JOB SEARCH SELF-EFFICACY, WORKPLACE ANXIETY AND CAREER EXPLORATION AMONG FINAL YEAR STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

By

IMAN NURHAKIM BIN SHAIFUL AHRAM

A dissertation submitted to the Department of Psychology and Counseling,

Faculty of Arts and Social Science,

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman,

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Psychology (Industrial and Organizational Psychology)

May 2025

ABSTRACT

JOB SEARCH SELF-EFFICACY, WORKPLACE ANXIETY AND CAREER EXPLORATION AMONG FINAL YEAR STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

Iman Nurhakim Bin Shaiful Ahram

Increasing technology changes the job market in Malaysia. Due to this, new job types are being created while old jobs are getting restructured. Therefore, final-year students must adapt to this by exploring careers through discovery of interests and research of different career options. In this regard, it is essential to review factors affecting career exploration behavior to properly address the issue. This study identifies Job Search Self-Efficacy (JSSE) and workplace anxiety as the factor that could influence career exploration. The main objective of the current study is to examine the relationships between JSSE, workplace anxiety and career exploration among final year students in Malaysia. Cross-sectional survey design was used, and data were collected via online questionnaires from 298 final-year students from Malaysia aged below 24 years by purposive sampling. A Spearman's rank correlation analysis indicated that there was a strong positive relationship between JSSE and career exploration, whereas the test results indicate that workplace anxiety did not significantly predict career exploration. Given that JSSE is a key predictor of career

exploration, this study recommends that relevant authorities enhance career counseling to support students' career development. Additionally, recognizing the dual nature of workplace anxiety underscores the need for adaptive frameworks that address both its enabling and debilitating effects on career exploration. Future research should adopt mixed-methods and longitudinal designs to mitigate self-report biases and examine additional variables to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing career exploration among final-year Malaysian students.

Keywords: job search self-efficacy (JSSE), workplace anxiety, career exploration, final-year students, malaysia.

Subject Area: BF1-990 Psychology

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisors, Dr. Nurul Iman and Dr. Grace, for their invaluable guidance and support throughout the completion of my dissertation. Despite their busy schedules, they consistently provided prompt and thoughtful feedback. Even though I had no prior experience with dissertation work, they were always willing to help me along the way.

I am also deeply thankful to my parents, Shaiful Ahram and Shafinaz, and my entire family for their unwavering support—emotionally, morally, physically, and financially—throughout my studies. They stood by me during my lowest moments and when I struggled to complete this dissertation. Their constant reminders to persevere kept me going whenever I felt demotivated.

A special thanks to the respondents who generously gave their time to participate in this study and complete the questionnaires. Lastly, I want to extend my sincere appreciation to my friends for their advice, support, and shared knowledge during the completion of this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

JSSE	Job Search Self Efficacy
TWA	Theory of Workplace Anxiety
UTAR	Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman
IIUM	International Islamic University Malaysia
PUO	Politeknik Ungku Omar
UniKL	Universiti Kuala Lumpur
UTP	Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS
UiTM	Universiti Teknologi MARA

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter will explain the background and focus of the research topic. Mainly, this study examines the relationship between Job Search Self-Efficacy (JSSE), workplace anxiety and career exploration. Furthermore, this chapter presents the research background, problem statements, research questions, research objectives, hypotheses, and significance of the study.

1.1 Research Background

Final-year students in Malaysia are in a critical phase as they transition from academia to the workforce. This phase is often marked by increased anxiety and uncertainty about their future careers (Elfina & Andriany, 2023). While academic performance is important, research has shown that job search self-efficacy and workplace anxiety can significantly impact a student's career exploration (Elfina & Andriany, 2023; Yang, 2018). Career exploration refers to discovering one's interests, values and past experiences an investigating different career possibilities that an individual might want to explore at any point in their career (Chen & Vinitwatanakhun, 2020). The rapid change in the market has made career exploration the key to career adaptability and a prerequisite for career success (Jiang et al., 2019). Therefore, it is necessary to understand the factors influencing final-year students' career exploration process.

In the context of Malaysia, where the competitiveness in the job market is increasing, fresh graduates face numerous challenges, including low levels of self-efficacy (Alias et al., 2022; Hasan et al., 2014). Job search self-efficacy (JSSE) was defined as a person's confidence in their ability to perform job search tasks (Saks & Ashforth, 1999). JSSE has become more important in determining students' career trajectories. Past and present research has consistently asserted that self-efficacy is a critical determinant of career-related outcomes, including career exploration (Çarkıt, 2024; Solberg, 1998). Moreover, studies conducted in Asia suggest that higher levels of self-efficacy have been linked to an increased propensity for self-employment. This is because self-efficacy fosters creativity, innovation, and the ability to recognise opportunities that, in turn, enhance career exploration outcomes among university graduates in countries such as China and Indonesia (Guan et al., 2013; Subhan et al., 2021).

In addition, technological advancements have significantly increased the dynamism of the job market. Novitz (2020) notes that technological innovation has led to new job types and occupations, resulting in massive restructuring and redesigning of professions at all levels (Sadik, 2022). For instance, the ability of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to perform high-skilled tasks, such as providing diagnosis and treatment, has led to a decline in employment opportunities for roles that were traditionally expected to be filled by graduates (Nawaz, 2019; Webb, 2019). These changes can worsen workplace anxiety, potentially impacting students' readiness to engage in career exploration.

Workplace anxiety is characterised by experiences of stress, worry, and fear related to job concerns, including the possibility of rejection, failure, and uncertainty about future career prospects (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018). As final-

year students transition from university to the workforce, many experience elevated anxiety levels due to uncertainties about future employment, personal skill adequacy, and the overall state of the job market. For example, the unpredictable job market and challenging economic conditions have heightened anxiety among final-year students (David et al., 2021; Rahmadani, 2021). Referring to the previous studies, we can understand that workplace anxiety can influence career exploration. Understanding and managing workplace anxiety anxiety can help improve job search outcomes among final-year students.

While previous research has established various factors associated with career exploration, limited attention has been given to the influence of JSSE and workplace anxiety on career exploration, particularly among final-year students in Malaysia. Malaysia's diverse cultural, educational, and job market landscape makes understanding how these factors influence final-year students crucial. This study examines the relationship between job search self-efficacy (JSSE), workplace anxiety, and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia. The results gained can help students, universities, and career counsellors develop strategies to boost JSSE and reduce workplace anxiety.

1.2 Problem Statement

According to Deming (2017), 58% of STEM graduates quit their jobs within ten years of graduation. This tremendous turnover results from rapid technological change, which introduces new job tasks while rendering older ones obsolete (Deming & Noray, 2018). As technological advancements transform industries, many organisations are open to digital transformation,

fundamentally changing company structures, human resource practices, and operational procedures (Gilchrist, 2016). In particular, the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) not only creates new opportunities and enhances productivity but also leads to job transformations, displacements, and the creation of entirely new roles (Ghobakhloo, 2018; Lee et al., 2016). For instance, incorporating AI into human resource functions can eliminate numerous positions by replacing them with software-based applications (Domingos, 2017), prompting organisations to establish new regulations for roles in the digital era (Domingos, 2017). Consequently, as AI continues to evolve and reshape job designs, final-year students must be prepared to explore new career paths that align with the changing demands of the modern workforce.

Nowadays, technological advancements have provided final-year students with access to a broader range of career options compared to previous generations (Tian & Sui, 2020). With the emergence of remote work, entrepreneurship, and other work alternatives, traditional career paths are no longer the only choices. Thus, in order to familiarise themselves with the job market dynamics, final-year students must seek to explore careers and then map their skills with their job market goals (Tran et al., 2022). This emphasises the need to check on the rate of career exploration of final-year students as they must place themselves in the dynamic job market.

Looking into the Malaysian context, the career exploration issue has become more important and demands serious attention from researchers. Lots of recent studies have highlighted the need for career interventions to enhance graduates' competencies (Lau et al., 2021; Yusran et al., 2021; Ho et al., 2020),

noting that many undergraduates struggle to secure employment despite the diverse career opportunities available in the industry. However, existing research on career exploration among Malaysian graduates has predominantly focused on specific disciplines, with several studies examining only engineering graduates (Keishing & Renukadevi, 2016; Makki et al., 2017; Makki et al., 2015; Rahim & Zainal, 2015). Since educational background plays a crucial role in shaping career decisions and can significantly influence career exploration (Rinke et al., 2014), limiting the sample to a single field may not provide a comprehensive picture of career exploration among university students in Malaysia. Therefore, a study that includes a diverse sample of final-year students across various courses must offer broader insights into how students navigate their career exploration in a rapidly evolving job market.

After completing their studies, finding a career path emerges as a significant challenge for students (Donald et al., 2018). In the final phase of their study, final-year students will enter a decisive phase as they will explore the complexities of the job market. This makes career exploration more important as it facilitates the transition by helping the students understand and fairly evaluate their career options. Lent et al. (2017) suggest that the increase in JSSE contributed to increased efforts in career exploration. This highlights the importance of boosting JSSE among students to ensure they effectively navigate their career exploration process.

Furthermore, given their limited familiarity with the labour market, final-year students must cultivate their JSSE to overcome the challenges during their career exploration (Kanfer et al., 2001). Factors such as JSSE are crucial during this transition as they are significant to students' career exploration behaviour,

shaping their future careers (Saks & Gruman, 2018). This was supported by other findings that the JSSE improves job search among new graduates and becomes an important psychological capital for school-to-work transition (Petruzziello et al., 2020; Uwakwe et al., 2022). Given this situation, understanding how JSSE is significant to career exploration is crucial for supporting final-year students in navigating this critical transition phase and facilitating their successful career exploration.

According to Vignoli (2015), research on demotivating factors, such as anxiety among students, should be a primary focus because graduates often worry about their future careers and are demotivated by occupational challenges. Anxiety, which can trigger defensive behaviours (Porcelli, 2020), may lead graduates to adopt avoidance strategies that prevent them from exploring various career options (Mac Gowan, 2022). Moreover, anxiety can also foster an irrational fear that restricts information-seeking behaviours (Haase et al., 2019). In the context of final-year students seeking employment, this anxiety manifests as workplace anxiety. Empirical evidence supports this perspective; studies have consistently found that workplace anxiety is a significant concern among graduates (Boo et al., 2021; Miller & Rottinghaus, 2014; Pisarik et al., 2017) and has been identified as a key variable influencing the extent of career exploration (Braunstein-Bercovitz et al., 2012; Park et al., 2017).

This study uses the framework by Cheng and McCarthy (2018) to examine how JSSE and workplace anxiety impact career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia. Students with higher JSSE are believed to feel more confident in dealing with any challenges related to finding a job,

consequently pushing them to seek career opportunities actively. In contrast, high workplace anxiety can demotivate and discourage students from exploring their options.

Given the fast-paced nature of today's job market, understanding the interaction between JSSE, workplace anxiety and career exploration is essential. This study aims to clarify how these factors affect the career exploration process for final-year students in Malaysia as they prepare to enter the workforce.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between job search self-efficacy (JSSE) and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia?
2. What is the relationship between workplace anxiety and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia?

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between job search self-efficacy (JSSE) and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia.
2. To examine the relationship between workplace anxiety and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia.

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

H_1: There is a positive relationship between job search self-efficacy (JSSE) and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia.

H_2: There is a negative relationship between workplace anxiety and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia.

1.6 Significance of Research

The current study makes several contributions. First, this study could benefit final-year students as the results provide insight into how to improve job search outcomes for them. Final-year students can benefit from this study by understanding how their self-efficacy and workplace anxiety are associated with their career exploration efforts. This acknowledgement could motivate them to look for resources to increase their self-efficacy. The big difference between university and the real world further deepens the issue. For example, a study by McKinsey in 2012, "Education to Employment," found that although more than 70% of universities thought they were doing an excellent job of preparing students for work, just 40% of employers believed this to be the case (Kennayuthulla et al., 2019). The listed issues regarding the elements that affect final-year university students' career exploration need to be understood. By checking the influence of JSSE and workplace anxiety, this study can help to show how emotional and psychological factors relate to career exploration activities. Students can use this to manage their resources effectively, improving their career exploration level.

This study could also yield significant insights to help universities develop and improve their support programmes. By recognising factors that might lower or boost career exploration, this study will provide valuable implications for educational institutions in devising supportive programs that enhance self-efficacy and minimise the workplace anxiety of final-year students when searching for a job. Through the findings of this study, universities can benefit from designing workshops, seminars, and counselling services that boost final-year students' JSSE and reduce their workplace anxiety. Implementing suitable interventions can enhance self-efficacy, reduce workplace anxiety, and improve students' well-being (Nixon et al., 2022; Ţuţu, 2011). JSSE serves as an important psychological resource that can significantly increase carer exploration. Universities can leverage this resource to develop suitable programs for their students. This will help their students to be well-prepared for career exploration.

This study also has several significant implications for the academic field. This study will be able to provide empirical evidence from a Malaysian context to the Theory of Workplace Anxiety (TWA). This helps us to understand how demographic variables, like cultural and social factors, direct this theory. The study will also yield insights into the interplay between psychological factors and career behaviours by exploring the relationship between JSSE, workplace anxiety and career exploration. This may also pave the way for more holistic models that recognise internal and external influences on career exploration. Finally, the study can serve as a foundation for future research by revealing new relationships and dynamics. For example, follow-up studies may

investigate the longitudinal impact of JSSE and workplace anxiety on career exploration or inspire replication studies conducted across countries, enabling cross-cultural comparisons that shed light on universal and culture-specific dynamics of career development.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Job Search Self-efficacy (JSSE)

JSSE can be conceptualised as the belief in one's capability to successfully execute specific job search behaviours and secure employment (Saks & Ashforth, 1999). This concept was operationally assessed using the Job-Search Self-Efficacy scale developed by Saks et al. (2015). Higher scores indicate higher levels of JSSE.

1.7.2 Workplace Anxiety

Conceptually, workplace anxiety is defined as an experience of stress, worry, and fear related to a job, including concerns about rejection, failure, and uncertainty about the future career (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018). Operationally, it was measured using the Workplace Anxiety Scale developed by McCarthy et al. (2016). Higher scores indicate higher levels of workplace anxiety.

1.7.3 Career Exploration

Career exploration refers to discovering one's interests, values,and past experiences and investigating different career possibilities that an individual might want to explore at any point in their career (Chen & Vinitwatanakhun,

2020). Operationally, it was measured using the Career Exploration Survey (CES) developed by Stumpf et al. (1983). Higher scores indicate higher levels of career exploration.

1.7.4 Final-Year Students

Final-year students refer to the students who typically completed most of their course requirements and are now focused on completing a significant research project or final assessment before graduating. (Olufemi et al., 2020). Respondents were identified through a demographic section in the questionnaire that gathered information on their age, gender, race, field of study, years of study, working experience, and CGPA. The present study only included undergraduate university students who are in their final year, are below 24 years old, are enrolled in Malaysian universities, and are residing in Malaysia. Samples that did not fulfill these criteria were excluded from the study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will explain theories and definitions related to this study. Moreover, in this study, Job search self-efficacy (JSSE) (predictor variable), workplace anxiety (predictor variable), career exploration (outcome variable), and theoretical and conceptual framework are discussed in the following chapter.

2.1 JSSE and Career Exploration

During the school-to-work transition, JSSE has been identified as an essential tool for university students, as it facilitates their engagement in exploring potential career paths (Saks, 2018). JSSE is the belief in one's ability to successfully perform specific job search behaviours and secure employment (Saks & Ashforth, 1999). JSSE may be a key factor influencing final-year students' career exploration. Previous research has demonstrated that students with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to engage in both the cognitive and behavioural aspects of career exploration (Kleine et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2022). Moreover, individuals with elevated self-efficacy feel capable, in control and are better equipped to handle new and challenging tasks (Becnel et al., 2021; Clercq et al., 2018). Despite the challenges associated with predicting future economic and labour market conditions, psychological resources such as JSSE can help individuals navigate these uncertainties (Akkermans et al., 2020). Thus, JSSE may be an important predictor of how well final-year students can adapt and succeed in their career exploration journey.

On the other hand, negative emotions resulting from low levels of self-efficacy may distract final-year students, leaving them unprepared for pursuing their careers and entering the job market (Huang, 2021). Job searching can be perceived as a distressing situation; when individuals feel incapable of managing it (i.e., when they exhibit low job search self-efficacy), it can lead to disengagement from career exploration activities. Over time, as job search self-efficacy diminishes regardless of the long duration and continuous problems with finding a job, feelings of frustration may develop, discouraging individuals from seeking new career paths (Rusu et al., 2013). Such evidence indicates that personal resources and skills, such as self-efficacy, are also crucial for facilitating career exploration. Higher levels of self-efficacy are related to career exploration behaviours, such as information-seeking for positions and job opportunities that they desire or aspire to (Petruzziello et al., 2021).

In contrast, those with low JSSE may be less inclined to challenge their abilities and might opt for professions that do not fully utilise their competencies (Wang & Yan, 2018). Therefore, higher levels of JSSE are positively correlated with career exploration. In comparison, lower levels may lead to limited engagement in such activities as individuals feel overwhelmed or discouraged by the job search process. Accordingly, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: *There is a positive relationship between job search self-efficacy and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia.*

2.2 Workplace Anxiety and Career Exploration

The higher education landscape in Malaysia has seen substantial growth and development, positioning Malaysia as an education hub in the Southeast Asian region. This quick growth means there is more need to study the details of academic results of the employability status of higher education students, particularly final-year students who are shifting to the workplace.

A key concern in this transition is the prevalence of workplace anxiety and its impact on student's ability to explore their career options effectively. Workplace anxiety is the experience of stress, worry, and fear related to job concerns, including the fear of rejection, failure, and uncertainty about future careers (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018). Workplace anxiety is increasingly recognised as a significant barrier. Studies indicate that final-year students in Malaysia are subjected to workplace anxiety as they are facing financial challenges and uncertainties regarding future employment prospects (Kenayathulla et al., 2019; Rusli et al., 2023). These stressors can elevate anxiety levels, which in turn may impair students' capacity for practical career exploration.

Research on workplace anxiety in the academic context of Malaysia and Indonesia has shown that career exploration concerns can significantly contribute to stress levels (Rusli et al., 2023). Moreover, workplace anxiety has been associated with reduced innovative work behaviour (Samma et al., 2020). According to Zhang et al. (2020), workplace anxiety consumes the emotional and physical resources of individuals, decreasing proactive behaviours like career exploration (Ali & Mehreen, 2022) and leading to more avoidance of

engaging in risk-taking activities (Mannor et al., 2016). Such persistent draining of personal resources may eventually exhaust workers' goodwill towards the organisation and lead them to withhold their efforts, which manifests as a reluctance to invest energy in proactive behaviours such as seeking resource opportunities that would enhance their careers (Trougakos et al., 2015; Hobfoll et al., 2018).

Empirical studies further support these assertions. Mohsin et al. (2022) found that workplace anxiety can prevent individuals from seeking job-related information, while Cui and Li (2021) identified a negative impact of workplace anxiety on proactive behaviour. These findings suggest that workplace anxiety could be a significant factor negatively influencing career exploration among final-year students. Therefore, we hypothesise that:

Hypothesis 2: *There is a negative relationship between workplace anxiety and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia.*

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study examines one theory that can help explain the relationship between JSSE, workplace anxiety and career exploration. Building upon the theory of workplace anxiety (TWA) by Cheng and McCarthy (2018). This theory posits that the anxiety that one experiences in work-related contexts may greatly determine how an individual thinks, feels and behaves. On the other hand, workplace anxiety among final-year students in Malaysia can be attributed to uncertainties related to entering the job market, fear of rejection, and self-doubt about their ability to search for and secure employment. This mechanism

can also be an important theoretical framework to explain the relationship between JSSE, workplace anxiety, and career exploration.

Based on this theory, the first hypothesis (H1) posits that there is a positive relationship between JSSE and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia. Individuals with high JSSE tend to believe in their ability to successfully secure employment, which helps them manage their workplace anxiety more effectively. According to this theory, individuals with excellent self-efficacy believe they can handle challenging tasks and are open to accepting them (i.e., exploring new careers). Individuals with high self-efficacy regard themselves as capable, worthy, and in command (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018; McCarthy et al., 2016). This provides resilience and steadiness that's needed to feel less overwhelmed to tackle workplace difficulties. As a result, high self-efficacy is likely to alleviate the effect of workplace anxiety. This positively affects career exploration, as individuals with higher self-efficacy are likelier to increase career exploration activities.

On the other hand, individuals with low self-efficacy are more inclined to internalise their experiences and blame failure on their limitations, increasing the level of workplace anxiety (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018). High levels of workplace anxiety lead to disengagement from challenging tasks (i.e., exploring new careers). This is because workplace anxiety leads to a persistent tendency to feel anxious about job-related issues across different situations (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018). To cope with anxiety, the anxious person tends to avoid being involved in challenging activities that could trigger their anxiety (Cui & Li, 2021). As a result, people with low levels of JSSE tend to be workplace-anxious and are more likely to disengage from high-arousal activities such as exploring

new careers (Mohsin et al., 2022). JSSE provides a sense of control, which minimises the adverse effects of anxiety and promotes career exploration. Final-year students in Malaysia with high JSSE are more likely to engage in career exploration because they perceive job-seeking challenges as manageable rather than overwhelming.

The second hypothesis (H2) asserts that there is a negative relationship between workplace anxiety and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia, a claim that is supported by the Theory of Workplace Anxiety (TWA). Excessive workplace anxiety can lead to worry about the future, which decreases a student's focus on career exploration activities. Such anxiety leads to avoidance behaviours, including procrastination, refraining from networking opportunities, and refusing to apply for jobs for fear of being rejected. Previous studies have employed TWA to examine how workplace anxiety affects job-related behaviours. For example, Samma et al. (2020) found that workplace anxiety negatively impacts innovative work behaviour. Similarly, Mohsin et al. (2022) observed that workplace anxiety prevents individuals from seeking job-related information, while Cui and Li (2021) reported a negative influence of workplace anxiety on employee proactive behaviour. Cheng and McCarthy (2018) further explain that such outcomes may stem from a resource loss experience, wherein heightened anxiety leads to the depletion of personal resources, thereby reducing career exploration behaviours.

Based on the explanation, the final-year students also are exposed to workplace anxiety. Final-year students face many challenges contributing to job-related anxiety, such as transitioning from academia to the workforce, high-

performance expectations, and uncertainty about future career prospects (Miller & Rottinghaus, 2014; Yusran et al., 2021). Increased workplace anxiety will likely lead students to withdraw from career exploration activities that support career development. Job market uncertainties exacerbate anxiety and demotivate students to explore their career opportunities.

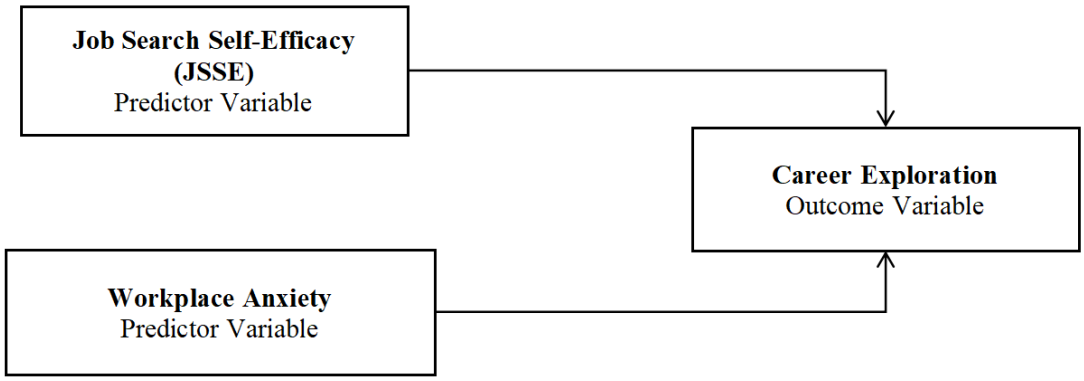
In summary, the theory of workplace anxiety offers explanations around the relationships among JSSE, workplace anxiety and career exploration. Students with high JSSE experience lower anxiety levels, which encourages active career exploration, whereas students with high workplace anxiety are more likely to avoid career-related activities due to fear and self-doubt. By referring to the TWA and previous studies that applied this theory, this study hypothesises a relationship between JSSE, workplace anxiety and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

This study has three variables: JSSE and workplace anxiety as predictor variables and career exploration as an outcome variable. This proposed framework would be an opportunity to determine the relationship between JSSE, workplace anxiety and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework


Job Search Self-Efficacy
(JSSE)
Predictor Variable
Career Exploration
Outcome Variable
Workplace Anxiety
Predictor Variable

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The following chapter discusses the research design, population and sample, sampling technique, data collection procedures, and measures.

3.1 Research Design

This quantitative study investigates the relationship between JSSE, workplace anxiety and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia. A quantitative study design was selected to facilitate data analysis through numerical comparisons and statistical inferences, enabling the generalisation of findings to the chosen population. Quantitative studies employ statistical analysis to extend the findings to the broader population (Willing, 2019). Moreover, this study employs a cross-sectional design as the data was collected once, and it was done through online questionnaires. The data that have been tested for normality test to check the data distribution pattern. Given the short time constraint for conducting this study, a cross-sectional design was the most appropriate because it is typically less time-consuming and less expensive than longitudinal studies.

3.2 Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used in this study. This method was selected as it could help the researcher identify groups of individuals who are proficient and knowledgeable about the interest of this study (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Besides that, purposive sampling is an efficient and practical tool that can be more effective (Tongco, 2007). This method focuses on individuals with specific traits who will be better qualified to help researchers gain information regarding the issues and interests of current research. This would allow the researchers to conclude the sample gathered (Sharma, 2017). Plus, purposive sampling is widely applied to focus on respondents with specific characteristics that would accommodate the research (Etikan et al., 2016). This method has been utilised in previous studies about job search among university graduates (Olufemi et al., 2020; Song et al., 2020). This method was used in the previous studies as it helps the researcher find a suitable sample for their study.

The present study recruited participants according to the following inclusion criteria: (1) undergraduate university students who are in their final year, (2) students below 24 years old, (3) from universities in Malaysia, and (4) residing in Malaysia. Samples that do not fulfil the mentioned criteria were not included as the sample for this study. Additionally, the participants' backgrounds were collected to determine the instruments' distribution and better understand the participants involved in this study. The demographic data was collected, including gender, age, race, field of study, years of study, working experience and CGPA.

3.3 Population and Sample

The population for this study is final-year students, which refers to the students who typically completed most of their course requirements and are now focused on completing a significant research project or final assessment before graduating. (Olufemi et al., 2020). Final-year university students in Malaysia could be exposed to workplace anxiety in various ways, significantly affecting their future career prospects. Despite still in their study, many students are exposed to workplace anxiety due to the feeling of being overwhelmed to secure employment after graduation (Demir, 2018). At this stage, uncertainty in finding a job, combined with the pressure of meeting high expectations from families and society, can intensify their anxiety (Ramli et al., 2018). Further strains of anxiety can lead to concentration issues, lowered motivation, and poor cognitive functioning, all of which inhibit their capacity to deal with demanding tasks such as career exploration (Pillay & Bundhoo, 2011; Rothkopf & Schworm, 2021). Moreover, such anxiety creates reductions in self-efficacy, whereby students do not feel ready for professional life, question their capabilities, and suffer from imposter syndrome (Radeef & Faisal, 2017). The pressure of transitioning into the workforce can further impair decision-making, causing students to procrastinate or even avoid career exploration activities (Linge & Kosnin, 2024).

This study was conducted in Malaysia. The population involved in this study would be below 24 years old. The age range was based on the study by Werbel (2000), where the average age of final-year students is 23.69 years old. Similarly, a study by Keane (2021) also suggested that the average age for final-year students is 24 and below.

The number of samples was calculated using the G*Power software. Using a Priori power analysis, statistical power of 0.80, and significance level (alpha) of 0.05, 270 samples were calculated as an ideal sample size for this study. According to Schönbrod and Perugini (2013), the sample size should reach 250 to be considered a stable estimation to represent a population. Hence, 270 final-year university students from universities in Malaysia and residing in Malaysia, aged below 24 years old, were being sampled for this study.

3.4 Measures

This study used an online questionnaire to collect participants' responses. The questionnaire used in the current study is divided into five sections. Section A is the informed consent (Appendix B). Next is Section B for demographic information (Appendix C), followed by Section C, Job search self-efficacy scale (JSSE) items (Appendix D), Section D for the Workplace Anxiety Scale (Appendix E) and Section E for the Career Exploration Survey (CES) (Appendix F).

3.4.1 Section B: Demographic Data

The demographic data sheet was included to identify variables that might correlate with the factor of career exploration. The sheet includes the age of the participants, gender, race, field of study, years of study, working experience, and CGPA.

3.4.2 Section D: Workplace Anxiety

Workplace anxiety was assessed using the Workplace Anxiety Scale (McCarthy et al., 2016), which consists of 8 items(see Appendix C). Participants' answers will be recorded using a Likert-type rating ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

The Workplace Anxiety Scale can be categorized into two themes: Self-Evaluative Anxiety and Social-Comparative Anxiety (McCarthy et al., 2016). The score for the Workplace Anxiety Scale was calculated by adding up the scores of the eight items. Higher scores indicate more significant workplace anxiety among individuals. A sample item for this scale is "I am overwhelmed by thoughts of doing poorly at work." The items for this scale were found reliable in another study, with $\alpha = 0.88$ (Cui & Li, 2021) and $\alpha = 0.933$ (Zhang et al., 2022).

3.4.3 Section E: Career Exploration

Career exploration was assessed using the Career Exploration Survey (CES) developed by Stumpf et al. (1983), which consists of 11 items (see Appendix A). The scale includes two subscales: Environmental Exploration (six items) and Self-Exploration (five items). A sample item for Environmental Exploration is "Investigated career possibilities over the last three months". A sample item for Self-Exploration is "Been retrospective in thinking about my career over the last three months". Cronbach alpha for the items ranges from .79 to .88 (Stumpf et al., 1983). The responses will be collected using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*little*) to 5 (*very satisfied*).

The Career Exploration scale can be grouped into two main themes: Environmental Exploration, which involves gathering external career-related information, and Self-Exploration, which focuses on internal reflection about one's identity, experiences, and future career path (Stumpf et al., 1983). The score for the Career Exploration Survey was calculated by adding up the scores of the 11 items. Higher scores indicate greater involvement in career exploration activities. Based on the manual, this scale is uni-dimensional and was analysed as a whole without breaking down its subscales for separate analysis (Stumpf et al., 1983).

3.4.4 Section C: Job search self-efficacy (JSSE)

Job search self-efficacy (JSSE) was measured using the 10-item scale from the Job-search self-efficacy scale developed by Saks et al. (2015) (see Appendix B). The scale covers job search self-efficacy behaviour (JSSE-B) and job search self-efficacy-outcome (JSSE-O). Saks et al. (2015) reported that Cronbach's alpha reliability for the JSSE-B and JSSE-O were 0.89 and 0.96. A sample item for JSSE-B is “Prepare resumes that will get you job interviews.” A sample item for JSSE-O is “Be successful in your job search.” The responses will be collected using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*not at all confident*) to 5 (*totally confident*).

The scale can be organized into three themes: Job Search Preparation Skills, Job Search Strategy and Opportunity Identification, and Expected Job Search Outcomes (Saks et al., 2015). The score for the JSSE Scale was calculated by adding up the scores of the 10 items. Higher scores indicate an individual's belief in their ability to engage in job search activities effectively..

This scale was analysed entirely without separating its subscales for analysis (Saks et al., 2015; Wang & Yan, 2018).

3.5 Pilot Study

A pilot study is essential for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of primary research and validating study methods and procedures (In, 2017). Before the entire study is implemented, a pilot study is needed to identify possible issue areas and shortcomings in the research instruments and methodology (Hassan et al., 2006). According to Baker (1994), a pilot study's sample size should be between 10% and 20% of the main study's sample size. Since the actual study's sample size is 270, the pilot study of this research has 27 respondents. The questionnaire was sent to the 27 respondents via WhatsApp app, and these respondents were excluded from the final data collection.

A reliability test was conducted to determine the reliability of the instruments used in this pilot study. As Mahtab and Abdullah (2016) proposed, Cronbach's alpha between $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$ indicates good and high reliability. In this study, all the questionnaires demonstrated a reliability of .70, signifying their high reliability. Consequently, it can be concluded that the measurements used in this study are reliable for application in Malaysia. Table 1 presents the Cronbach's alpha values for this research's pilot and actual study phases.

Table 1

Reliability results for the scales

Scales	No of Items	Pilot Study (*n*=27)	Actual Study (*n*=289)
JSSE Scale	10	.85	.91
Career Exploration Scale	11	.89	.89
Workplace Anxiety Scale	8	.85	.78

3.6 Validity Analysis

Factor analysis was used to analyse the construct validity of the Job search self-efficacy scale (JSSE), Workplace Anxiety Scale and Career Exploration Survey (CES). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy was used together with Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) to evaluate whether the instruments measured what it is intended to measure. According to Chan and Idris (2017), the KMO value should be greater than 0.6, and BTS must be significant at $p < .05$ to assume the instruments are valid. The results showed that the value of KMO for the JSSE was .90, the Workplace Anxiety Scale was .92, and the Career Exploration Survey (CES) was .91, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that all of the instruments were valid. Table 2 shows the validity results for the JSSE, Workplace Anxiety Scale and Career Exploration Survey (CES).

Table 2

Validity results for the scales

	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
		Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig
JSSE Scale	.904	1574.395	45	.000
Career Exploration Scale	.926	1385.287	55	.000
Workplace Anxiety Scale	.918	928.263	28	.000

To assess convergent validity, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was computed, yielding values of 0.505 for the Job Search Self-Efficacy Scale (JSSE), 0.447 for the Career Exploration Survey, and 0.479 for the Workplace Anxiety Scale. Prior to the AVE calculation, the factor loadings for all items were examined (see Appendix I), ensuring each item's contribution to its respective construct. An AVE value of 0.50 or higher is generally considered acceptable, indicating that the latent construct explains at least 50% of the variance in its observed indicators (Hair et al., 2022). However, AVE values marginally below this threshold may still be deemed acceptable in the context

of psychological research (Bond & Satchell, 2002). This is particularly relevant given the complexity of psychological constructs, which often results in lower explained variance. For instance, Smedslund et al. (2022) note that it is common for psychological variables to account for only around 40% of indicator variance. Supporting this, Sias (2005) found that studies on workplace relationships maintained acceptable construct validity despite AVE values falling below the recommended threshold. Moreover, Carlson and Herdman (2011) argue that measurement error and construct complexity frequently contribute to lower AVE values, with traits in validation studies often explaining less than 50% of the variance. Given the abstract and multifaceted nature of the constructs examined in this study, and in light of supporting evidence from prior literature, the slightly lower AVE values observed here may still be considered acceptable within the current research context. Table 3 shows the validity results for the JSSE, Workplace Anxiety Scale and Career Exploration Survey (CES).

Table 3

Convergent validity results for the scales

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
JSSE Scale	.505
Career Exploration Survey	.447
Workplace Anxiety Scale	.479

3.7 Procedure

This current study gained the data from primary data collection. The primary data source in this study was collected using the online questionnaire survey method. Data was collected using a questionnaire that covers JSSE, career exploration, and workplace anxiety. The questionnaire distribution used an online survey. Google Forms has been used to create the online questionnaire. Upon collection, the data was examined using IBM's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

The final-year students were contacted through direct messages by lecturers or their respective university career departments. Direct messages include email, Instagram, Linked In and WhatsApp. Following that, the questionnaires were sent out to the participants. The responses have been collected using Google Forms. The questionnaires comprised five sections, including consent forms, participants' demographics and instruments involved in the current study. In addition, all of the respondents' personal information has been kept private and anonymous to protect their identity.

3.8 Ethical Approval

This study has been approved by the Scientific and Ethical Review Committee of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) (Re: U/SERC/237/2023). In the Google Form, information about the purpose of the study, the estimated time needed to complete the survey, the researcher's email address and phone number, and the informed consent form were provided to the respondent and the online questionnaires.

3.9 Data Analysis

The data was analysed using Spearman's rank correlation (Spearman's Rho). Before the primary analysis, we performed preliminary tests to confirm that all assumptions required to produce trustworthy results were satisfied. Pearson's correlation was deemed as unsuitable as the data was non-linear. In contrast, Spearman's Rho accounted for the monotonic shape of the data, thus providing the robustness needed for the correlation analysis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents results such as the data cleaning, normality test, descriptive data, and assumptions for the correlation analysis.

4.1 Data Cleaning

The data collected were entered into IBM SPSS Statistics 26, and data cleaning was performed to remove any responses that did not match the criteria. Fourteen responses were removed from the data set due to a mismatch with the requirements for this study. The initial sample size for this study was 303; however, after removing the participants with missing responses, the usable total sample size for this current study is 289.

4.2 Normality Test

Allen and Bennett (2012) have suggested that each continuous variable in the data set should be normally distributed to ensure the validity and reliability of the interpretation and inference. Hence, the data distribution of this study was tested by checking the skewness and kurtosis values.

As presented in Table 4 below, the skewness value ranges from -.76 to -.34. In contrast, the kurtosis value ranges from .98 to .02. Referring to West et al. (1996), the skewness and kurtosis values that fall within the range of +2 to -

2 are accepted as a normally distributed data. Hence, this dataset's skewness and kurtosis values suggest that the data follows a normal distribution.

Table 4

Skewness and Kurtosis

	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistics	Std. Error	Statistics	Std. Error
JSSE	-.76	.14	.98	.28
Career Exploration	-.76	.14	.66	.28
Workplace Anxiety	-.34	.14	.02	.28

4.3 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis was used to summarise the data clearly for better understanding. The participants' characteristics were outlined using frequency distributions.

4.3.1 Participant Statistics

A study with 289 participants aged 20 to 24 years had the following age distribution: 22 participants were 20 years old (7.6%), 66 were 21 years old (22.8%), 92 were 22 years old (31.8%), 87 were 23 years old (30.1%), and 22 were 24 years old (7.6%). The average age was 22.07 years, with a standard deviation of 1.06.

Among the participants, 188 (65.1%) were female, and 101 (34.9%) were male. The ethnic breakdown was 62.3% Malay, 31.1% Chinese, 5.9% Indian, and 0.6% other races. Academic disciplines were as follows: 51.6% in social sciences, 14.5% in engineering, 9.7% in healthcare, 6.6% in computer science, 5.5% in education, and 12.2% in other fields.

Regarding work and education background, 67.1% had internship experience, and 32.9% had part-time job experience. University distribution was 32.9% from UTAR, 18% from IIUM, 10% from PUO, 9.3% from UniKL and UTP, 7.3% from UiTM, and 13.2% from other universities. CGPA scores were: 18.3% below 3.0, 33.9% between 3.0 to 3.5, and 47.8% above 3.5. Table 5 presents the frequency and proportion of demographic characteristics among the participants.

Table 5

Demographic information of respondent (N = 289)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
20	22	7.6
21	66	22.8
22	92	31.8
23	87	30.1
24	22	7.6
Gender		
Male	101	34.9
Female	188	65.1
Race		
Malay	180	62.3
Chinese	90	31.1
Indian	17	5.9
Others	2	0.6
Field of Study		
Social science	149	51.6
Engineering	42	14.5
Healthcare	28	9.7

Table 5 (*continued)*

Computer Science	19	6.6
Others	35	12.2
Working Experience		
Internship	194	67.1
Part-Time Job	95	32.9
University		
UTAR	95	32.9
IIUM	52	18
PUO	29	10
UniKL	27	9.3
UTP	27	9.3
UiTM	21	7.3
Others	38	13.2
CGPA		
below 3.0	53	18.3
between 3.0 to 3.5	98	33.9
Above 3.5	138	47.8

4.3.2 Variable Statistics

Table 6 below illustrates the descriptive statistics of JSSE, career exploration and workplace anxiety. Mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum were reported, respectively.

Table 6

Descriptive statistics for the variables

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max
JSSE	34.56	7.14	10	50
Career Exploration	36.01	7.96	11	55
Workplace Anxiety	27.48	5.49	12	40

4.4 Spearman's Rank Correlation Assumptions

The Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient, also known as Spearman's rho, is a non-parametric statistical measure used to assess the strength and direction of the monotonic relationship between two variables. In contrast to the Pearson correlation coefficient, which measures the linear relationship between two variables, Spearman's rho evaluates the strength of the monotonic relationship, which may or may not be linear (Prion & Haerling, 2014).

Before applying Spearman's Rank Correlation analysis, certain pre-tests were conducted to demonstrate that all necessary assumptions were satisfied. The dataset was checked for necessary conditions, including appropriateness of the ranked data for the analysis, the monotonic relationship between the variables, and no significant outliers that would skew the results. These initial checks provided evidence for the reliability and validity of the correlation results.

4.4.1 Appropriateness of Data

The first assumption is that the two correlated variables are measured on an ordinal, interval, or ratio scale (Prion & Haerling, 2014). This means the data must be ranked or have a precise order, such as ratings or rankings, rather than nominal or categorical data.

This assumption is met, as all variables (JSSE, Workplace Anxiety, Career Exploration) are measured using continuous Likert-type scales, which

are ordinal or interval data. Since the JSSE, workplace anxiety and career exploration scores reflect underlying constructs that have an inherent order (higher scores indicate higher levels of JSSE, workplace anxiety, or career exploration), the data meets the requirement for ranking-based analysis, making Spearman's correlation an appropriate statistical test for this study.

4.4.2 Presence of a Monotonic Relationship

The second assumption for conducting Spearman's Rho Correlation is that the relationship between the two variables should be monotonic. In other words, as one variable increases, the other variable either consistently increases or decreases, but not necessarily at a constant rate (Prion & Haerling, 2014). This assumption is less strict than the linearity requirement for Pearson's correlation, making Spearman's correlation a more suitable alternative when data does not follow a straight-line relationship (Hauke & Kossowski, 2011).

This study had a monotonic positive association between JSSE and Career Exploration (see Figure 2), indicating that higher JSSE scores were linked with higher CE scores in students. Even if the increase is not strictly linear, it will be consistent overall, which satisfies the monotonicity assumption.

The relationship between workplace anxiety and career exploration (See Figure 3) has also been tested. The findings found no significant correlation between these variables, indicating that the data did not demonstrate a clear monotonic trend. The test is still suitable for studying these relationships as Spearman's correlation does not require strict linearity. Thus, this study's

assumption of monotonicity was satisfied, supporting the applicability of Spearman's correlation for exploring associations between JSSE, workplace anxiety and career exploration.

Figure 2

Relationship between JSSE and Career Exploration

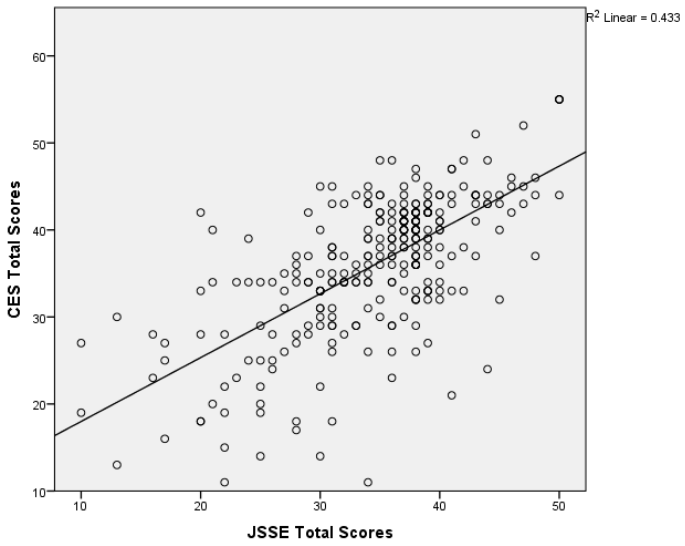
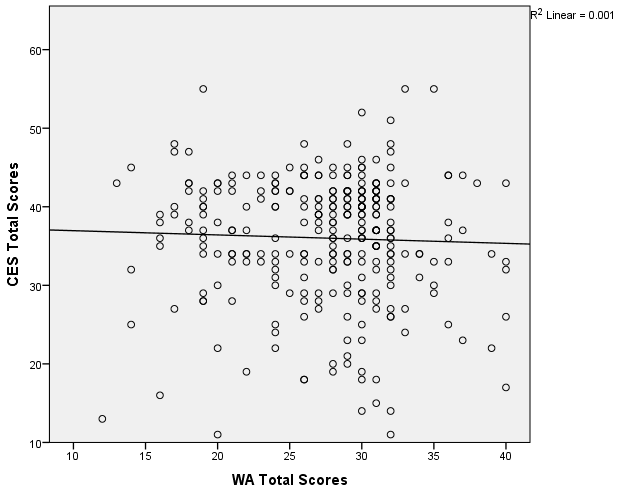


Figure 3

Relationship between Workplace Anxiety and Career Exploration



4.4.3 No Significant Outliers

Finally, the data should not have any significant outliers, as these can unduly influence the Spearman rho coefficient (Prion & Haerling, 2014). The dataset was examined for potential outliers, as their presence could adversely impact the accuracy of the correlation equation for predicting the outcome variable based on predictor variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Cook's Distance was employed to assess this assumption, and the findings, as outlined in Appendix F, indicated the absence of significant outliers. The values of Cook's Distance were below 1, following the guideline suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), indicating that no particular responses excessively impact the model.

4.5 Common Method Variance (CMV)

Before conducting data analysis, a check for common method variance is crucial to ensure the absence of any bias related to the measurement method. Common method variance refers to the variance attributed to the measurement method rather than the constructs the measures represent (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Harman's single-factor test was employed to analyse common method variance. This technique involves subjecting all variables in the study to an exploratory factor analysis, and the unrotated factor solution is examined to determine the number of factors necessary to account for the variance in the variables (Padsakoff et al., 2003).

The analysis of Harman's single-factor test, conducted using SPSS 25.0, revealed that only one factor accounts for 31.57% of the total variance among the variables (see Appendix G). Given that this percentage is significantly less than the threshold of 50% suggested by Podsakoff and Organ (1986), common method bias is not a significant issue in this study.

4.6 Correlation Analysis

Spearman's rank correlation analysis examined the relationship between JSSE, workplace anxiety, and career exploration. Since the data did not exhibit a linear relationship, Spearman's Rho was selected over Pearson's correlation to fit with the monotonic nature of the data.

The relationship between JSSE and career exploration was moderate to strong, $r =. 609$, $p <. 001$, showing that students in the final year with higher JSSE will also have higher career exploration. The relationship was determined

to be statistically significant. The relationship between workplace anxiety and career exploration was weak and negative, $r = -.055$, $p = .356$, implying that workplace anxiety is not a significant factor that predicts career exploration. The non-significant p-value adds to the evidence that these two variables do not have a meaningful relationship with each other.

These findings suggest that JSSE plays a significant role in predicting career exploration, while workplace anxiety does not correlate significantly with career exploration. The strong positive association between JSSE and career exploration implies that final-year students with greater JSSE are more likely to have higher career exploration, reinforcing the importance of JSSE to career exploration. Therefore, hypothesis 1 of this study has found support, while hypothesis 2 was rejected. Further details on the correlation results are provided in Table 7.

Table 7

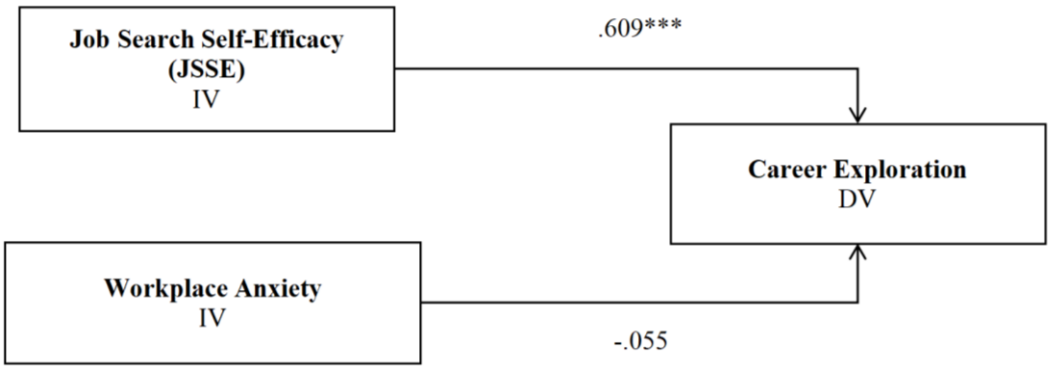
Correlation Results of JSSE, Workplace Anxiety and Career Exploration

Variables	JSSE	Workplace Anxiety	Career Exploration
JSSE	-		
Workplace Anxiety		-	
Career Exploration	.609***	-.055	-

Note. ***p < .001.*

Figure 4

Correlation of Variables



Note. The correlation coefficient between JSSE and career exploration is in parentheses with ***$p < .001$.

4.7 Summary

This chapter discusses data cleaning, normality tests, descriptive data, correlation assumptions, and correlation analysis results. As hypothesised, the results of this study indicated a positive relationship between JSSE and career exploration. In contrast, work anxiety did not have a significant relationship with career exploration, implying that workplace anxiety may not directly impact student career exploration.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

5.0 Introduction

This study specifically aimed to investigate the relationships between Job Search Self-Efficacy (JSSE), Workplace Anxiety and Career Exploration among final-year students in Malaysia. The results show that students with more JSSE are more likely to explore their careers. However, no significant relationship was observed between workplace anxiety and career exploration, suggesting that workplace anxiety may not directly influence the career exploration behaviours of these students.

5.1 JSSE and Career Exploration

The results of this study supported hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between JSSE and career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia. Final-year students who perceive themselves as having a high JSSE have more effort to explore a career than those with a low JSSE.

JSSE is the belief in one's capability to successfully execute specific job search behaviours and secure employment, as defined by Saks and Ashforth (1999). Over the past three decades, self-efficacy has been prominent in job search research. It predicts job search intention, behaviour, and outcomes, including its association with career exploration (Saks et al., 2015). This can be confirmed based on the findings from past studies, which found that individuals with high levels of self-efficacy tend to have greater engagement in their career

exploration (Lent & Hackett, 2002; Lent et al., 2016; Werbel, 2000). This shows that the relationship between self-efficacy and career exploration has been consistent for decades.

To continue, a study conducted among Latino students found that those who expressed higher confidence in their ability to accomplish tasks were also more likely to have a clear vision of their goals, strengths, and interests. This increased self-efficacy was associated with higher levels of engagement in career exploration activities (Gushue et al., 2006). Similarly, a study by the same researcher, Gushue et al. (2006), among African American students discovered that elevated levels of self-efficacy were linked to increased engagement in career exploration activities. These findings exhibit the association between self-efficacy and career exploration activities across different contexts.

The current findings align with previous studies, and a plausible explanation is the motivational aspect of self-efficacy. Students with stronger self-efficacy are more likely to develop positive expectations about the outcomes of engaging in career exploration (Lent et al., 2017). These positive outcome expectations then drive actions to pursue career exploration. In a study on Malaysian undergraduate students, self-efficacy was identified as a motivational resource influencing students' enrollment in specific majors and career choices (Yusuf, 2011). For instance, if students believe they excel in mathematics, this belief may lead them to pursue a mathematics-related career. Similarly, individuals with higher levels of JSSE may feel more motivated to participate actively in career exploration activities. People with a strong sense of self-efficacy perceive task demands as challenges and set high-performance goals for themselves (Yusuf, 2011). The confidence in their ability to manage the job

search process is a strong driver that propels final-year students to look for what is available, find the correct information, and actively build their careers (Bahari et al., 2022; Lazarides et al., 2018).

Moreover, JSSE significantly contributes to a proactive mindset, which leads to compelling career exploration. This is because individuals are not passive recipients of situational forces but active agents who can influence their employment opportunities (Lent et al., 2002). When someone has a strong JSSE, they will be better able to explain career goals based on career-related self-information (Wang et al., 2019). For example, imagine a student with a high JSSE exploring different career paths. This individual, confident in their skills, engages in thorough research, attends networking events, and participates in informational interviews. As individuals engage effectively with the career exploration process, they can engage in careers appropriate to their skill level and aspirations, solidifying the positive relationship between JSSE and career exploration (Kim et al., 2019). Thus, individuals with perceived self-efficacy in their ability to succeed will explore career paths with an expansive knowledge of their strengths and preferences, strengthening the depth of their career exploration (Komarraju et al., 2014). Final-year students with high JSSE will exhibit a profound understanding and confidence in their capabilities, skills, and strengths, enabling them to boost their career exploration activities.

5.2 Workplace Anxiety and Career Exploration

The findings of this study failed to support hypothesis 2: There is a negative relationship between workplace anxiety and career exploration among

final-year students in Malaysia. Therefore, this finding contradicts past studies that found workplace anxiety's effects in predicting job-related behaviour. Previously, workplace anxiety was found to be able to reduce innovative work behaviour (Samma et al., 2020), information-seeking activity (Mohsin et al., 2022), proactive behaviour (Cui & Li, 2021) and overall working performance (Zhang et al., 2018). Several factors may contribute to this result.

Firstly, the transitional phase among final-year students would likely contribute to the lack of support for the proposed hypothesis. In the transitional phase, final-year students may experience distinct challenges compared to established workers (Akermans et al., 2015). In addition, contemporary labour markets pose distinctive challenges in transitioning to a career, marked by a rising prevalence of less predefined entry routes (Wanberg et al., 2020). As these individuals are on the brink of completing their undergraduate studies and entering the workforce, they struggle to define their career paths and adapt to the demands of the professional environment (Okay-Somerville & Scholarios, 2021; Rummel et al., 2021). The different nature of their job search and the uncertainty associated with the transition phase may introduce factors absent in studies involving established professionals. In addition, previously, workplace anxiety was found to be influential on job-related behaviour and cognition. However, the sample in the previous studies was individuals already in the workforce (Ali & Mehreen, 2022; Samma et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2020), while this study involved final-year students. The differences in experience and the issues encountered between these two groups could result in different ways to cope with workplace anxiety.

Secondly, the limited working experience of final-year students could contribute to the failure to find support for the hypothesis of the relationship between workplace anxiety relationship and career exploration. TWA describes workplace anxiety as partially associated with the workplace situation and rooted in specific circumstances (Ceng & McCarthy, 2018). Workplace anxiety could stem from stressors, uncertainty, and job insecurity, with their pervasiveness crucial in shaping workplace anxiety (Tallentire et al., 2016; Vance et al., 2021). The lack of experience in the workplace for students with industrial training and part-time jobs may lead to limited exposure to those burdening factors, which may not be severe enough to cause acute workplace anxiety. Another study that found that final-year university students did not show sensitivity to impending career anxiety, environmental pressures or limitations on choice when performing their job search activities supports this (Wang et al., 2018). This constrained experience could affect their workplace anxiety levels, potentially contributing to the study's outcomes.

To continue, the number of hours worked and the number of jobs held in adolescence were influential factors in understanding work expectations (Ling & O'Brien, 2012). Students who do not have sufficient work experience might not be exposed to real-life working challenges. As a result, their understanding of workplace dynamics, job demands, and organisational culture may be limited (Lin et al., 2020). This lack of exposure could diminish the salience of workplace anxiety as students may not yet have encountered significant job-related stressors or challenges to the extent experienced by individuals with more extensive work experience.

The TWA can explain this finding. According to the TWA, workplace anxiety has a dual nature, as it could debilitate and facilitate performance. For these reasons, it does not tend to be negatively impactful to career exploration. Job anxiety may prevent workers from performing efficiently, leading to stress, concern, and destructive emotions (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018). Workplace anxiety may prevent final-year students from engaging in activities associated with career exploration during the job search period. Final-year students are not actively looking for career paths or opportunities but avoiding or potentially withdrawing from situations that induce anxiety, thus leading to lower levels of career exploration behaviours.

On the other hand, appropriate anxiety levels at work can increase output by motivating people to prepare carefully, focus on detail, and concentrate on their goals better (Cheng & McCarthy, 2017). In this situation, a manageable level of anxiety may prompt students to take proactive steps to overcome challenges, see support, and adapt to new environments. In this way, workplace anxiety may trigger students to explore career options more assertively and strategically.

Given the dual nature of workplace anxiety, its effect on career exploration behaviours may differ depending on the individual's characteristics. Students who perceive anxiety as debilitating may experience difficulties in performing career exploration activities, whereas those who view anxiety as a motivating factor may have effective career exploration strategies. As a result, the complexity of how workplace anxiety is associated with career exploration, combined with final-year students' transitional phase and limited working experience, may contribute to the failure of workplace anxiety to influence career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia negatively.

5.3 Implication of study

As discussed in this paper, JSSE has emerged as an important predictor of career exploration outcomes, with important implications for career class education and counselling practices. JSSE is a valuable diagnostic for each student's issues in school-to-work transition, especially when navigating diverse career paths. Therefore, universities, future employers, and policymakers must collaborate to develop comprehensive strategies that bolster Malaysian university students' career development and well-being. Such strategies might include the provision of psychological resources, enhanced career counselling services, and the integration of curricula and co-curricular activities aimed at boosting essential psychological resources (Kenayathulla et al., 2019; Kotera et al., 2020; Rusli et al., 2023; Xu & Rashid, 2023). Consequently, educators and counsellors are encouraged to prioritise JSSE when designing career interventions, ensuring that graduates are better equipped to manage the demands of the modern workforce, particularly within the Malaysian context.

Final-year students who believe they can participate in career exploration are more inclined to engage in career exploration behaviours. Final-year students with a strong belief in their ability to navigate the job search process may exhibit greater resilience and adaptability, actively seeking diverse opportunities and managing career transitions more effectively (Gushue et al., 2006). In line with the Theory of Workplace Anxiety (TWA) predictions, students' beliefs about their ability to successfully engage in activities lead to proactive actions such as exploratory behaviours. Therefore, institutions and counsellors should respond

appropriately by enhancing students' beliefs about their capacity to engage in career exploration tasks.

Most importantly, because JSSE components are more susceptible to change than innate personality traits, they offer practical intervention lev rage points (Guan et al., 2013). Career counsellors and educational institutions can leverage these findings to inform the design and implementation of interventions to boost JSSE among final-year students. It has been proven that undergraduates' ability to adapt to diverse job surroundings is fostered through programs and learning courses in universities (McDow & Zabrucky, 2015). The findings have important implications for practitioners and educators, highlighting the potential role of self-efficacy in driving proactive career exploration and better preparing individuals for the complexities of the job market through focused interventions. These programs allow students to learn the skills and knowledge required to decipher and orient themselves in complicated career paths, aiding students further in entering the workforce and best suited for future relatable career challenges.

Secondly, recognising the theoretical contribution of this study is the acknowledgement of workplace anxiety having a dual nature. This acknowledgement highlights a relationship and suggests that anxiety may play both a debilitating and a function as an enabler in the degree to which individuals participate in career exploration activities. By acknowledging this duality, the TWA could gain an in-depth understanding of the effects of workplace anxiety and career exploration activities. This recognition, however, reflects the need for targeted interventions and frameworks that are adaptive to these variable impacts of workplace anxiety. These results recommend researching the strategies and

preferences that final-year students would employ in facing the job market, particularly in stressful situations.

5.4 Limitations and Direction for Future Studies

Several limitations of this study should be acknowledged. First, all the data from this study were collected through self-reports. Self-reports are prone to bias, especially among subjects who suggestively avoid undesirable descriptors and show favour toward inducible indicators (Stachowski & Kulas, 2020). Many participants select socially desirable choices rather than their actual opinions or preferences. As Durmaz et al. (2020) noted, reducing social desirability bias in self-report surveys is also important for preserving the validity and accuracy of data in behavioural research.

Future research should consider a mixed-method approach, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, to mitigate this self-report bias. By doing so, researchers may overcome the limitations and gain deeper insights into the role of workplace anxiety as a mediator in the relationship between JSSE and career exploration. Mixed methods broaden the scope of explanations, bridging the gap between qualitative and quantitative approaches and encouraging comprehensive multi-nodal discussions (Mason, 2006). A mixed-method research design makes the research more substantial and evident; measurable data will be received from the quantitative part, and detailed, contextual information will be obtained from the qualitative part (Dewasiri et al., 2018). This would make the findings more reliable and comprehensive.

Secondly, the present study employed a cross-sectional design due to the limited time and financial resources. A limitation associated with this design is its inability to establish causal relationships among the variables. A longitudinal research method could offer more comprehensive and profound evidence regarding the research topic. Furthermore, considering that anxiety is often a prolonged and gradually escalating process (Bishop, 2007), a study with a longer time interval may provide a more insightful understanding of how the relationships among the variables evolve over an extended period.

Thirdly, the current study focused on two predictor variables: JSSE and workplace anxiety. Other variables could influence career exploration among final-year students in Malaysia. Future research could explore other variables, such as carer decision-making self-efficacy. For instance, Zhang and Huang (2021) found that career decision-making self-efficacy can influence career exploration among undergraduate students. Moreover, past studies have indicated a direct effect of career decision-making self-efficacy on career exploration (Chen et al., 2021; Keji, 2015; Rumalutur & Salim, 2020). Investigating how these potential variables play a role would give further insight into the factors that potentially affect the career exploration of Malaysia final-year students.

Finally, limitations of low Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of the instruments used in the present Study. The JSSE scale achieved an AVE of 0.505, meeting the conventional threshold of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2022). However, the Career Exploration Survey (AVE = 0.447) and the Workplace Anxiety Scale (AVE = 0.479) fell slightly below this benchmark. While an AVE $\geq$ 0.50 is typically considered acceptable, prior research suggests that slightly lower

values can still be valid, particularly in psychological contexts where constructs are abstract and multifaceted (Bond & Satchell, 2002; Smedslund et al., 2022). Moreover, measurement error and domain complexity often contribute to reduced AVE values (Farrell & Rudd, 2009). Additionally, a study in organisational setting, such as workplace relationship research, have demonstrated acceptable validity even with AVEs below the ideal threshold (Sias, 2005). Despite this, the lower AVE values suggest some limitations in the convergent validity of the Career Exploration Survey and Workplace Anxiety Scale, which may reduce the strength of structural relationships in the model (Henseler et al., 2015). To address this, future research could revisit items with low factor loadings and consider item refinement (Byrne, 2016). Overall, while the slightly suboptimal AVEs are not uncommon in psychological research, they underscore the importance of continuous instrument refinement to ensure robust construct validity.

5.5 Conclusion

This study's findings highlight the importance of JSSE in predicting career exploration outcomes. JSSE is a significant tool for final-year students transitioning from school to work, particularly in exploring career paths. Thus, educators and counsellors should prioritise these dimensions in final-year students when designing career interventions, particularly in the Malaysian context. Among final-year students, those with strong beliefs about their JSSE tend to show greater resilience and adaptability, actively seeking diverse

opportunities and managing career exploration. As predicted by the TWA, this boosts an individual's belief in their capacity, which catalyses proactive behaviour, including exploration. Therefore, both institutions and counsellors should act accordingly, enhancing students' confidence in their abilities to engage in career exploration tasks.

Additionally, JSSE components can be modified more quickly than one's inherent personality dispositions. This could be a potential intervention points. Educational institutions and career counsellors could use these findings to design programs to utilise the JSSE of final-year students. Students can adopt a more open and concerted attitude surrounding the career exploration process by improving self-efficacy via specific counselling sessions, workshops or educational modules.

Finally, identifying workplace anxiety's dual nature brings about significant theoretical implications. This recognition further emphasises the connection between workplace anxiety and career exploration, identifying workplace anxiety as both a debilitating and an enabler of engagement with career exploration activities. The TWA derives a deeper understanding of the differential effects of workplace anxiety on career exploration by realising this duality. In addition, this acknowledgement highlights the emphasis on targeted interventions and support systems to address the varying impact of workplace anxiety on individuals, as well as the idea of individualised approaches to assist in graduating students and the job-seeking process.

References

Akkermans, J., Richardson, J., & Kraimer, M. L. (2020). The Covid-19 crisis as a career shock: *Implications for careers and vocational behavior*. Journal of vocational behavior, p. 119, 103434. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2020.103434

Ali, Z., & Mehreen, A. (2022). Can you manage shocks? An investigation of career shocks on proactive career behavior: *a COR theory perspective*. Journal of Managerial Psychology, 37(4), 346-360. Retrieved from https://www.emerald.com/insight/0268-3946.htm

Alias, R., Ee, G. T., Sombuling, A., & Jayos, S. (2022). Work Readiness among Final Year Students in A Higher Education in Malaysia. International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development, 11(3). http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v11-i3/15504

Bahari, G., Alharbi, K., & Alenazi, L. (2022). Learning Motivation and Self-Efficacy towards Improved Clinical Performance in Undergraduate Nursing Students: A Cross-sectional Study. *Journal Of Clinical And Diagnostic Research*. https://doi.org/10.7860/jcdr/2022/52202.15982.

Baker, T. L. (1994), Doing Social Research (2nd Ed.). New York: McGrawHill Inc.

Becnel, A. T., Range, L., & Remley Jr, T. P. (2021). School Counselors' Exposure to Student Suicide, Suicide Assessment Self-Efficacy, and Workplace Anxiety: Implications for Training, Practice, and Research. *Professional Counselor*, 11(3), 327-339. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1312372.pdf

Bishop, S. (2007). Neurocognitive mechanisms of anxiety: an integrative account. Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 11, 307-316. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2007.05.008

Bond, S. A., & Satchell, S. E. (2002). Statistical properties of the sample semi-variance. Applied Mathematical Finance, 9(4), 219-239. https://doi.org/10.1080/1350486022000015850

Boo, S., Wang, C., & Kim, M. (2021). Career adaptability, future time perspective, and career anxiety among undergraduate students: A cross-national comparison. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education, 29,* 100328. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2021.100328

Braunstein-Bercovitz, H., Benjamin, B. A., Asor, S., & Lev, M. (2012). Insecure attachment and career indecision: Mediating effects of anxiety and pessimism. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 81(2), 236-244. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2012.07.009

Byrne, B. M. (2016). Adaptation of assessment scales in cross-national research: Issues, guidelines, and caveats. International Perspectives in Psychology, 5(1), 51-65. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ipp0000042

Çarkıt, E. (2024). Adaptation to Turkish of the Career Exploration and Decision Self-Efficacy Scale. The Career Development Quarterly. https://doi.org/10.1002/cdq.12353

Carlson, K. D., & Herdman, A. O. (2011). Understanding the Impact of Convergent Validity on Research Results. Organizational Research Methods, 15(1), 17-32. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428110392383

Chan, L. L., & Idris, N. (2017). Validity and reliability of the instrument using exploratory factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, Retrieved from 7(10), 400-410.https://ideas.repec.org/a/hur/ijarbs/v7y2017i10p400-410.html

Chen, C., & Vinitwatanakhun, W. (2020). Improving students' career decision making through organisation development interventions-*a course design of career exploration in the international college of Zhejiang Yuexiu University of Foreign Languages*. Retrieved from https://repository.au.edu/handle/6623004553/23044

Chen, S., Xue, Y., Chen, H., Ling, H., Wu, J., & Gu, X. (2021). Making a Commitment to Your Future: Investigating the Effect of Career Exploration and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy on the Relationship between Career Concern and Career Commitment. Sustainability. https://doi.org/10.3390/su132212816.

Cheng, B. H., & McCarthy, J. M. (2018). Understanding the dark and bright sides of anxiety: A theory of workplace anxiety. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 103(5), 537. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/apl0000266

Clercq, D., Haq, I., & Azeem, M. (2018). Self-efficacy to spur job performance. Management Decision, 56, 891-907. https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-03-2017-0187.

Cresswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). Designing and conducting mixed methods research.

Cui, Z., & Li, Y. (2021). The relationship between proactive behavior and work-family conflict: a moderated mediation model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 657863. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.657863

David, N., Mathias, C., & Kj, D. (2021). The Impact of COVID-19 as an Unforeseen Crisis on the Career Anxiety in Final Year Students. , 9. https://doi.org/10.25215/0904.044.

Deming, D. J. (2017). The growing importance of social skills in the labor market. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *132*(4), 1593-1640. https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjx022

Deming, D. J., & Noray, K. L. (2018). *STEM careers and technological change* (Vol. 24, No. 25065, pp. 1-67). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from http://www.nber.org/papers/w25065

Demir, S. (2018). The Relationship between Psychological Capital and Stress, Anxiety, Burnout, Job Satisfaction, and Job Involvement. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, pp. 75, 137–153. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1181447.pdf

Dewasiri, N., Weerakoon, Y., & Azeez, A. (2018). Mixed Methods in Finance Research. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 17. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918801730.

Domingos, P. (2017). Artificial intelligence in HR: a no-brainer. Retrieved from https://www.pwc.nl/nl/assets/documents/artificial-intelligence-in-hr-a-no-brainer.pdf

Donald, W. E., Ashleigh, M. J., & Baruch, Y. (2018). Students' perceptions of education and employability: Facilitating career transition from higher education into the labor market. Career development international, 23(5), 513-540. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-09-2017-0171

Durmaz, A., Dursun, İ., & Kabadayi, E. (2020). Mitigating the Effects of Social Desirability Bias in Self-Report Surveys. , 146-185. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-1025-4.ch007.

Farrell, A. M., & Rudd, J. M. (2009). Factor analysis and discriminant validity: A brief review of some practical issues. In Australia and New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference 2009. Anzmac.

Ghobakhloo, M. (2018). "The future of manufacturing industry: a strategic roadmap toward Industry 4.0", *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management*, Vol. 29 No. 6, pp. 910–936. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1108/JMTM-02-2018-0057

Gilchrist, A. (2016). Industry 4.0: *The Industrial Internet of Things*, Apress. Retrieved from: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4842-2047-4

Guan, Y., Deng, H., Sun, J., Wang, Y., Cai, Z., Ye, L., ... & Li, Y. (2013). Career adaptability, job search self-efficacy and outcomes: A three-wave investigation among Chinese university graduates. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 83(3), 561-570. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2013.09.003

Gushue, G. V., Clarke, C. P., Pantzer, K. M., & Scanlan, K. R. (2006). Self-efficacy, perceptions of barriers, vocational identity, and the career exploration behavior of Latino/a high school students. *The Career Development Quarterly*, *54*(4), 307-317. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-0045.2006.tb00196.x

Gushue, G. V., Scanlan, K. R., Pantzer, K. M., & Clarke, C. P. (2006). The relationship of career decision-making self-efficacy, vocational identity, and career exploration behavior in African American high school students.

Journal of career development, 33(1), 19-28. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845305283004

Haase, V. G., Guimarães, A. P. L., & Wood, G. (2019). Mathematics and emotions: The case of math anxiety. International handbook of mathematical learning difficulties: From the laboratory to the classroom, 469-503. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-97148-3_29

Hair Jr, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., Danks, N. P., & Ray, S. (2022). Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) using R: A workbook (p. 197). Springer Nature. https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/51463

Hasan, M. Z. B., Hossain, T. B., & Islam, A. (2014). Factors affecting self-efficacy towards academic performance: A study on polytechnic students in Malaysia. Advances in Environmental Biology, 695-706. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263807314_Factors_Affecting_Self-Efficacy_Towards_Academic_Performance_A_Study_on_Polytechnic_Students_in_Malaysia

Hassan, Z., Schattner, P., & Mazza, D. (2006). Doing A Pilot Study: Why Is It Essential?. Malaysian family physician : the official journal of the Academy of Family Physicians of Malaysia, 1 2-3, 70-3.

Hauke, J., & Kossowski, T. (2011). Comparison of values of Pearson's and Spearman's correlation coefficients on the same sets of data. Quaestiones geographicae, 30(2), 87-93. https://intapi.sciendo.com/pdf/10.2478/v10117-011-0021-1

Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. Journal of the academy of marketing science, 43, 115-135. https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8.pdf

Ho, H. H., Rasdi, R. M., Ibrahim, R., & Khambari, M. N. M. (2020). Developing and evaluating the effectiveness of mobile phone-based career intervention for career competencies of Malaysian public managers: Protocol for a mixed method study. Internet interventions, 22, 100349. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.invent.2020.100349

Huang, R. (2021). Influence of Epidemic Situation on Employment of College Graduates and Informatization Countermeasures. *In E3S Web of Conferences* (Vol. 235, p. 03069). EDP Sciences. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202123503069

In, J. (2017). Introduction of a pilot study. Korean Journal of Anesthesiology, 70, 601 - 605. https://doi.org/10.4097/kjae.2017.70.6.601.

Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia. (2022). *KENYATAAN MEDIA STATISTIK SISWAZAH 2021*. Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia.

https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/uploads/files/5_Gallery/2_Media/4_Stats%40media/4-Press_Statement/2022/05.%20MEI/JMI%20MJP%20Q122.pdf

Jiang, Z., Newman, A., Le, H., Presbitero, A., & Zheng, C. (2019). Career exploration: A review and future research agenda. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 110, 338-356. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.08.008

Kanfer, R., Wanberg, C. R., & Kantrowitz, T. M. (2001). Job search and employment: A personality–motivational analysis and meta-analytic review. *Journal of Applied psychology*, 86(5), 837. Retrieved from https://carlsonschool.umn.edu/sites/carlsonschool.umn.edu/files/2018-10/kanfer_wanberg_kantrowitz_2001.pdf

Keane, C., Waldeck, D., Holliman, A., Goodman, S., & Choudhry, K. (2021). Exploring the experience of anxiety among final year students at university: A thematic analysis. The Qualitative Report, 26(8). https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2021.4874

Keishing, V., & Renukadevi, S. (2016). A review of knowledge management based career exploration system in engineering education. *International Journal of Modern Education and Computer Science*, *8*(1), 8. Retrieved from https://www.mecs-press.org/ijmecs/ijmecs-v8-n1/IJMECS-V8-N1-2.pdf

Keji, Q. (2015). The Relationships among Proactive Personality,Career Decision-making Self-efficacy and Career Exploration in College Students. Psychological development and education.

Kleine, A. K., Schmitt, A., & Wisse, B. (2021). Students' career exploration: *A meta-analysis*. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 131, 103645. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2021.103645

Komarraju, M., Swanson, J., & Nadler, D. (2014). Increased career self-efficacy predicts college students' motivation, and course and major satisfaction. Journal of Career Assessment, 22(3), 420-432. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072713498484

Lange, M., & Kayser, I. (2022). The Role of Self-Efficacy, Work-Related Autonomy and Work-Family Conflict on Employee's Stress Level during Home-Based Remote Work in Germany. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19094955.

Lau, P. L., Chung, Y. B., & Wang, L. (2021). Effects of a career exploration intervention on students' career maturity and self-concept. Journal of Career Development, 48(4), 311-324. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845319853385

Lazarides, R., Buchholz, J., & Rubach, C. (2018). Teacher enthusiasm and self-efficacy, student-perceived mastery goal orientation, and student

motivation in mathematics classrooms. Teaching and Teacher Education, 69, 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.TATE.2017.08.017.

Lee, J., Bagheri, B. and Jin, C. (2016). "Introduction to cyber manufacturing," *Manufacturing Letters, Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME)*, Vol. 8, pp. 11–15. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mfglet.2016.05.002

Lee, S., Kobayashi, R., Oda, M., Noritake, Y., & Nakashima, K. I. (2022). Does shift-and-persist strategy buffer career choice anxiety and affect career exploration?. *BMC Research Notes*, 15(1), 1-5. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1186/s13104-022-06206-w

Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D., & Hackett, G. (2002). Social cognitive career theory. Career choice and development, 4(1), 255-311. http://www.borbelytiborbors.extra.hu/ZSKF/CareerDevelopment.pdf#page=276

Lent, R. W., Ireland, G. W., Penn, L. T., Morris, T. R., & Sappington, R. (2017). Sources of self-efficacy and outcome expectations for career exploration and decision-making: A test of the social cognitive model of career self-management. Journal of vocational behavior, 99, 107-117. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2017.01.002

Lent, R., & Hackett, G. (1987). Career self-efficacy: Empirical status and future directions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 30, 347-382. https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791(87)90010-8.

Lent, R., Ezeofor, I., Morrison, M., Penn, L., & Ireland, G. (2016). Applying the social cognitive model of career self-management to career exploration and decision-making. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 93, 47-57. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JVB.2015.12.007.

Lent, R., Ireland, G., Penn, L., Morris, T., & Sappington, R. (2017). Sources of self-efficacy and outcome expectations for career exploration and decision-making: A test of the social cognitive model of career self-management. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 99, 107-117. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JVB.2017.01.002.

Lin, Y., Lin, K., Pan, Y., & Lin, S. (2020). Investigation of the Role of Anxiety and Depression on the Formation of Phantom Vibration and Ringing Syndrome Caused by Working Stress during Medical Internship. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17207480.

Linge, D., & Kosnin, A. M. (2024). Employment Anxiety among College Students During COVID-19: A Systematic Review. International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development, 13(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v13-i1/20124

Mac Gowan, R. L. (2022). Reframing Anxiety as Excitement in Job Seekers: A Within-Person Field Experiment (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Arizona). Retrieved from

https://www.proquest.com/openview/a464ee94cc8f0168113b63a3c4dd1292/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y

Makki, B. I., Javaid, M. U., & Javaid, M. U. (2017). Level of work readiness skills, career self-efficacy and career exploration of engineering students. NFC IEFR Journal of Engineering and Scientific Research, 4. http://nijesr.com/ojs/index.php/archive/article/view/39

Makki, B. I., Salleh, R., Memon, M. A., & Harun, H. (2015). The relationship between work readiness skills, career self-efficacy and career exploration among engineering graduates: A proposed framework. *Research Journal of Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology*, *10*(9), 1007-1011. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Mumtaz-Memon/publication/281405914_The_Relationship_between_Work_Readiness_Skills_Career_Self efficacy_and_Career_Exploration_among_Engineering_Graduates_A_Proposed_Framework/links/55e590c508aebdc0f589e6a4/The-Relationship-between-Work-Readiness-Skills-Career-Self-efficacy-and-Career-Exploration-among-Engineering-Graduates-A-Proposed-Framework.pdf

Mannor, M. J., Wowak, A. J., Bartkus, V. O., & Gomez-Mejia, L. R. (2016). Heavy lies the crown? How job anxiety affects top executive decision making in gain and loss contexts. Strategic Management Journal, 37(9), 1968-1989. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.2425

Mason, J. (2006). Mixing methods in a qualitatively driven way. Qualitative Research, 6, 25 - 9. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794106058866.

McCarthy, J. M., Trougakos, J. P., & Cheng, B. H. (2016). *Are anxious workers less productive workers? It depends on the quality of social exchange*. Journal of Applied Psychology, 101(2), 279. Retrieved from http://www-2.rotman.utoronto.ca/facbios/file/McCarthyTrougakosCheng.pdf

Miller, A. D., & Rottinghaus, P. J. (2014). Career indecision, meaning in life, and anxiety: An existential framework. *Journal of Career Assessment*, *22*(2), 233-247. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072713493763

Mohsin, M., Jamil, K., Naseem, S., Sarfraz, M., & Ivascu, L. (2022). *Elongating nexus between workplace factors and knowledge hiding behavior: mediating role of job anxiety*. Psychology Research and Behavior Management, 441-457. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S348467

Nawaz, N. (2019). *Artificial intelligence interchange human intervention in the recruitment process in Indian software industry*. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.30534/ijatcse/2019/62842019

Nixon, P., Ebert, D., Boß, L., Angerer, P., Dragano, N., & Lehr, D. (2022). The Efficacy of a Web-Based Stress Management Intervention for Employees Experiencing Adverse Working Conditions and Occupational Self-efficacy as a Mediator: Randomized Controlled Trial. *Journal of Medical Internet Research, 24*. https://doi.org/10.2196/40488.

Novitz, T. (2020). Past and Future Work at the International Labour Organization: Labour as a Fictitious Commodity, Countermovement and Sustainability. international organizations law review, 17(1), 10-40. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tonia-Novitz/publication/341518850_Past_and_Future_Work_at_the_International_Labour_Organization_Labour_as_a_Fictitious_Commodity_Countermovement_and_Sustainability/links/625e8a4c1c096a380d100d42/Past-and-Future-Work-at-the-International-Labour-Organization-Labour-as-a-Fictitious-Commodity-Countermovement-and-Sustainability.pdf

Okay-Somerville, B., & Scholarios, D. (2021). Focused for Some, Exploratory for Others: Job Search Strategies and Successful University-to-Work Transitions in the Context of Labor Market Ambiguity. Journal of Career Development, 49, 126 - 143. https://doi.org/10.1177/08948453211016058.

Olufemi, O. F., Olayinka, B., Olatope, O. S., Oladele, O. A., & Olabisi, A. F. (2020). Perceptions of Academic Staff on Causes of Plagiarism in Project Writing Among Undergraduate in Southwest Nigeria. American Journal of Information Science and Technology, 4(4), 58-66. http://dx.doi.org/10.11648/j.ajist.20200404.11

Park, K., Woo, S., Park, K., Kyea, J., & Yang, E. (2017). The mediation effects of career exploration on the relationship between trait anxiety and career indecision. *Journal of Career Development*, 44(5), 440–452. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845316662346

Petruzziello, G., Mariani, M. G., Chiesa, R., & Guglielmi, D. (2021). *Self-efficacy and job search success for new graduates*. Personnel Review, 50(1), 225-243. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-01-2019-0009

Pillay, A. L., & Bundhoo, H. Y. (2011). Mauritian undergraduate university students' sources of stress and support. South African Journal of Psychology, 41(4), 417-423. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/008124631104100402

Pisarik, C. T., Rowell, P. C., & Thompson, L. K. (2017). A phenomenological study of career anxiety among college students. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 65(4), 339-352. https://doi.org/10.1002/cdq.12112

Porcelli, P. (2020). Fear, anxiety and health-related consequences after the COVID-19 epidemic. *Clinical Neuropsychiatry*, 17(2), 103. https://doi.org/10.36131/CN20200215

Prion, S., & Haerling, K. A. (2014). Making sense of methods and measurement: Spearman-rho ranked-order correlation coefficient. Clinical Simulation in Nursing, 10(10), 535-536. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ecns.2014.07.005

Radeef, A. S., & Faisal, G. G. (2017). Psychological distress and sources of stressors amongst medical and science undergraduate students in Malaysia. Makara Journal of Health Research, 21(2), 5. https://doi.org/10.7454/msk.v21i2.6697

Rahim, N. B., & Zainal, S. R. M. (2015). Embracing Psychological Well-Being among Professional Engineers in Malaysia: The Role of Protean Career Orientation and Career Exploration. I*nternational Journal of Economics & Management*, 9. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Norizan-Rahim/publication/294521184_IJEM_International_Journal_of_Economics_and_Management_Embracing_Psychological_Well-Being_among_Professional_Engineers_in_Malaysia_The_Role_of_Protean_Career_Orientation_and_Career_Exploration/links/56c187b808aeedba0564bc9e/IJEM-International-Journal-of-Economics-and-Management-Embracing-Psychological-Well-Being-among-Professional-Engineers-in-Malaysia-The-Role-of-Protean-Career-Orientation-and-Career-Exploration.pdf

Rahmadani, R., & Sahrani, R. (2021). The Role of Stress During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Future Career Anxiety of Final-Year Students. Proceedings of the International Conference on Economics, Business, Social, and Humanities (ICEBSH 2021). https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210805.154.

Ramli, N. H., Alavi, M., Mehrinezhad, S. A., & Ahmadi, A. (2018). Academic stress and self-regulation among university students in Malaysia: Mediator role of mindfulness. Behavioral Sciences, 8(1), 12. https://www.mdpi.com/2076-328X/8/1/12#

Rinke, C. R., Mawhinney, L., & Park, G. (2014). The apprenticeship of observation in career contexts: A typology for the role of modelling in teachers' career paths. *Teachers and Teaching*, *20*(1), 92–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2013.848517

Rothkopf, C., & Schworm, S. (2021). Exploring dog-assisted interventions in higher education: Students' attitudes and perceived effects on well-being. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18(9), 4492. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18094492

Rumalutur, N., & Salim, R. (2020). The Effect of Attributional Style on Career Exploration of Vocational School Students: The Mediating Role of Career Decision Self-Efficacy. , 57, 167-172. https://doi.org/10.17762/PAE.V57I3.27.

Rummel, S., Akkermans, J., Blokker, R., & Van Gelderen, M. (2021). Shocks and entrepreneurship: A study of career shocks among newly graduated entrepreneurs. Career Development International, 26(4), 562-581. https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-11-2018-0296

Sadik, M. A. (2022). Can and will HR prevent THE GREAT EXTINCTION? HR Future, 2022(1), 38–40. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/M-Amr-Sadik/publication/361183200_2022_February_The_Great_Extinction/links/62a1b0e355273755ebdf5cc2/2022-February-The-Great-Extinction.pdf

Saks, A. M., & Ashforth, B. E. (1999). Change in job search behaviors and employment outcomes. *Journal of Vocational behavior*, 56(2), 277-287. https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1999.1714

Saks, A. M., Zikic, J., & Koen, J. (2015). Job search self-efficacy: Reconceptualizing the construct and its measurement. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 86, 104-114. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2014.11.007

Saks, A.M. and Gruman, J.A. (2018), "Socialization resources theory and newcomers' work engagement: A new pathway to newcomer socialization", *Career Development International*, Vol. 23 No. 1, pp. 12-32. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-12-2016-0214

Samma, M., Zhao, Y., Rasool, S. F., Han, X., & Ali, S. (2020, November). Exploring the relationship between innovative work behaviour, job anxiety, workplace ostracism, and workplace incivility: *empirical evidence from small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In Healthcare* (Vol. 8, No. 4, p. 508). MDPI. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare8040508

Schönbrodt, F. D., & Perugini, M. (2013). At what sample size do correlations stabilise? *Journal of Research in Personality*, 47(5), 609-612. Retrieved from https://epub.ub.uni-muenchen.de/17968/1/oa_Schoenbrodt_17968.pdf

Sharma, D. S. (2017). Auditing research opportunities from an international perspective. International Journal of Auditing, 21(3), 223-224. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijau.12096

Sias, P. M. (2005). Workplace Relationship Quality and Employee Information Experiences. Communication Studies, 56(4), 375–395. https://doi.org/10.1080/10510970500319450

Smedslund, G., Arnulf, J., & Smedslund, J. (2022). Is psychological science progressing? Explained variance in PsycINFO articles during the period 1956 to 2022. Frontiers in Psychology, 13. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1089089.

Solberg, V. S. (1998). Assessing career search self-efficacy: Construct evidence and developmental antecedents. Journal of Career Assessment, 6(2), 181-193. https://doi.org/10.1177/106907279800600205

Stachowski, A., & Kulas, J. (2020). The Persnickety Pervasiveness of Rating Enhancement in Personality Assessment. European Journal of Psychological Assessment. https://doi.org/10.1027/1015-5759/a000610.

Subhan, M., Amat, S., Bakar, A. Y. A., Mahmud, M. I., & Mas' ud Zein, H. (2021). Career Self-efficacy (CSE) Influence towards Selection of Self-employment Career among Riau University Students'. http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v11-i4/9677

Tian, L., & Sui, D. (2020, September). Spatial pattern of artificial intelligence and its influence on the labor market in China. In Journal of Physics: Conference Series (Vol. 1629, No. 1, p. 012070). IOP Publishing. Retrieved from https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1742-6596/1629/1/012070/pdf

Tran, L. T., Phan, H. L. T., Tan, G., & Rahimi, M. (2022). 'I changed my strategy and looked for jobs on Gumtree': the ecological circumstances and international graduates' agency and strategies to navigate the Australian labour market. *Compare A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, *52*(5), 822-840. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2020.1837613

Trougakos, J. P., Beal, D. J., Cheng, B. H., Hideg, I., & Zweig, D. (2015). Too drained to help: A resource depletion perspective on daily interpersonal citizenship behaviors. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 100(1), 227–236. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038082

Ţuţu, A. (2011). Depression and anxiety at work: pilot study regarding employees' self-perceived job efficacy and the psychological impact of global economic crisis in two Romanian private organizations. *J Depress Anxiety*, *1*(101), 2.

Vance, M., Mash, H., Ursano, R., Zhao, Z., Miller, J., Clarion, M., West, J., Morganstein, J., Iqbal, A., & Sen, S. (2021). Exposure to Workplace Trauma and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Among Intern Physicians. JAMA Network Open, 4. https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.12837.

Vignoli, E. (2015). Career indecision and career exploration among older French adolescents: The specific role of general trait anxiety and future school and career anxiety. *Journal of Vocational behavior*, 89, 182-191. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2015.06.005

Wanberg, C. R., Ali, A. A., & Csillag, B. (2020). Job seeking: The process and experience of looking for a job. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 7(1), 315–337. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-012119-044939

Wang, J., Fan, W., Cheung, F., Wang, Q., & Li, M. (2019). Personality and Chinese adolescents' career exploration: The mediation effects of self-efficacy and perceived parental support. Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology, 13. https://doi.org/10.1017/prp.2019.16.

Wang, L., & Yan, F. (2018). Emotion regulation strategy mediates the relationship between goal orientation and job search behaviour among university seniors. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 108, 1-12. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.05.011

Wang, P., Zhang, L., Wang, X., Geng, J., Gao, X., Ma, J., & Jiao, R. (2018). Career Exploration and Decision Self-Efficacy Scale: Factorial Structure and Validity. Journal of College Student Development, 59, 475 - 478. https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2018.0043.

Webb, M. (2019). *The impact of artificial intelligence on the labour market*. Available at SSRN 3482150. Retrieved from https://web.stanford.edu/~mww/webb_jmp.pdf

Werbel, J. D. (2000). Relationships among career exploration, job search intensity, and job search effectiveness in graduating college students. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 57(3), 379-394. doi:10.1006/jvbe.2000.1746

Werbel, J. D. (2000). Relationships among career exploration, job search intensity, and job search effectiveness in graduating college students. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *57*(3), 379-394. https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2000.1746

Willing, J. (2019). Willingness of online respondents to participate in alternative modes of data collection. Survey Practice, 12(1), 1-11. https://doi.org/10.29115/sp-2019-0001

Yusran, N. A., Puad, M. H. M., & Omar, M. K. (2021). Role of Career Exploration in Influencing Career Choice among Pre-University Student. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, *29*. Retrieved from http://journalsjd.upm.edu.my/resources/files/Pertanika%20PAPERS/JSSH%20Vol.%2029%20(S1)%202021/05%20JSSH(S)-1491-2021.pdf

Yusuf, M (2011). "The impact of self-efficacy, achievement motivation, and self-regulated learning strategies on students' academic achievement." Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences 15 (2011): 2623-2626. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.04.158

Zhang, H., & Huang, H. (2018). Decision-making self-efficacy mediates the peer support–career exploration relationship. Social Behavior and Personality, 46, 485-498. https://doi.org/10.2224/SBP.6410.

Zhang, H., Tang, L., Ye, Z., Zou, P., Shao, J., Wu, M., ... & Mu, S. (2020). The role of social support and emotional exhaustion in the association between work-family conflict and anxiety symptoms among female medical staff: a moderated mediation model. *BMC psychiatry*, 20(1), 1–9. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-020-02673-2

Zhang, S., Chen, L., Zhang, L., & Stein, A. M. (2022). The ripple effect: How leader workplace anxiety shape follower job performance. *Frontiers in*

Psychology, 6693. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.965365

APPENDIX A

Ethical Approval for Research

Re: U/SERC/237/2023

22 September 2023

Dr Nurul Iman Binti Abdul Jalil
Department of Psychology and Counselling
Faculty of Arts and Social Science
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman
Jalan Universiti, Bandar Baru Barat
31900 Kampar, Perak

Dear Dr Nurul Iman,

Ethical Approval For Research Project/Protocol

We refer to your application for ethical approval for your research project (Master student's project) and are pleased to inform you that your application has been approved under Expedited Review.

The details of your research project are as follows:

Research Title	Job Search Self-Efficacy and Career Exploration Among Graduands in Malaysia: Workplace Anxiety as A Mediator
Investigator(s)	Dr Nurul Iman Binti Abdul Jalil Dr Grace T'ng Soo Ting Iman Nurhakim Bin Shaiful Ahram (UTAR Postgraduate Student)
Research Area	Social Science
Research Location	Malaysia
No of Participants	270 participants (Age: 18 - 24)
Research Costs	Self-funded
Approval Validity	22 September 2023 - 21 September 2024

The conduct of this research is subject to the following:

(1) The participants' informed consent be obtained prior to the commencement of the research,

(2) Confidentiality of participants' personal data must be maintained; and

(3) Compliance with procedures set out in related policies of UTAR such as the UTAR Research Ethics and Code of Conduct, Code of Practice for Research Involving Humans and other related policies/guidelines.

(4) Written consent be obtained from the institution(s)/company(ies) in which the physical or/and online survey will be carried out, prior to the commencement of the research.

Should you collect personal data of participants in your study, please have the participants sign the attached Personal Data Protection Statement for your records.

The University wishes you all the best in your research.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Ts Dr Faidz bin Abd Rahman
Chairman
UTAR Scientific and Ethical Review Committee

c.c Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Science
Director, Institute of Postgraduate Studies and Research

Kampar Campus : Jalan Universiti, Bandar Barat, 31900 Kampar, Perak Darul Ridzuan, Malaysia
Tel: (605) 468 8888 Fax: (605) 466 1313
Sungai Long Campus : Jalan Sungai Long, Bandar Sungai Long, Cheras, 43000 Kajang, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
Tel: (603) 9086 0288 Fax: (603) 9019 8868
Website: www.utar.edu.my

APPENDIX B

Inform Consent Form

Section A

Inform Consent Form

Study Title: Job Search Self-Efficacy and Career Exploration Among Graduands in Malaysia: Workplace Anxiety as a Mediator

Researcher: IMAN NURHAKIM BIN SHAIFUL AHRAM

Institution: Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)

Study Objectives:

1. To examine the predictive role of Job Search Self-Efficacy (JSSE) on career exploration among graduands in Malaysia.
2. To examine the mediating role of workplace anxiety on the relationship between job search self-efficacy and career exploration among graduands in Malaysia.

Confidentiality and Voluntary Participation:

Your participation is entirely voluntary and confidential. Your personal information will not be disclosed, and your identity will remain protected.

Inclusion Criteria:

Before proceeding, please ensure that you meet the following inclusion criteria for participation in this study:

1. You are a graduand from a university in Malaysia.

2. You currently reside in Malaysia.

3. Your age is below 24 years old.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions, concerns, or wish to receive the study results, please feel free to contact Iman Nurhakim Bin Shaiful Ahram at iman.nur@1utar.my (Email) or 018-9104991 (Phone Number).

Consent:

By proceeding to the questionnaire, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the information provided in this consent form. If you agree, please continue to the questionnaire.

APPENDIX C

Demographic Data

Introduction for the Section B:

This section (Section B) aims to gather information about your background and eligibility for participation in our study. Please follow these instructions carefully as you provide your responses.

Instructions:

1. Personal Information: Please provide accurate and up-to-date personal information, including your age, gender, field of study, years of study, working experience and CGPA.
2. Answer All Questions: Ensure that you respond to all the questions in this section.

Section B

Demographic Data

Age:	
Gender:	- Male ☐ - Female ☐
Race:	
Field of Study:	
Years of Study:	
Working Experience:	
University:	
CGPA:	

APPENDIX D

Job-Search Self-Efficacy Scale

Job Search Behaviours (JSSE-B)						
No.	Items	Not at all confident (1)	Slightly Confident (2)	Neutral (3)	Quite confident (4)	Totally confident (5)
1.	Prepare resumes that will get you job interviews					
2.	Impress interviewers during employment interviews					
3.	Prepare a sales pitch that will attract the interest of employers					
4.	Find out where job openings exist					
5.	Search for and find good job opportunities					

Job Search Outcomes (JSSE-O)						
No.	Items	Not at all confident (1)	Slightly Confident (2)	Neutral (3)	Quite confident (4)	Totally confident (5)
1.	Be successful in your job search					
2.	Be invited to job interviews					
3.	Get a job offer in an organization that you want to work in					
4.	Get a job offer for a job that you really want					
5.	Obtain a very good job					

APPENDIX E

Workplace Anxiety Scale

Section D

Workplace Anxiety Items

Instructions:

1. Read Each Statement: Read each statement provided in the survey carefully.
2. Choose the Appropriate Response: For each statement, select the response that best represents your level of satisfaction.
3. Answer All Statements: Ensure that you respond to all the statements in the survey. Your input on each statement is important.
4. Survey Confidentiality: Your responses are completely confidential. Your personal information will not be shared.
5. Survey Completion: Once you have answered all the statements, review your responses to make sure you are satisfied. If you are content with your choices, you can proceed with the next section.

No.	Items	Strongly Disagree (1)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
1.	I am overwhelmed by thoughts of doing poorly at work					
2.	I worry that my work performance will be lower than that of others at work					
3.	I feel nervous and apprehensive about not being able to meet performance targets					
4.	I worry about not receiving a positive job performance evaluation					
5.	I often feel anxious that I will not be able to perform my job duties in the time allotted					
6.	I worry about whether others consider me to be a good employee for the job					

7.	I worry that I will not be able to successfully manage the demands of my job					
8.	Even when I try as hard as I can, I still worry about whether my job performance will be good enough					

APPENDIX F

Career Exploration Survey

Section E

Career Exploration Survey (CES)

Instructions:

1. Read Each Statement: Read each statement provided in the survey carefully.
2. Choose the Appropriate Response: For each statement, select the response that best represents your level of satisfaction.
3. Answer All Statements: Ensure that you respond to all the statements in the survey. Your input on each statement is important.
4. Survey Confidentiality: Your responses are completely confidential. Your personal information will not be shared.
5. Survey Completion: Once you have answered all the statements, review your responses to make sure you are satisfied. If you are content with your choices, you can submit the survey.

Environment Exploration: To what extent have you behaved in the following ways over the last 3 months?						
No.	Items	Little (1)	Somewhat Satisfied (2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4)	Very Satisfied (5)
1.	Investigated career possibilities					
2.	Went to various career orientation programs					
3.	Obtained information on specific jobs or companies					
4.	Initiated conversations with knowledgeable individuals in my career area					
5.	Obtained information on the labor market and general job opportunities in my career area					
6.	Sought information on specific areas of career interest					

Self-Exploration: To what extent have you done the following in the past 3 months?						
No.	Items	Little (1)	Somewhat Satisfied (2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4)	Very Satisfied (5)
1.	Reflected on how my past integrates with my future career					
2.	Focused my thoughts on me as a person					
3.	Contemplated my past					
4.	Been retrospective in thinking about my career					
5.	Understood a new relevance of past behavior for my future career					

APPENDIX G

Cook'S Distance Table

No	Cook's Distance	No	Cook's Distance	No	Cook's Distance	No	Cook's Distance	No	Cook's Distance
1	0.00092	22	0.00066	43	0.00015	64	0.00217	85	0.00167
2	0.00285	23	0.00429	44	0.00123	65	0.01039	86	0.00255
3	0.00019	24	0.00213	45	0.00492	66	0.00031	87	0.00158
4	0	25	0.00002	46	0.00001	67	0.00047	88	0.00124
5	0.00001	26	0.0043	47	0.00423	68	0.00264	89	0.00019
6	0.00467	27	0.00264	48	0	69	0.00842	90	0.00056
7	0.00001	28	0.00125	49	0.00079	70	0.00004	91	0.00208
8	0.00302	29	0.01776	50	0.0007	71	0	92	0.01233
9	0.00814	30	0.01667	51	0.00121	72	0.04444	93	0.00106
10	0.00332	31	0.00266	52	0.00067	73	0.01369	94	0.00285
11	0.02944	32	0.00034	53	0.00317	74	0.00996	95	0.00035
12	0.00078	33	0.00033	54	0.00038	75	0.00331	96	0.00449
13	0.00515	34	0.00128	55	0	76	0.05483	97	0.00266
14	0.00117	35	0.01441	56	0	77	0.00068	98	0.01513

15	0	36	0.00906	57	0.00036	78	0.00367	99	0.00791
16	0.00018	37	0.02101	58	0.01435	79	0.00206	100	0.00045
17	0.00001	38	0.00038	59	0.05059	80	0.01565	101	0.00103
18	0.00938	39	0.00123	60	0.00094	81	0.00267	102	0.0007
19	0.00091	40	0.0015	61	0.00557	82	0.00156	103	0.00002
20	0.00045	41	0.00377	62	0	83	0.01383	104	0.00123
21	0.00092	42	0.00127	63	0.03081	84	0.00026	105	0.00091

No	**Cook's Distance**	**No**	**Cook's Distance**	**No**	**Cook's Distance**	**No**	**Cook's Distance**	**No**	**Cook's Distance**
106	0.02381	127	0.00007	148	0.00128	169	0.00248	190	0.00035
107	0.07147	128	0.00007	149	0.00001	170	0.00277	191	0.00317
108	0.00009	129	0.00175	150	0	171	0.00434	192	0.00014
109	0.00207	130	0.00671	151	0.00343	172	0.00345	193	0.00043
110	0.01806	131	0.00183	152	0.00123	173	0.00038	194	0.00106
111	0.00119	132	0.002	153	0.01013	174	0.00004	195	0.00004
112	0.00219	133	0.03438	154	0.00004	175	0.00146	196	0.00187
113	0.00033	134	0.01812	155	0.00045	176	0.0066	197	0.00029
114	0.00002	135	0.00328	156	0.0094	177	0.00019	198	0.00012

115	0.00001	136	0.00008	157	0.01667	178	0.00183	199	0.00175
116	0.00617	137	0.00014	158	0.0073	179	0.00015	200	0.00013
117	0.02709	138	0.00003	159	0.00528	180	0.0028	201	0.00342
118	0.01383	139	0.00747	160	0.00006	181	0	202	0.00037
119	0.00356	140	0.00049	161	0.01667	182	0.00427	203	0
120	0.00392	141	0.01811	162	0.00255	183	0.00601	204	0.00006
121	0.00207	142	0.00001	163	0.00047	184	0.00177	205	0.00329
122	0	143	0.00367	164	0.00777	185	0.0005	206	0.00038
123	0.01237	144	0.00001	165	0.00008	186	0.00072	207	0.00117
124	0.05025	145	0.00102	166	0.00012	187	0.00038	208	0.00038
125	0.00533	146	0	167	0.00156	188	0.00346	209	0.00543
126	0.00019	147	0.04831	168	0.02822	189	0.00078	210	0.00004

No	**Cook's Distance**	**No**	**Cook's Distance**	**No**	**Cook's Distance**	**No**	**Cook's Distance**	**No**	**Cook's Distance**
211	0.0013	232	0.00208	253	0.00014	274	0.00001	279	0.00055
212	0	233	0.00042	254	0.00036	275	0.00055	280	0.00031
213	0.00026	234	0.00002	255	0.0005	276	0.00094	281	0.00072

214	0.00095	235	0	256	0.00036	277	0.00095	282	0.00026
215	0.00055	236	0.00013	257	0.00094	278	0.0005	283	0.00122
216	0.00006	237	0.00009	258	0.00055	279	0.00055	284	0
217	0	238	0.00195	259	0.00026	280	0.00031	285	0.00119
218	0.00026	239	0.00095	260	0.00013	281	0.00072	286	0.00036
219	0.00013	240	0.00019	261	0.00001	282	0.00026	287	0.00095
220	0.00013	241	0.00072	262	0.00123	283	0.00122	288	0.00346
221	0.00017	242	0.00055	263	0.00013	284	0	289	0.00013
222	0.00008	243	0.00026	264	0	285	0.00119		
223	0.00038	244	0.00036	265	0.00011	286	0.00036		
224	0.00008	245	0.01109	266	0.00072	287	0.00095		
225	0.00264	246	0.00094	267	0.00002	288	0.00346		
226	0.00072	247	0.00221	268	0.00002	289	0.00013		
227	0.00036	248	0.0005	269	0.00013	274	0.00001		
228	0	249	0.00255	270	0.00328	275	0.00055		
229	0.00055	250	0.00038	271	0.00055	276	0.00094		
230	0.00078	251	0.00014	272	0.00072	277	0.00095		
231	0.00036	252	0.0005	273	0.00056	278	0.0005		

APPENDIX H

Harman'S Single-Factor Test

Total Variance Explained

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9.156	31.572	31.572	9.156	31.572	31.572
2	4.395	15.156	46.728			
3	2.013	6.942	53.669			
4	1.212	4.179	57.849			
5	.984	3.393	61.241			
6	.904	3.116	64.357			
7	.777	2.678	67.035			
8	.733	2.528	69.563			
9	.719	2.478	72.041			
10	.643	2.217	74.257			
11	.600	2.069	76.326			
12	.554	1.910	78.236			
13	.537	1.852	80.088			
14	.510	1.757	81.845			
15	.502	1.732	83.577			
16	.480	1.654	85.231			
17	.438	1.511	86.741			
18	.418	1.443	88.184			
19	.409	1.409	89.593			
20	.382	1.318	90.911			
21	.368	1.268	92.179			
22	.363	1.252	93.432			
23	.336	1.159	94.590			
24	.313	1.081	95.671			
25	.296	1.019	96.690			
26	.287	.990	97.681			
27	.261	.899	98.580			
28	.220	.758	99.338			
29	.192	.662	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

APPENDIX I

Factor Loadings for JSSE, CES, and WAS Scales

Items	Factor Loading
Job Search Self-Efficacy Scale	
Prepare resumes that will get you job interviews	0.768
Impress interviewers during employment interviews	0.698
Prepare a sales pitch that will attract the interest of employers	0.710
Find out where job openings exist	0.520
Search for and find good job opportunities	0.656
Be successful in your job search	0.638
Be invited to job interviews	0.710
Get a job offer in an organization that you want to work in	0.770
Get a job offer for a job that you really want	0.786
Obtain a very good job	0.805
Career Exploration Survey	
Investigated career	0.684
Went to various career orientation programs	0.616
Obtained information on specific jobs or companies	0.686
Initiated conversations with knowledgeable individuals in my career area	0.649
Obtained information on the labor market and general job opportunities in my career area	0.776
Sought information on specific areas of career interest	0.785

Reflected on how my past integrates with my future career	0.701
Focused my thoughts on me as a person	0.575
Contemplated my past	0.547
Been retrospective in thinking about my career	0.692
Understood a new relevance of past behavior for my future career	0.604
Workplace Anxiety Scale	
I am overwhelmed by thoughts of doing poorly at work	0.532
I worry that my work performance will be lower than that of others at work	0.736
I feel nervous and apprehensive about not being able to meet performance targets	0.692
I worry about not receiving a positive job performance evaluation	0.699
I often feel anxious that I will not be able to perform my job duties in the time allotted	0.729
I worry about whether others consider me to be a good employee for the job	0.666
I worry that I will not be able to successfully manage the demands of my job	0.727
Even when I try as hard as I can, I still worry about whether my job performance will be good enough	0.733