respondents (74%), 23-25 years of 16 respondents (21%), and >25 years of 3 respondents (4%). The characteristics of respondents based on the study program of students who had filled out the questionnaire for this study show that the respondents were mostly from the Management study program, namely 41 people with a percentage of 54%, the Accounting Study Program amounted to 25 people with a percentage of 33%, and while the Islamic Economics Study Program only amounted to 10 people with a percentage of 13%. The characteristics of respondents based on work experience, it can be seen that most respondents have previous work experience. A total of 30 respondents, or 40% have participated in an internship program, while 36 respondents, or 47% have experience working part-time or as freelancers. Meanwhile, 10 respondents, or 13%, had no work experience. This data illustrates the variation in work experience among the study respondents.

Validity and Reliability Testing Results

The validity test was used to measure the accuracy of the instrument and determine the validity of each questionnaire item used in this study (Sugiyono 2019). The test was conducted using SPSS. According to (Ghozali 2018), each questionnaire item is considered valid if the calculated r -value $>$ r -table and the significance value is less than 0.05. The formula for r -table is $df = n - k$ (n = number of samples, k = number of independent variables). In this study, $df = 76 - 2 = 74$ with a significance value of 0.05, resulting in the r -table value of 0.1975. The validity test results showed that almost all data were valid, with the calculated r value greater than r -table (0.226) and the significance value less than 0.05 ([Table 3](#)). The results of the reliability test in [Table 3](#) show that the self-efficacy, career planning, and work readiness, are reliable with a Cronbach's alpha value above 0.6.

Table 2. Characteristics Respondents

Characteristics	Amount	Presentation
Gender		
Man	30	39%
Woman	46	61%
Age		
<21 years	1	1%
21-23 years	56	74%
23 – 25 years	16	21%
>25 years	3	4%
Department		
Accounting	25	44%
Management	41	54%
Islamic Economics	10	13%
Work experience		
Internship	30	40%
Have worked part-time/freelance	36	47%
Never worked	10	13%

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Testing Results

Variables	Item	r-count	r-table	Information	Conbach's Alpha	Information
Self-efficacy	SE 1	0.688	0.226	Valid	0.763	Reliabel
	SE 2	0.564		Valid		
	SE 3	0.756		Valid		
	SE 4	0.621		Valid		
	SE 5	0.752		Valid		
	SE 6	0.663		Valid		
Career Planning	CP 1	0.584	0.226	Valid	0.878	Reliabel
	CP 2	0.622		Valid		
	CP 3	0.695		Valid		
	CP 4	0.721		Valid		
	CP 5	0.858		Valid		
	CP 6	0.729		Valid		
	CP 7	0.742		Valid		
	CP 8	0.739		Valid		
	CP 9	0.716		Valid		
	CP 10	0.51		Valid		
Work Readiness	KK 1	0.605	0.226	Valid	0.724	Reliabel
	KK 2	0.564		Valid		
	KK 3	0.781		Valid		
	KK 4	0.797		Valid		
	KK 5	0.473		Valid		
	KK 6	0.738		Valid		
	KK 7	0.335		Valid		
	KK 8	0.377		Valid		

Classical Assumption Test

The normality test aims to assess whether the residuals from a regression analysis are normally distributed. One way to evaluate normality is by using a P-P plot. If the points on the graph approach a straight line, the data can be considered normally distributed. [Figure 2](#) shows that the data points lie on a straight line. This indicates that the data obtained in this study are normally distributed. Based on the results of the multicollinearity test in [Table 4](#), the tolerance value for each independent variable in this study is greater than 0.10, and the variance inflation factor (VIF) is less than 10, indicating that there is no multicollinearity in the study. The heteroscedasticity test aims to detect the relationship between the dependent and independent variables in a regression. If the points on the scatterplot are randomly distributed without a clear pattern, heteroscedasticity is not present (see [Figure 3](#)).

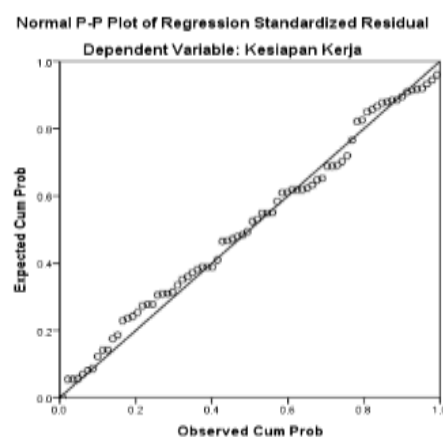
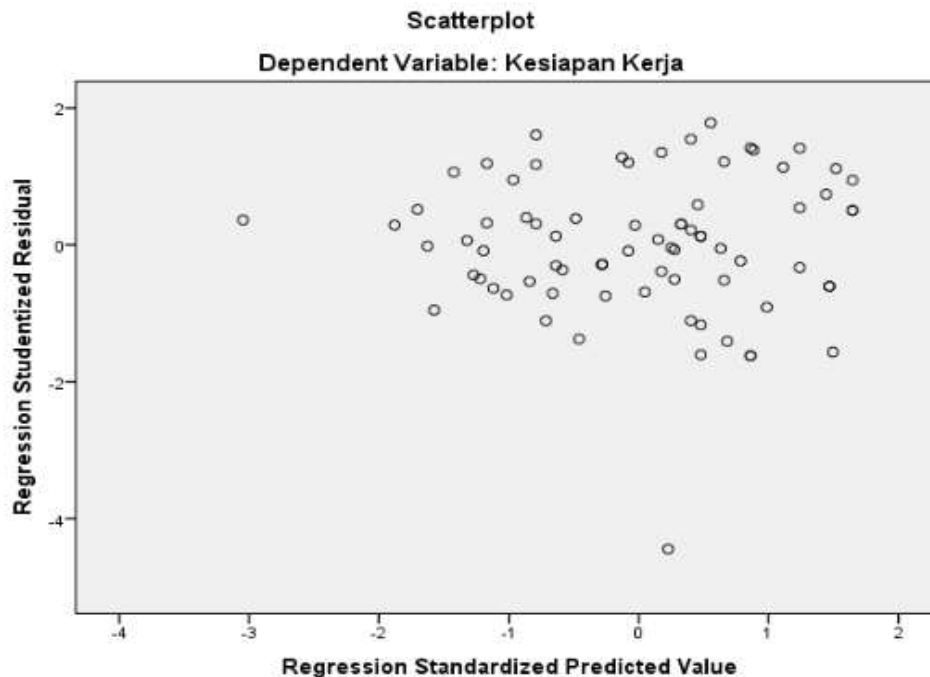
**Figure 2.** Normality Testing

Table 4. Multicollinierity Testing

Variable	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Self-efficacy	0.576	1.738
Career Planning	0.576	1.738

a. Dependent Variable: Work Readiness

**Figure 3.** HeteroscedasticityTesting

Hypothesis Testing Results

The t-test indicates the extent to which one independent variable influences the dependent variable, assuming the other independent variables remain constant (Ghozali 2018). If the calculated t-value is greater than the t-table (1.984) and the significance value is <0.05 , it means that the independent variable individually influences the dependent variable. If the calculated t-value is less than the t-table (1.984) and the significance value is >0.05 , it means that the independent variable individually does not influence the dependent variable (Table 5). Using the formula $df = n - k - 1$, where n is the number of samples and k is the number of independent and dependent variables, in this study, with $df = 76 - 2 - 1 = 73$ and a significance level of 0.5, the t-table value is 1.993.

Based on Table 5, the results of the simultaneous test (F) show that the calculated F value of 49.998 is much greater than the F table, namely 3.12 (calculated F 49.998 $>$ F table 3.12) and the significance value in the F test of 0.000 is smaller than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$) so it can be concluded that H3 is accepted, which means that together the variables of self-efficacy and career planning have a positive and significant effect on work readiness. The results of the coefficient of determination (R^2) test in Table 5 show that the adjusted R square value is 0.566, meaning that the independent variables self-efficacy (X1) and career planning (X2) have an influence of 56.6% on the dependent variable work readiness (Y) and 43.4% is influenced by other variables outside this study ($100\% - 56.6\% = 43.4\%$).

Table 5. Multiple Regression Result

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	11.884	2.588		4.592	0.000
Self-efficacy	0.068	0.129	0.053	0.528	0.599
Career Planning	0.479	0.066	0.725	7.231	0.000
Adjusted R Square= 0.566, F-value= 49.998, Sig. F value=0.000					

a. Dependent Variable: Work Readiness

Discussion

The Influence of Self-Efficacy on Work Readiness

Based on the results of the partial t-test, the self-efficacy variable had a calculated t-value of $0.528 < t_{\text{table}} 1.993$, with a significance value of $0.599 > 0.05$. These results indicate that statistically, self-efficacy does not have a significant influence on students' work readiness. Therefore, the hypothesis stating a positive and significant influence of self-efficacy on work readiness cannot be accepted. Although theoretically, self-efficacy plays an important role in shaping individual readiness for the world of work, the results of this study indicate that its indicators are not yet strong enough to have a direct influence. The indicators of level, strength, and generalization are generally not optimally developed in students. Students' level of confidence in their ability to complete tasks or strength, and their ability to generalize this confidence across various work situations or generality, are still limited. This indicates that other factors such as work experience, training, or social support may be more dominant in shaping students' work readiness (Alifah, 2025).

The Effect of Career Planning on Work Readiness

Based on the results of the partial t-test, the career planning variable has a calculated t-value of $7.231 > t_{\text{table}} \text{ value of } 1.993$, and a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that career planning has a positive and significant influence on student work readiness. Therefore, the hypothesis stating a positive influence of career planning on work readiness is accepted. These results indicate that students with a clear and well-defined career plan are more prepared to face challenges in the workplace. A well-thought-out career plan helps students define their desired career goals and the steps they need to take to achieve them. Furthermore, having a career plan allows students to more easily identify the competencies they need to master and design self-development strategies appropriate to their chosen career field (Wendling & Sagas, 20220).

The Influence of Self-Efficacy and Career Planning on Work Readiness

Based on the results of the simultaneous test (F-test), the calculated F-value was 49.998 F-table 3.12, with a significance level of $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that the variables self-efficacy and career planning together have a positive and significant effect on student work readiness. In the partial test (t-test), career planning was proven to have a significant effect on work readiness, with a calculated t-value of $7.231 > 1.993$ and a significance level of $0.000 < 0.05$. Students with a clear career plan tend to be better prepared for the world of work. Meanwhile, self-efficacy did not show a significant effect partially (calculated t-value of $0.528 < 1.993$, significance level of $0.599 > 0.05$). This finding indicates that self-confidence, in this context, is not sufficient to directly influence work readiness (Puspitasari & Fadhli, 2024).

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that career planning has a positive and significant effect on the work readiness of new postgraduate students in Semarang. Self-efficacy and career planning jointly have a positive and significant effect on the work readiness of new postgraduate students in Semarang. Based on the conclusion, it is hoped that students will further enhance their self-confidence or self-efficacy in their abilities and develop the courage to face and overcome challenges, believing that every effort will yield the desired results. Students are also advised to begin developing more focused career plans early on, recognizing their potential and desired career goals. This is crucial so that upon completion of their education, students will have a more mature and structured work readiness.

Future researchers are advised to develop and add other independent variables beyond this research model. Based on the coefficient of determination, it was found that self-efficacy and career planning only explained 56.6% of the work readiness variable, while the remaining 43.4% was influenced by other factors not examined. Factors such as soft skills, internal locus of control, and emotional intelligence have the potential to contribute significantly to work readiness and could be the focus of further research.

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