



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***INFLUENCE OF CAREER DECISION-MAKING SELF-EFFICACY,
CAREER MATURITY, PARENTING STYLE, AND PARENTAL
PERFECTIONISM ON CAREER DECISION AMONG UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS***

MAHDI KHASMOHAMMADI

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By

MAHDI KHASMOHAMMADI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra
Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

July 2018



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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved mother and the memory of my late dearest father,
I miss him every day but I am glad he saw this process through to its completion.



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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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MAHDI KHASMOHAMMADI

July 2018

Chair: Sidek Mohd Noah, PhD
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Career decision is one of the most investigated constructs in career development. Numerous studies assume that career decision is associated with various personal or external factors. Given that one of the primary goals of career counseling is to assist with the career decision-making process, research in this area is crucial. Therefore, the primary rationale for this study was to be the first known investigation into the relationship between parental perfectionism, parenting style, career decision self-efficacy, career maturity, and career indecision. This research was an initial attempt to integrate and extend existing research in the areas of parenting and career development using the less studied construct of parental perfectionism and to investigate whether gender plays a moderating effect on the relationships between exogenous variables and career indecision among undergraduate students.

The multi-stage cluster random sampling method was employed to recruit a total of 543 undergraduate students aged 18 to 24 years from public universities in the Selangor state. Descriptive and correlational research design was employed. The respondents completed Career Decision Scale (CDS; Osipow, 1987), Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale – Short Form (CDSE-SF, Betz et al., 1996), Career Maturity Inventory-Revised (CMI-R; Crites and Savickas, 1996), Parental Authority Questionnaire-Revised (PAQ-R; Reitman et al., 2002), and Family Almost Perfect Scale (FAPS; Wang et al., 2010).

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) indicated that undergraduate students with low career maturity and low career decision making self-efficacy were more likely to report high career indecision. Moreover, this study supported the moderating role of gender

between career decision making self-efficacy with career indecision. Furthermore, parental perfectionism was the strongest predictor of career indecision among undergraduate students. The findings of this study also proposed that career maturity, career decision making self-efficacy, parenting style and parental perfectionism were valuable predictors of career indecision among undergraduate students.

Overall, studied variables were explained 64% of the variance in career indecision. The current study advances understanding on the importance of career maturity and career decision making self-efficacy as influencing individual factors against career indecision. The findings of the study also provided evidence to increase understanding on the importance of parenting styles and parental perfectionism as external factors on career indecision among undergraduate students. The findings of the current study can be useful for counselors, therapists, educators, parents, and policy makers for prevention and intervention of career indecision among undergraduate students. However, more studies are needed to investigate the role and impact of parental perfectionism in career indecision.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PENGARUH EFIKASI KENDIRI MEMBUAT KEPUTUSAN
KERJAYA, KEMATANGAN KERJAYA, GAYA KEIBUBAAPAN DAN
PERFEKSIONISME IBU BAPA TERHADAP KETIDAKUPAYAAN
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Keputusan kerjaya merupakan salah satu yang paling disiasat dalam pembangunan kerjaya. Banyak kajian menganggap bahawa keputusan kerjaya dikaitkan dengan pelbagai faktor peribadi atau luaran. Memandangkan salah satu matlamat utama kaunseling kerjaya adalah untuk membantu proses membuat keputusan kerjaya, penyelidikan dalam bidang ini adalah penting. Oleh itu, rasional utama untuk kajian ini adalah penyiasatan pertama yang diketahui mengenai hubungan antara perfeksionisme ibu, gaya keibubapaan, keputusan kerjaya diri, kematangan kerjaya, dan keraguan kerjaya. Kajian ini merupakan percubaan awal untuk mengintegrasikan dan memperluaskan penyelidikan yang sedia ada dalam bidang pembangunan keibubapaan dan kerjaya dengan menggunakan pembinaan perfeksionisme orang kurang belajar dan untuk menyiasat sama ada jantina memainkan peranan yang menyederhanakan hubungan antara pembolehubah eksogen dan ketidakpastian karier di kalangan pelajar prasiswazah.

Kaedah persampelan rawak berkelompok pelbagai peringkat telah digunakan untuk memilih 543 pelajar prasiswazah berusia 18 hingga 24 tahun dari beberapa buah universiti awam di Selangor. Reka bentuk kajian deskriptif dan kajian korelasi telah digunakan. Responden telah menjawab Skala Keputusan Kerjaya (CDS, Osipow; 1987); Skala Efikasi Kendiri Keputusan Kerjaya - Borang Pendek (CDSE-SF, Betz et al., 1996); Inventori Kematangan Kerjaya - Semakan (CMIR; Crites & Savickas, 1996); Soalselidik Autoriti Keibubapaan - Semakan (PAQ-R; Reitman et al., 2002) dan Skala Keluarga Hampir Sempurna (FAPS; Wang et al., 2010).

Pemodelan Persamaan Berstruktur (SEM) menunjukkan bahawa pelajar prasiswazah dengan kematangan kerjaya yang rendah dan efikasi sendiri membuat keputusan kerjaya yang rendah lebih cenderung untuk memperlihatkan ketidakupayaan membuat keputusan kerjaya yang tinggi. Kajian ini juga menyokong peranan menyederhana faktor jantina antara keberkesanan diri dalam membuat keputusan kerjaya dengan ketidakupayaan membuat keputusan kerjaya. Selain itu, perfeksionisme ibubapa adalah peramal yang paling kuat terhadap ketidakupayaan membuat keputusan kerjaya dalam kalangan pelajar prasiswazah. Penemuan kajian ini juga mencadangkan bahawa kematangan kerjaya, efikasi sendiri membuat keputusan kerjaya, gaya keibubapaan dan perfeksionisme ibu bapa merupakan peramal penting dalam ketidakupayaan membuat keputusan kerjaya dalam kalangan pelajar prasiswazah.

Secara keseluruhan, pemboleh ubah-pemboleh ubah yang dikaji menjelaskan 64% daripada varians dalam ketidakupayaan membuat keputusan kerjaya. Kajian ini telah meningkatkan pemahaman mengenai kepentingan kematangan kerjaya dan efikasi sendiri membuat keputusan kerjaya dalam mempengaruhi faktor-faktor individu terhadap ketidakupayaan membuat keputusan kerjaya. Penemuan kajian ini juga memberikan bukti untuk meningkatkan pemahaman tentang kepentingan gaya keibubapaan dan perfeksionisme ibu bapa sebagai faktor luaran terhadap ketidakupayaan membuat keputusan kerjaya dalam kalangan pelajar prasiswazah. Dapatan dari kajian ini boleh digunakan oleh kaunselor, ahli terapi, pendidik, ibu bapa dan pembuat dasar untuk pencegahan dan intervensi berkaitan isu ketidakupayaan membuat keputusan kerjaya dalam kalangan pelajar prasiswazah. Namun, lebih banyak kajian diperlukan untuk menyiasat peranan dan kesan perfeksionisme ibu bapa terhadap kebimbangan kerjaya.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 4 July 2018 to conduct the final examination of Mahdi Khasmohammadi on his thesis entitled Influence Of Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy, Career Maturity, Parenting Style, And Parental Perfectionism On Career Decision Among Undergraduate Students in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the (insert the name of relevant degree).

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter presents the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, general and specific objectives, research hypotheses. It also discusses significance and limitations of the study. Finally, conceptual and operational definitions of key terms are presented.

1.2 Background of the Study

Gordon, (1995) reported that between 20 up to 50% of the students who start college are undecided. The statistics show that in 2000, 11.1% of university students were doubtful about choosing their major in college. The figure hit 13% of incoming students in 2007 (Kelly & Shin, 2009). Reviewing the present reports reveals that in Malaysia the figure of university students with career-related problems has touched 50% or even more (Abu Talib & Tan, 2009). This is even worse in some non-Western countries such as South Africa and the Philippines, where 40% of registered students either quit their universities in their first year or fail to complete their study up to graduation (CHED, 2008). To refer to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, almost 44% of college alumni with jobs in 2012 were underemployed (Abel, Deitz, & Su, 2014). This means that college degree was not necessary in types of the jobs these graduates had. Another disappointing statistic related to college graduates is from a 2012 investigation done by the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University Only 51% of Rutgers University graduates between the years of 2006 to 2011 were full-time employees (Stone, Horn, & Zukin, 2012).

Regarding these warning statistics, the young people who struggle to determine the direction of their upcoming life and job, experience a discouraging and devastating situation. As Kelly and Shin (2013) explain, between 11 and 13% of new students at university level have no idea of their major in college. The recent study of Fadaei Nasab (2012) represents that nearly 85% of Iranian students at undergraduate level are doubtful about their major. In this case, males express a higher career indecision compared to females. Likewise freshmen are reported to suffer a higher hesitancy in choosing their occupation compared to sophomores. A study which was accomplished by Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs (2014) resulted in to similar findings. In this study, 64% of the research subjects had not decided about their job. Still, most of the students who had decided on that, had not explored it. In another case, 51% of the volunteers who participated in Rao study (2017) confirmed that they were still undecided about choosing their profession. One of the most investigated concepts in career counseling is Career indecision (Gati & Levin, 2014). One of the reasons increasing the number of student who quit college without obtaining any degree is

confusion about the job to be taken. The students who drop out are most susceptible to increased negative managing skills along with a diminished sense of welfare. This problematizes professional and social realms (Essig & Kelly, 2013). Uthayakumar, Schimmack, Hartung, & Rogers (2010b) explored the relation of career decidedness with undergraduate students' personal health. Results confirmed that subjective well-being is directly related to career decidedness. Those students who had a clear idea about their career considerably had a better feeling about their life. Feldman (2003) also scrutinized career indecision in young adults. His findings brought to the fore temporary, harmful results that afflicted the life of persons whose career choice was subjected to undecidedness. The results included lost income, a negative outlook towards jobs, and decreased problem solving potential. Agreed that well-being is under the direct influence of career decidedness, career indecisiveness will lead to varieties of negative consequences. The previous explorations of career indecision aimed at identifying the variables that could distinguish the people who were decided about their future carrier from those who were not (Ferreira, 2013).

During the latest decades, career indecision has been a subject of study for a considerable number of researchers (e.g., Di Fabio, Palazzeschi, Asulin-Peretz, & Gati, 2013; Nauta, 2012; Paulo Jorge Santos, Ferreira, & Gonçalves, 2014). The concept of career indecision addresses the problems that bloc normal career-related decisions (Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 1996). Normally it is considered as a natural part of the process of decision making during professional progress. An example is when an individual should undergo a change from university to workplace. Most of the undecided individuals can conquer this undecidedness personally or by referring to career counselors (Betz & Serling, 1993).

Career indecision is not permanent because it is usually resulted from interpersonal conflicts, obstacles, and/or lack of information (Brown & Lent, 2017). According to the available research results indecisive persons require more time to finalize a decision (Frost & Shows, 1993), they are most susceptible to decision postponement (Rassin & Muris, 2005), are in need of more information before making any decision, suffer a lower self-efficacy in decision-making (Rassin, Muris, Franken, Smit, & Wong, 2007), and point to more post-decisional difficulties (Germeijs & Verschueren, 2011). Moreover, these persons face more challenges in choosing their majors in college and vocational paths (Gayton, Clavin, Clavin, & Broida, 1994; Germeijs, Verschueren, & Soenens, 2006).

According to the findings of the accomplished studies, decisiveness in choosing a job may be affected by emerging career maturity. It is the attitudes maturity which is important in career decisions (Luzzo, 1993). Career maturity in Savickas' words (1984) is the capacity of making well-informed and proper decisions in choosing jobs. Overall, those people who have gained a higher sense of career maturity are more successful in career-related decision-making and can adapt their values, interests, personality features, and skills to any particular job with more ease (Luzzo, 1993). Career maturity renders people capable of determining their careers expectations. In this way, they will be able to understand their interests and, therefore, will be knowledgeable enough to choose the path which they want to follow. Furthermore, a student who knows about

which career path s/he will take will be more capable to equip him or herself with the necessary skills and experiences for a successful period of study (Van Reenen, 2010). In another study, Betz (2006) examined the factors which influenced undergraduate students' career choice. The study revealed that career maturity together with other factors that affected self-concept and self-efficacy are in direct association with career choice certainty. There are other studies that, similarly, pointed to the connection between career maturity and career decision self-efficacy (Chung, 2002). Hammond, Lockman and Boling (2010) argue that students' active involvement in career planning process can negatively be affected by inadequate knowledge and scarcity of professional maturity. Mubiana (2010) explains that the process of deciding on career path is under the influence of inadequate learning experiences, career maturity levels, and career and self-knowledge. Positive relationships between career maturity and career decidedness have been highlighted in previous research. Rojewski (1994) discusses career indecision as the only significant demonstrator of career immaturity. The Most recent study by Rao (2017) probes the relation of career maturity with career indecision. Findings emphasize on the difference between the decided and undecided respondents in terms of career maturity attitudes and competence aspects. The decided students appeared to be equipped with higher levels of career maturity. On the whole, the results of previous explorations openly confirm that career maturity is one of the essential factors which address undergraduate students' career indecision.

Betz (2006) considered career indecision as the most significant variable relate to career decision making self-efficacy. Residing on Bandura's concept of self-efficacy as a model, career decision self-efficacy addresses persons' belief in their ability to accomplish the tasks which are essential to finalize career choices (Taylor & Betz, 1983). Individuals, who are not equipped with the necessary self-efficacy in career decision, usually decide on their career choices principally based on their parent's recommendations or personal perspective on job and salary, without considering the compatibility of the career with their skills, interests, personal features, or abilities. This necessitates the more detailed examination of conviction in career choices (Alika, 2012; Keller & Whiston, 2008; Kniveton, 2004; Wang & Castañeda-Sound, 2008). Past studies have revealed a substantial connection between career indecision and career self-efficacy (Feinstein-Messinger, 2007; Guay, Senécal, Gauthier, & Fernet, 2003; Obana, 2007). Taylor & Betz (1983) examined the relation of self-efficacy in career decision with college students' career indecision. They argued that the intensity of expectations in the self-efficacy of the students who considered career choices were and undesirably related to career indecision in the most total form. The results affirmed that those individuals have a low confidence in their capability of carrying out tasks and in actions vital for effective career decision-making, suffer from undecidedness.

Creed, Patton and Prideaux (2006) assumed most of the accomplished research found that career indecision is, affected by self-efficacy, and as such, changes in career self-efficacy will impact on career indecision. Tracey (2010) inspected the connection between self-efficacy and the certainty in career choice among youths and adults. Results brought to the fore a powerful connection between self-efficacy levels and determination in career choice. In comparison to decided students, hesitant students represented a deeper obsession with negative thoughts in relation to career and the hardships in career choice. This was accompanied with reduced self-efficacy in

choosing career. These findings were discussed in an inspection by Bullock-Yowell, McConnell, and Schedin (2014) where they focused on decision status.

The results of Hellmann (2014) study back the hypothesis which anticipated not only a positive connection between self-efficacy and vocational search, but also a negative connection between self-efficacy and career indecisiveness. In a current study, Mao, Hsu & Fang (2016) clarified the entire aspects of self-efficacy in career decision which were in the most noticeable negative way correlated with the entire aspects of career indecision. Generally, the findings of previous inspections have revealed that self-efficacy in choosing career is one of the most significant factors which impress career hesitancy in undergraduate and college students.

A number of researches represent the relation of career indecision with various factors, either personal or impersonal. Creed, Patton, and Prideaux (2006b) believe that career indecision is not separate from the career development concerns, problematic occupational decisions, society's assumptions and observations and the role of the family. These factors impact student's determination in making career choices. Though theories addressing career development emphasize on family's role in career development, few theories have offered detailed discussions of the aspects of these roles in career development. Researches have struggled to elaborate parents' roles in their children's career development. Yet, because of the variety of factors influencing one's career choices, it is not easy to understand the family's roles in these choices.

The reviews done on the literature stress the importance of the role the family plays in vocational development in various periods of life (Leung, Hou, Gati, & Li, 2011; Sovet & Metz, 2014a). Concentrating on the role of parental behavior in youths' career development, most studies have probed the overall dimensions of parent-child relationship like patterns of family interaction (Lewis, 2016), parental attachment (Bolat, Odaci, & Odaci, 2016; Fadaei Nasab, Abdul Kadir, Mohd. Noah, & Hassan, 2013; Fraley, Roisman, Booth-LaForce, Owen, & Holland, 2013; Mao, Hsu, & Fang, 2016b), parenting styles (Baumrind, 2013; Moilanen, Rasmussen, & Padilla-Walker, 2015; Sovet & Metz, 2014a) family climate and family dysfunction (Hargrove, Inman, & Crane, 2005), parental support (Fernandes & Bance, 2015; Ginevra, Nota, & Ferrari, 2015) parental acceptance (Fan, Cheung, Leong, & Cheung, 2014; Georgia Koumoundourou, Tsaousis, & Kounenou, 2011) family patterns of expressiveness and cohesiveness (Lewis, 2016), and parental perfectionism (Khasmohammadi et al., 2010). These studies have demonstrated that individuation in the parent-child relationship; secure attachment styles, authoritative parenting and generally greater parental support and positive relationships between parents and children are associated with higher career decision self-efficacy, vocational exploration activities, career self-efficacy beliefs, career adaptability, earlier vocational identity development, less irrational career beliefs, and a greater propensity to optimism and hope.

Additionally, it is through family life that the realm of work becomes meaningful for children. In this way, they develop their understanding of education, work, and their career lives (Soresi, Nota, Ferrari, & Givenra, 2014). However, some studies also reported a negative association of vocational identity development, career decision self-

efficacy, and career decision making with family conflict and dysfunction. The findings of studies on the influences of parents on career decision-making difficulties and career indecision are heterogeneous. There are some studies which represent a rare or no relation among career indecision, career decision-making difficulties and family variables (Marcionetti, 2014). Despite these, other studies (Bolat et al., 2016; Fernandes & Bance, 2015; Garcia, Restubog, Toledano, Tolentino, & Rafferty, 2012; Isaac, 2014; Khasmohammadi et al., 2010) uncovered rather stronger correlations between decision-making difficulties and career indecision with various family variables such as family patterns of expressiveness and cohesiveness, parental perfectionism and parental support.

One aspect of family interactions that has been less explored in relation to career outcomes is parenting styles. Though parenting styles are generally subjected to ignorance in the career literature, their impact on perceptions of self-efficacy, decision making and the ability for independent exploration should not be undervalued. Lease & Dahlbeck (2009a) pointed parenting styles like demanding styles with characterized by parental controls that permit little independent practice of decision making for children may directly affect their decision-making skills.

Lease & Dahlbeck (2009) found that the authoritarian style is related to young women's career decision making rather than the authoritative style. High demandingness and low responsiveness are the characterizing features of the authoritarian parenting style. It was postulated that decreased career decision self-efficacy is related to growing up through an authoritarian parenting style; it leads to exacerbated indecisiveness in career choice. An authoritarian parenting perspective was considerate of career decision in women, while none of the parenting perspectives was significantly considerate of those in men. As a result of direct received guidance, women in this study reflected high levels of efficacy in the process of choosing jobs. On the other hand, direct and authoritarian parenting style assists these young women in choosing their jobs. On the contrary, Whiston (1996) has stated that low level of career decisiveness in women was under the influence of having highly disciplined and controlling families. He argued that having more controlling families with authoritarian nurturing approaches increased the probability of premature career-related decisions in women. Studies hesitate about the positive points of authoritative child-raising stand and the disadvantageous impact of authoritarian child-raising one in choosing jobs.

Roe (1957) was the first person who suggested the idea that because of the initial stages of life spent in a warm, loving, and nurturing atmosphere, people are eager to have the jobs which are people oriented; those whose choices are professions in the scientific fields, come from families with colder emotional interactions. Baumrind (1996) came to recognize that those activities which are shaped by intellectual work, without targeting or being influenced by social consent on child's part, or the ones that request the rejection of something which does not follow the rules laid down by the authority, are less likely to attract the kids who rely on their parents and their wisdom, and learn to agree with and accept their domination. Because career indecisiveness is a common phenomenon in the earlier stages of career development, pressure to decide on a choice can create stress (Feldman, 2003). It has also been found that perceived choice is quite

influential in perceived control (Perlmutter, 1980). This suggests that parental pressure in case of career choice may affect children's level of perceived control.

Inspection of the direct connection between parental pressure and independence makes it clear that a parent who respects child's independence and recognizes his/her personal decisions and actions, avoiding imposed strategies based on obedience and surrender, fosters the child's autonomous growth (Pérez & Cumsille, 2012). Parenting perfectionism is a kind of ideal perspective where people's personality is assessed and defined through a perfectionistic look to their parenting manners (Snell Jr, Overbey, & Brewer, 2005). Perfectionist parents are distinguished through their self-induced standards, sticking to personal demands, severe adherence to the standards, and strict, critical self-assessment (Frost, Marten, Lahart, & Rosenblate, 1990). Soenens et al. (2005) discuss that, due to their severe concentration on their personal needs and desires, maladaptive-perfectionist parents are not easily responsive towards their children's needs. Rather, they prefer to set their own standards for their children's full accomplishments, implementing psychological control as a means of imposing these standards.

There has been little inspection of the connection among parental perfectionism, parent-child communication, and job success. According to the explanation of Cheng & Yuen (2012) different dimensions of parenting (behavioral, cognitive and affective aspects) have been examined through empirical studies to show that they play a significant role in an individual's career development. They went on to explain that parents tend to set high but realistic expectations for their child's school achievement that motivate them to be successful. They detailed their explanation, stating that parents who set high but realistic expectations about their children's educational achievement can inspire them to be successful. Zafar (2012) believes that students favor a major which coursework they like and which their parents favor as well. Roach (2010) studied the particular parental behaviors that are apparently significant in predicting career self-efficacy. Roach found that parental high expectations for students' career predicted vocational self-efficacy. This finding is aligned with previous studies which confirm that parents' expectations were anticipative of young adolescents' vocational self-efficacy (Keller & Whiston, 2008).

Recent and only study (Khasmohammadi et al., 2010) into the effects of parental perfectionism on vocational behavior indicated that there is positive relationship between career indecision and parental perfectionism. Perfectionist parents directly or indirectly providing the condition for their children to become and remain undecided about their own educational and vocational decisions by following perfectionistic approach to their parenting behaviors. They suggest that students who perceive their parents as more dominant and discrepant with high orders and standards reported high level of career indecision.

The literature review shows the lack of research regarding to discover the combination of individual and parental variables related to career indecision, especially parental perfectionism which is regarded as vital in improvement of career development and career decision making. A gap still exists in the literature according to numerous

evidence on the associations between career decision self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting style, and parental perfectionism with career indecision, these studies examined the linear association between variables, and the moderating variable on these associations have not been studied. However, from the existing literature, no research has discovered the role of gender in association between career indecision and parental perfectionism.

1.3 Problem Statement

Many efforts have been done to investigate and recognize the reasons of clients' career decision-making difficulties. Career indecision is the primary reason people go to career counselors and it is one of the most examined concepts in career development (Itamar Gati & Levin, 2014). Shin & Kelly (2013) stated that 11 to 13% of students who go to universities are not sure about which major they want to continue in. It has been exposed that career indecision results in being dropped out from university with no degree between undergraduate students. These students might develop negative coping abilities and generally lower level of well-being (Hartung, 2011) which can often lead to poorer social and career outcomes (Shin & Kelly, 2013). In a study conducted by Rao (2017) 51% of the participants reported that they had not yet decided on their career choice. Recently studies of Fadaei Nasab (2012) revealed almost 85% of Iranian undergraduate students are undecided. Students also reported about worry regarding their indecision. However, this may lead to ineffective decision making and missed opportunities (Landine, 2013).

The important features of career development embrace vocational identity, maturity, self-efficacy, and decision-making difficulties. These facets and the impact of the quality of parent-child relationships on them recently have been studied frequently. However, some children informed extreme control of their parents on their career choices and activities which known as parental perfectionism (Fernandes & Bance, 2015; Khasmohammadi et al., 2010; Lo Cascio, Guzzo, Pace, Pace, & Madonia, 2016). The aim of some of these parents might have been enforcing their own job-related perspectives to their child's vocational development without thinking about their child's aspirations (Fan, Cheung, Leong, & Cheung, 2014; Khasmohammadi et al., 2010). Children are mostly inactive in the career preparation process in such families (Cheung, Cheung, & Wu, 2014).

However, it is not clear if parental perfectionism is able to act as a predictor in career development. Thus, though a complete understanding of the deep effects of parenting on career development, this study is an attempt to fill a gap in the present literature by scrutinizing the relationships between career decision making self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting styles, and parental perfectionism with career indecision among undergraduate students.

Even though past studies have recognized diverse socio-demographic factors related to career indecision, however, for providing effective career guidance and appropriate career development interventions, discovering and understanding the effects of gender

on career decision-making may be necessary (Niles, Harris-bowlsbey, & Corso, 2013). The recent empirical research reveals inconsistent findings on the correlations between career indecision and gender. Some researchers has reported higher level of career indecision in female (Abu Talib & Tan, 2009; Nota, Ferrari, Solberg, & Soresi, 2007; Patton & Creed, 2001), by contrast, other researchers (Khasmohammadi et al., 2010; M. Lam & Santos, 2017; Middleton, 2017), reported higher level of career indecision in male.

Even though existing results reveal that gender differences in career indecision exist, no research has explored the influence of gender differences between career decision making self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting style, and parental perfectionism with career indecision among undergraduate students. Furthermore, the direct relationships between variables of this study have generally been studied. Therefore, this study has been designed to investigate whether gender plays a moderating effect in relationships between career indecision and exogenous variables among undergraduate students. Subsequently, the findings of current study on the moderating role of gender in association between research variables may help to develop career indecision prevention and intervention programs which are also responsive to gender differences.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The proposed research conveys a number of key constructs associated with parental and individual influences vocational development. Although preliminary evidences have proved parental influences on child's career development, however, the unique combination of career decision self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting styles, parental perfectionism and career indecision as well as the importance of examining this correlations in a diverse sample, will deliver a unique set of associations in the literature among these concepts and add to the recent capable work of Khasmohammadi et al. (2010).

The main rationale for this study is to be the first known study into the relationship between career decision self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting style, parental perfectionism, and career indecision. This research is a primary effort to extend existing research in the areas of career development and parenting by means of the less studied construct of parental perfectionism. This research is unique by 1) pairing the career decision self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting style and parental perfectionism with career indecision, as an explanation of the processing of the career development, and 2) looking for to discover whether gender functions as a moderating factor between career decision self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting style, parental perfectionism and career indecision.

This study by providing a deeper understanding of the interrelationships between research variables and discovering potential moderating effect of gender can subsidize in development of competent interventions and preventions for psychologists and counselors to help students who experiencing high levels of career indecision along with low levels of career decision self-efficacy and career maturity. The obtained

information about the incidents that happen within the families that guide children to healthier career decisions will offer a instructions for policy makers, educators, career advisors, parents and career development professionals to help adults and adolescents in a better way in their career decision making and development process. Additionally, the results of current study would help researchers, counselors and psychologists to integrate family interaction factors such as parental perfectionism into conceptualizing individuals' career choices, career development, and career decision-making difficulties.

Overall, the inadequate findings as regards to career indecision and gender propose that more research should be done to completely clarify the effect of gender on career indecision. Therefore, the current study attempts to provide a deeper understanding on career development between undergraduate students by exploring the role of parental perfectionism and gender on career indecision in order to provide preventive efforts for the reduction of career indecision. Besides, the particular concerns of male and female students is crucial to consider in spite of providing the services they require and to find out whether different counseling interventions needed for male and female students or not.

Ultimately, for adding new findings to literature besides raising knowledge and awareness among professionals in the area of psychology and counseling for assisting people in the process of career development by providing deep understanding about career indecision, the present study was designed to provide answers for the subsequent questions.

1.5 Research Questions

Following questions are expected to be answered in the current study.

1. What are the levels of career decision making self-efficacy, career maturity, and career indecision among undergraduate students based on gender and academic year?
2. Are there relations between career decision making self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting styles, parental perfectionism, and career indecision among undergraduate students?
3. To what extent gender moderates the relationships between career decision making self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting styles, parental perfectionism, and career indecision?
4. What is the unique predictor (career decision making self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting styles, and parental perfectionism) of career indecision among undergraduate students?

1.6 Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the current study have been divided to general and specific objectives which describe bellow.

1.6.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to examine the influence of career decision self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting styles and parental perfectionism on career indecision of undergraduate students by investigating the moderating role of gender on the relationships between the independent variables of the study with career indecision.

1.6.2 Specific Objectives

Subsequent specific objectives are formulated based on the general objective of the study.

1. To describe the level of career decision making self-efficacy, career maturity, and career indecision among undergraduate students based on gender and academic year.
2. To determine the relationships between career decision making self-efficacy, career maturity, permissive parenting style, flexible parenting style, authoritarian parenting style, family order perfectionism, family discrepancy perfectionism, family standards perfectionism, and career indecision among undergraduate students.
3. To examine the moderating role of gender on the relationships between career decision making self-efficacy, career maturity, permissive parenting style, flexible parenting style, authoritarian parenting style, family order perfectionism, family discrepancy perfectionism, family standards perfectionism, and career indecision among undergraduate students.
4. To determine unique predictor (career decision making self-efficacy, career maturity, parenting styles, and parental perfectionism) of career indecision among undergraduate students.

1.7 Research Hypotheses

Regarding to the objectives of the study following hypotheses were proposed.

Ha1: There is a significant negative relationship between career decision making self-efficacy and career indecision among undergraduate students.

- Ha2: There is a significant negative relationship between career maturity and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha3: There is a significant positive relationship between permissive parenting style and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha4: There is a significant negative relationship between flexible parenting style and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha5: There is a significant positive relationship between authoritarian parenting style and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha6: There is a significant negative relationship between family standards perfectionism and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha7: There is a significant positive relationship between family discrepancy and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha8: There is a significant negative relationship between family order perfectionism and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha9: Gender moderates the relationship between career decision making self-efficacy and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha10: Gender moderates the relationship between career maturity and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha11: Gender moderates the relationship between permissive parenting style and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha12: Gender moderates the relationship between flexible parenting style and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha13: Gender moderates the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha14: Gender moderates the relationship between family standards perfectionism and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha15: Gender moderates the relationship between family discrepancy perfectionism and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha16: Gender moderates the relationship between family order perfectionism and career indecision among undergraduate students.
- Ha17: The standardized beta coefficients for all selected independent variables do not equal zero when regressed against undergraduate students' career indecision.

1.8 Definition of Terminology

Conceptual and operational definitions of the studied variables of this study are described in this section.

1.8.1 Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy

Conceptual definition: Career decision-making self-efficacy is defined as individual's believes that he or she can successfully complete tasks necessary to making career decisions (Taylor & Betz, 1983).

Operational definition: Career decision-making self-efficacy refers to the respondents' score on the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale, Short Form (CDSES-SF; Betz, Klein, & Taylor, 1996). Higher scores mean respondent has high level of confidence to complete career-related tasks.

1.8.2 Career Maturity

Conceptual definition: Career maturity is an individual well-prepared status to make age appropriate and elevated career decisions along with having the ability to carry out career development tasks properly (Savickas, 1984).

Operational definition: Career maturity refers to the respondents' score on the Career Maturity Inventory-Revised (CMI-R; Crites & Savickas, 1996). High scores in this scale indicate respondent has more mature career attitudes.

1.8.3 Parenting Styles

Conceptual definition: Parenting style was defined as the parental strategies in raising children, which include permissiveness, involvement, affection, warmth, and control (Reitman, Rhode, Hupp, & Altobello, 2002).

Operational definition: Parenting style refers to respondents' score on the Parental Authority Questionnaire-Revised (PAQ-R; Reitman, Rhode, Hupp, & Altobello, 2002). Higher scores equal to higher level of participants' perceived level of permissive, authoritarian and flexible practices in their parents.

1.8.4 Parental Perfectionism

Conceptual definition: Parental perfectionism refers to a type of perfectionism where people are characterized by a perfectionistic approach to their parenting behaviors (Snell Jr et al., 2005).

Operational definition: Parental perfectionism refers to respondents' score on the Family Almost Perfect Scale (FAPS; Wang, Methikalam, & Slaney, 2010) which measures perceived level of family standards, order, and discrepancy in the family by participants. High scores on this scale mean high level of parental perfectionism.

1.8.5 Career Indecision

Conceptual definition: Career indecision refers to a state in which individual is not able to make decision about the desired careers to pursue (Guay, Ratelle, Senécal, Larose, & Deschênes, 2006).

Operational definition: Career indecision refers to the respondents' score on the Career Decision Scale (CDS; Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico, & Koschier, 1976). High score on this scale means high level of career decision uncertainty in respondents.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

The present study has few limitations. First, current study used 18-24 years old male and female undergraduate students in public universities as participants. Thus, the findings might not be applicable beyond this population. Second, this study is a descriptive correlational study; therefore it cannot examine any possible causal relationships between the variables of the study. Lastly, self-reporting instruments were used to collect the data, thus the results of current research could consequence in some kind of bias.

1.10 Chapter Summary

The present chapter provided the background of the study. The problem statement, significance of the study, research questions, general and specific objectives of the study, and research hypotheses are presented. Furthermore, conceptual and operational definition of the terms of this study is discussed. Lastly, the limitations of the current study are presented.

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