

Self-Efficacy and Perceived Social Support as Predictors of Career Maturity among Twelfth-Grade Vocational High School Students

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Abstract

This study investigated the extent to which self-efficacy and perceived social support predict career maturity among twelfth-grade students at SMK Bintara Rancaekek. A quantitative cross-sectional correlational design was applied to the entire population of 53 students through total sampling. Data were collected using adapted and modified measures derived from the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale, the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, and the Career Development Inventory–Australian Version Short Form. Descriptive statistics, Pearson’s correlation, and multiple linear regression were employed for data analysis. The findings revealed that self-efficacy was a positive and statistically significant predictor of career maturity ($\beta = .707$, $t = 7.246$, $p < .001$). By contrast, perceived social support showed a positive but nonsignificant contribution ($\beta = .150$, $t = 1.541$, $p = .130$). The overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(2, 50) = 27.603$, $p < .001$, accounting for 52.5% of the variance in career maturity. These results suggest that students’ confidence in handling career-related tasks plays a more substantial role in career maturity than general perceptions of social support. Accordingly, vocational school career guidance should place greater emphasis on strengthening students’ confidence in career exploration, planning, decision-making, and problem-solving, while ensuring that social support is more specifically aligned with practical career-development needs.

Keywords: Career Decision-Making; Career Maturity; Perceived Social Support; Self-Efficacy; Vocational High School Students

1. Introduction

Vocational high schools are designed to equip students with the technical and practical competencies required to enter employment, pursue entrepreneurship, or continue to higher education after graduation. Accordingly, twelfth-grade vocational students are expected not only to possess occupational skills but also to demonstrate the psychological readiness needed to recognize their potential, explore available opportunities, formulate plans, and determine an appropriate career direction. However, the persistently high unemployment rate among

vocational high school graduates suggests that technical competence is not always accompanied by adequate readiness to manage the transition from school to employment.

SMK Bintara Rancaekek is a private vocational high school in Bandung Regency offering three vocational programs: Automotive Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Office Management. Its location within the Rancaekek industrial area provides students with opportunities to become familiar with workplace conditions through workplace-based training, industrial visits, and interactions with business and industry partners. Such exposure would ideally enable students to develop a clearer understanding of occupational demands and prepare realistic career pathways before completing their education.

Nevertheless, a preliminary questionnaire administered to 53 twelfth-grade students on January 26, 2026, revealed several concerns regarding their career readiness. A total of 58% of the students did not understand the steps required to select an occupation or pursue further education. In addition, 41% remained uncertain about the vocational competencies they had acquired and expressed concern about making inappropriate career decisions. Furthermore, 56% perceived the social support available from their families, peers, and school environment as inadequate.

These preliminary findings were further supported by initial interviews with students representing the three vocational programs. The interviews indicated that some students had not yet established definite postgraduate plans, were still considering whether to seek employment or pursue higher education, and remained uncertain about the occupations most consistent with their competencies. Several students also reported that their workplace-based training experiences had not fully strengthened their confidence in facing recruitment and employment demands. Regarding social support, students indicated that encouragement from their families and schools was generally available but remained broad, providing limited concrete information about occupational alternatives, further education, and practical career-preparation steps.

These circumstances are closely related to career maturity, which refers to an individual's readiness to address career-development tasks appropriate to a particular life stage ([Super, 1990](#)). During the exploration stage, students are expected to identify their personal characteristics, obtain occupational information, evaluate alternatives, and clarify their career preferences. Career maturity therefore does not emerge automatically but develops through self-understanding, information seeking, planning, and active engagement in career decision-making processes ([Prideaux & Creed, 2001](#); [Savickas, 1984](#)).

One personal resource associated with career maturity is self-efficacy, defined as an individual's belief in their capacity to organize and perform the actions required to achieve a desired outcome ([Bandura, 1997](#)). In the career domain, self-efficacy includes confidence in evaluating personal abilities, obtaining occupational information, selecting goals, preparing plans, and overcoming barriers ([Taylor & Betz, 1983](#)). Career development also occurs within a social context. Perceived social support refers to an individual's subjective assessment of the availability of assistance from family members, friends, and significant others ([Zimet et al., 1988](#)). Such support may include emotional acceptance, information, guidance, constructive feedback, and practical assistance relevant to career decision-making.

Previous research has demonstrated that self-efficacy and social support are associated with students' career development. However, relatively few studies have examined both factors

simultaneously among vocational students who have received workplace exposure and study within an industrial environment. Therefore, this study examines self-efficacy as an internal psychological resource and perceived social support as an external resource associated with career maturity. Specifically, it investigates the relationship between self-efficacy and career maturity, the relationship between perceived social support and career maturity, and the overall predictive significance of a model incorporating both variables among twelfth-grade students at SMK Bintara Rancaekek.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Career Maturity

Career maturity refers to an individual's readiness to manage career-development tasks that are appropriate to a particular stage of life. [Super \(1990\)](#) positioned this construct within a lifelong developmental process, with particular emphasis on the exploration stage, during which individuals begin to recognize their strengths, compare occupational alternatives, and clarify emerging career preferences. [Savickas \(1984\)](#) further argued that career maturity is reflected in both decision readiness and the capacity to respond appropriately to developmental career demands.

Career maturity should not be understood as an automatic consequence of age. Rather, it is gradually formed through experience, self-knowledge, access to occupational information, and active participation in decision-making processes ([Prideaux & Creed, 2001](#)). [Creed and Patton \(2004\)](#) described the construct through four interrelated dimensions: career planfulness, career exploration, world-of-work information, and decision making. Together, these dimensions indicate the extent to which individuals are able to anticipate their future, investigate available options, understand employment contexts, and arrive at reasoned career choices.

This construct is particularly important for vocational high school students because they are approaching a major transition into employment, entrepreneurship, or tertiary education. [Akbar and Ekanesia \(2023\)](#) found that difficulties in aligning personal interests with career choices remained evident even among university students. Similarly, [Azzahra and Akbar \(2025\)](#) emphasized the importance of interest congruence in career planning. These findings suggest that unresolved career-development difficulties during secondary education may persist into later educational and occupational stages.

2.2 Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy concerns individuals' beliefs in their ability to organize and perform the actions required to achieve a desired outcome ([Bandura, 1997](#)). These beliefs shape behavioral choices, effort, persistence, and responses to difficulty. Individuals with stronger self-efficacy are generally more willing to pursue demanding goals, sustain their efforts, and interpret obstacles as manageable challenges rather than as reasons to withdraw.

In the career domain, [Taylor and Betz \(1983\)](#) introduced the concept of career decision-making self-efficacy, which encompasses self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning, and problem solving. These dimensions reflect confidence in understanding one's own characteristics, gathering relevant career information, selecting realistic objectives, constructing workable plans, and responding effectively to decision-related barriers. Self-efficacy therefore supports the exploratory and decisional processes that constitute central elements of career maturity.

Empirical evidence has repeatedly demonstrated the relevance of self-efficacy to career development. [Ekanesia \(2022\)](#) reported that career self-efficacy training improved career maturity among vocational students. Comparable associations were reported by Alodia (2023), Darmawan et al. (2024), and Hanifa et al. (2024), who found that confidence in personal capability was positively associated with students' readiness to address career development tasks. Evidence from an organizational context also suggests that self-efficacy may function as a psychological pathway through which competence is translated into performance ([Oktari & Siddiq, 2024](#)). Collectively, these findings indicate that individuals are more likely to convert their abilities into purposeful action when they believe those abilities can be used effectively.

2.3 Perceived Social Support

Perceived social support refers to an individual's subjective judgment regarding the availability of care, assistance, and reassurance within the social environment. [Zimet et al. \(1988\)](#) identified three principal sources of support: family, friends, and significant others. The construct therefore focuses not only on support that is objectively received, but also on whether individuals believe that meaningful assistance would be available when needed.

During adolescence, support from family members, peers, and other significant figures can help individuals manage developmental pressure and uncertainty about the future. Such support may involve emotional acceptance, useful information, guidance, or practical assistance. [Ekanesia et al. \(2024\)](#) associated perceived social support with adolescent mental health, while [Saskia and Sastri \(2025\)](#) linked social support with emotional dysregulation among vocational students who engaged in self-harm. Although these studies addressed different psychological outcomes, they indicate that supportive relationships may contribute to emotional stability and adaptive functioning during adolescence.

In career development, social support may broaden students' access to information, experience, encouragement, and feedback. [Khofifah \(2022\)](#) identified an association between family support and career maturity among vocational students, while [Darmawan et al. \(2024\)](#) highlighted the relevance of parental support by [Hanifa et al. \(2024\)](#) reported a relationship between peer support and career maturity. However, the value of support may differ according to its source, form, and relevance to the student's career needs. Its effectiveness may also depend on how the surrounding environment is interpreted. [Nuradina et al. \(2023\)](#) showed that personal characteristics shape positive perceptions of organizational climate, suggesting that similar social conditions may be experienced differently by different individuals. Applied to perceived social support, this implies that available assistance becomes psychologically meaningful only when students recognize, evaluate, and use it. Social support has also been associated with stronger student engagement and a greater capacity to manage academic burnout ([Firdaus & Fikri, 2025](#)).

2.4 Self-Efficacy, Perceived Social Support, and Career Maturity

Career maturity develops through the interaction of personal characteristics and environmental conditions. [Super \(1990\)](#) viewed career development as a process shaped by both individual attributes and social context. Within this perspective, self-efficacy represents an internal psychological resource that strengthens students' confidence in managing career-related tasks, whereas perceived social support represents an external resource that provides emotional reassurance, information, and practical assistance.

Self-efficacy may encourage students to participate actively in career planning, exploration,

and decision-making. Perceived social support, in turn, may strengthen psychological security and extend the range of information and assistance available to them. Yet social support may not translate directly into career maturity when students lack the confidence required to act on that support. Conversely, strong self-efficacy may be less effective when access to information, guidance, and meaningful assistance remains limited. The two resources may therefore operate in complementary rather than interchangeable ways.

Prior studies have provided evidence for this combined perspective. [Khofifah \(2022\)](#) and [Darmawan et al. \(2024\)](#) reported that self-efficacy and social support were jointly associated with students' career maturity, while [Hanifa et al. \(2024\)](#) found that self-efficacy and peer support contributed to explaining variation in career maturity. Nevertheless, much of the existing literature has focused on a single source of support. The present study adopts a broader conceptualization of perceived social support that includes family members, friends, and significant others, thereby offering a more comprehensive account of how internal and external resources relate to career maturity among vocational high school students.

Based on the theoretical framework and prior empirical evidence, the proposed relationships among the study variables are illustrated in Figure 1.

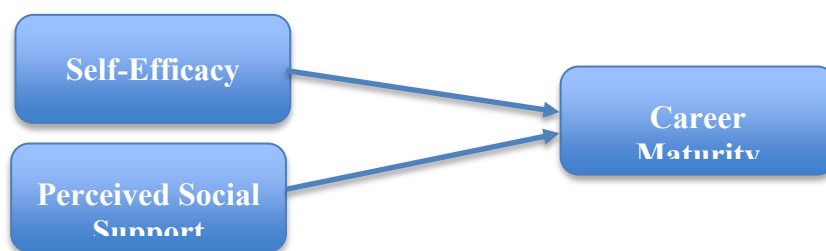


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Relationship among Self-Efficacy, Perceived Social Support, and Career Maturity

3. Research Method

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional correlational design. Self-efficacy and perceived social support were specified as predictor variables, whereas career maturity served as the criterion variable. The design was selected to examine the direction and strength of the associations among the variables at a single point in time without implying causal relationships.

3.2 Participants and Sampling Procedure

The study population comprised all 53 twelfth-grade students enrolled at SMK Bintara Rancaekek during the 2025/2026 academic year. The students represented three vocational programs: Automotive Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Office Management. Because the population was relatively small and fully accessible, a total population sampling approach was applied, and every eligible student was included in the study.

The final sample consisted of 37 male and 16 female students aged between 17 and 19 years. All participants were present during data collection, agreed to take part voluntarily, and completed the questionnaire in full. Consequently, no responses were excluded from the analysis because of missing data.

3.3 Research Instruments

Career maturity was assessed using an instrument adapted from the Australian short form of the Career Development Inventory, developed by [Creed and Patton \(2004\)](#). The final version contained 11 items across four domains: career planfulness, career exploration, world-of-work information, and decision-making.

Self-efficacy was measured using an adapted and modified instrument based on the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy framework introduced by [Taylor and Betz \(1983\)](#). The final measure comprised eight items covering self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning, and problem-solving.

Perceived social support was measured using an adapted and modified version of the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support developed by [Zimet et al. \(1988\)](#). The final instrument consisted of 13 items assessing support from family, friends, and significant others. All three instruments used a five-point response scale, with higher scores indicating higher levels of the respective constructs.

3.4 Instrument Evaluation

Before the main data collection, the instruments were pilot tested with 30 eleventh-grade students who were not included in the final sample but had characteristics comparable to those of the target participants. Item analysis led to the removal of two self-efficacy items, one perceived social support item, and one career maturity item.

Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The resulting coefficients were .789 for self-efficacy, .867 for perceived social support, and .762 for career maturity. These values indicated that all three measures had adequate reliability for subsequent analysis.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through paper-based questionnaires after formal permission had been obtained from the school. Before completing the instruments, participants received an explanation of the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. Questionnaire completion required approximately 20–25 minutes.

All distributed questionnaires were returned with complete responses and were therefore retained for analysis. No identifying information was included in the dataset used for statistical processing.

3.6 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize participant characteristics and the distribution of scores for each study variable. Pearson's product-moment correlation was applied to examine the bivariate relationships among self-efficacy, perceived social support, and career maturity. Multiple linear regression was then used to assess the unique and combined predictive contributions of self-efficacy and perceived social support to career maturity.

Before estimating the regression model, the assumptions of residual normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity were examined. The results were reported using the unstandardized coefficient (B), standard error, standardized coefficient (β), t statistic, F statistic, coefficient of determination (R^2), adjusted R^2 , and a significance threshold of .05. Given the correlational and cross-sectional nature of the study, all findings were interpreted as predictive associations rather than evidence of causation.

4. Results and Discussion

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4.1 Participant Characteristics

The study included all 53 twelfth-grade students enrolled at SMK Bintara Rancaekek. Of these participants, 37 were male (69.81%), and 16 were female (30.19%). Most participants were 17 years old ($n = 28$, 52.83%), followed by those aged 18 years ($n = 22$, 41.51%) and 19 years ($n = 3$, 5.66%). The sample represented three vocational programs: Automotive Engineering ($n = 21$, 39.62%), Office Management ($n = 18$, 33.96%), and Electrical Engineering ($n = 14$, 26.42%).

Table 1. Participant Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	37	69.81%
	Female	16	30.19%
Age	17 years	28	52.83%
	18 years	22	41.51%
	19 years	3	5.66%
Vocational program	Automotive Engineering	21	39.62%
	Electrical Engineering	14	26.42%
	Office Management	18	33.96%

Source: Primary data processed by the authors, 2026.

Male students and those enrolled in Automotive Engineering constituted the largest groups in the sample. Nevertheless, because all eligible twelfth-grade students from the three vocational programs participated, the data represent the complete target population at SMK Bintara Rancaekek rather than a selected subsample.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis was conducted to summarize the distributions of self-efficacy, perceived social support, and career maturity. The reported statistics included actual and ideal scores, percentage attainment, mean values, standard deviations, and observed minimum and maximum scores.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables

Variable	Actual Score	Ideal Score	Percentage	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Self-Efficacy	1,524	2,120	71.89%	28.75	3.50	22	40
Perceived Social Support	2,430	3,445	70.54%	45.85	7.04	28	61
Career Maturity	2,213	2,915	75.92%	41.75	4.62	30	51

Source: Primary data processed by the authors, 2026.

Career maturity recorded the highest percentage attainment at 75.92%, followed by self-efficacy at 71.89% and perceived social support at 70.54%. According to the percentage-based classification adopted in this study, all three variables fell within the moderate category. This pattern suggests that the students had developed an initial capacity to plan and determine their career direction, although their readiness had not yet reached an optimal level.

Self-efficacy scores averaged 28.75 and ranged from 22 to 40, indicating variation in students' confidence in evaluating their abilities, obtaining occupational information, selecting goals, preparing plans, and handling career-related difficulties. Perceived social support had a mean of 45.85, a range of 28–61, and the largest standard deviation ($SD = 7.04$). Thus, students differed more widely in how they perceived support from family members, friends, and significant others than they did on the other two constructs. Career maturity scores averaged 41.75 and ranged from 30 to 51, reflecting differences in students' readiness to plan, explore alternatives, understand the world of work, and make career decisions.

4.3 Reliability and Regression Assumption Tests

The reliability analysis indicated satisfactory internal consistency across all measures. Cronbach's alpha was .789 for self-efficacy, .867 for perceived social support, and .762 for career maturity. Each coefficient exceeded the commonly applied threshold of .70, supporting the use of the three measures in the subsequent analyses.

Table 3. Reliability of the Study Measures

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Self-Efficacy	8	.789	Adequate
Perceived Social Support	13	.867	Good
Career Maturity	11	.762	Adequate

Source: Primary data processed by the authors, 2026.

Before estimating the multiple regression model, the assumptions of normality of residuals, absence of multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity were evaluated. The residual normality test yielded a p-value of .823, indicating no statistically significant departure from normality.

Tolerance values for self-efficacy and perceived social support were both .9998, while the corresponding variance inflation factor values were 1.0002. These results were well within acceptable limits and indicated that multicollinearity was not present. The two predictors, therefore, did not share sufficient variance to distort the estimation of their regression coefficients.

The Glejser test produced significance values of .892 for self-efficacy and .337 for perceived social support. Because both values exceeded .05, there was no evidence of heteroscedasticity. Taken together, the diagnostic results indicated that the principal assumptions required for multiple linear regression were satisfied.

Table 4. Regression Assumption Tests

Assumption	Indicator	Result	Decision
Residual normality	Significance	.823	Assumption satisfied
Multicollinearity: Self-Efficacy	Tolerance/VIF	.9998/1.0002	No multicollinearity
Multicollinearity: Perceived Social Support	Tolerance/VIF	.9998/1.0002	No multicollinearity
Heteroscedasticity: Self-Efficacy	Significance	.892	No heteroscedasticity
Heteroscedasticity: Perceived Social Support	Significance	.337	No heteroscedasticity

Source: Primary data processed by the authors, 2026.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine bivariate relationships among the study variables prior to the regression analysis. Self-efficacy was strongly and positively associated with career maturity, $r = .709$, $p < .001$. Students reporting greater confidence in managing career-related tasks, therefore, tended to exhibit higher levels of career maturity.

Perceived social support showed a weak positive correlation with career maturity, $r = .160$, but the relationship was not statistically significant, $p = .252$. In this sample, higher perceived support was not consistently associated with greater career maturity at the bivariate level.

The correlation between self-efficacy and perceived social support was negligible, $r = .014$, $p = .920$. This result indicates that the two predictors captured largely distinct psychological domains. Self-efficacy reflected students' confidence in completing career-related tasks, whereas perceived social support represented their appraisal of assistance available within the social environment.

Table 5. Pearson Correlations among the Study Variables

Relationship	r	p	Interpretation
Self-Efficacy and Career Maturity	.709	< .001	Positive and significant
Perceived Social Support and Career Maturity	.160	.252	Positive and nonsignificant
Self-Efficacy and Perceived Social Support	.014	.920	Nonsignificant

Source: Primary data processed by the authors, 2026.

4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression was performed to estimate the unique contributions of self-efficacy and perceived social support to career maturity. The resulting regression equation was:

$$\text{Career Maturity} = 10.363 + 0.934(\text{Self-Efficacy}) + 0.099(\text{Perceived Social Support})$$

The intercept of 10.363 represents the predicted career maturity score when both predictor scores are mathematically equal to zero. Holding perceived social support constant, a one-unit increase in self-efficacy was associated with an estimated increase of .934 units in career maturity. By comparison, a one-unit increase in perceived social support was associated with an estimated .099-unit increase in career maturity when self-efficacy was held constant.

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
Constant	10.363	4.719	—	2.196	.033
Self-Efficacy	.934	.129	.707	7.246	< .001
Perceived Social Support	.099	.064	.150	1.541	.130

Source: Primary data processed by the authors, 2026.

Self-efficacy emerged as a positive and statistically significant predictor of career maturity, $\beta = .707$, $t = 7.246$, $p < .001$. After perceived social support was statistically controlled, students with greater confidence in performing career decision-making tasks tended to report higher career maturity.

Perceived social support also produced a positive standardized coefficient, $\beta = .150$, but its contribution was not statistically significant, $t = 1.541$, $p = .130$. Accordingly, perceived social support did not explain a significant amount of unique variance in career maturity after self-efficacy had been included in the model.

4.6 Regression Model Summary

The multiple correlation coefficient was $R = .724$, indicating a substantial association between the combined predictor set and career maturity. The model yielded an R^2 of .525, indicating that self-efficacy and perceived social support together accounted for 52.5% of the observed variance in career maturity.

The adjusted R^2 value was .506. After accounting for sample size and the number of predictors, the model explained 50.6% of the variance in career maturity. The remaining variance was attributable to factors not included in the present model and to random variation.

Table 7. Multiple Regression Model Summary

R	R²	Adjusted R²	F	df	p
.724	.525	.506	27.603	2, 50	< .001

Source: Primary data processed by the authors, 2026.

The overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(2, 50) = 27.603$, $p < .001$. Thus, the model containing self-efficacy and perceived social support provided a statistically meaningful prediction of career maturity. However, the coefficient tests showed that this explanatory capacity was driven primarily by self-efficacy, whereas perceived social support did not make a statistically significant unique contribution.

4.7 Discussion

4.7.1 Self-Efficacy and Career Maturity

The findings showed that self-efficacy was positively and significantly associated with career maturity. This result indicates that students' confidence in understanding their own abilities, locating occupational information, selecting career goals, formulating plans, and managing career-related obstacles is closely related to their readiness to address developmental career tasks. The relatively large standardized coefficient further suggests that self-efficacy was the strongest predictor included in the present model.

This pattern is consistent with [Bandura's \(1997\)](#) account of self-efficacy as a belief system that shapes behavioral choice, effort, persistence, and responses to difficulty. In career-related situations, students who believe that they can manage relevant tasks may be more willing to investigate alternatives, establish clearer goals, and remain engaged when planning becomes difficult. The result also aligns with the career decision-making self-efficacy framework proposed by Taylor and Betz (1983), in which self-appraisal, occupational information, goal selection, planning, and problem-solving represent key areas of confidence involved in career decision-making.

The present findings are also aligned with earlier empirical evidence. [Ekanesia \(2022\)](#) reported that career self-efficacy training was associated with improved career maturity among vocational students. Similar positive relationships were identified by [Alodia \(2023\)](#), [Darmawan et al. \(2024\)](#), and [Hanifa et al. \(2024\)](#). Taken together, these studies suggest that vocational

learning and workplace-based training may be more meaningful when they strengthen students' beliefs that they can apply their technical competence to real career demands. Exposure to occupational settings alone may therefore be insufficient unless students interpret those experiences as evidence of their own capability.

4.7.2 Perceived Social Support and Career Maturity

Perceived social support displayed a positive but statistically nonsignificant association with career maturity. After self-efficacy was included in the regression model, general perceptions of support from family members, friends, and significant others did not account for a significant amount of unique variance in career maturity. Thus, feeling socially supported was not necessarily accompanied by greater readiness to plan, explore, and make career decisions within this sample.

One possible explanation concerns the distinction between general support and career-specific support. The perceived social support measure primarily captures the extent to which individuals feel accepted, cared for, and able to rely on others. These experiences may be important for emotional well-being, yet they do not necessarily provide occupational information, educational guidance, realistic feedback, or practical assistance with career decision-making. The findings of [Ekanesia et al. \(2024\)](#), who linked perceived social support with adolescent mental health, support the possibility that general social support may operate more strongly through emotional adjustment than through direct involvement in career-development tasks.

The present result differs from those reported by [Khofifah \(2022\)](#), [Darmawan et al. \(2024\)](#), and [Hanifa et al. \(2024\)](#), who found meaningful relationships between family or peer support and career maturity. This discrepancy may reflect differences in how social support was defined and measured. Earlier studies tended to focus on a specific source of support, whereas the current study assessed a broader perception of support across several relationships. Accordingly, support that is informational, concrete, and directly relevant to career decisions may be more closely related to career maturity than a general sense of being supported.

4.7.3 Self-Efficacy, Perceived Social Support, and Career Maturity

The regression model containing self-efficacy and perceived social support was statistically significant and explained 52.5% of the variance in career maturity. This finding indicates that the combined set of personal and social variables provided a meaningful account of differences in students' career maturity. However, the coefficient analysis showed that the model's predictive value was attributable primarily to self-efficacy, while perceived social support did not make a significant unique contribution.

This pattern remains compatible with [Super's \(1990\)](#) developmental perspective, which conceptualizes career development as a product of interactions between personal characteristics and environmental conditions. In the present sample, however, the personal resource appeared more influential than the social resource. One possible explanation is that vocational students had already participated in technical learning and workplace-based training, making their appraisal of personal competence especially salient when considering entry into employment or further education. Social support may still matter, but its value may depend on whether it is translated into relevant information, guidance, opportunities, and experiences that strengthen students' confidence in handling career tasks.

The coefficient of determination also indicates that 47.5% of the variance in career maturity remained unexplained. Career maturity may therefore be associated with a wider range of psychological and contextual factors. Adjustment capacity and coping strategies may be relevant when individuals navigate demanding transitions and competing roles ([Putri & Sastri, 2026](#)). Other potentially important factors include future time perspective, school engagement, vocational interests, personality characteristics, work experience, and the quality of career-guidance services. [Khairani \(2020\)](#), for example, found that school engagement, future time perspective, and parental support were associated with vocational students' career maturity. These findings reinforce the view that career maturity is a multidimensional construct that cannot be adequately understood through only one or two predictors.

4.7.4 Practical Implications

The findings have several implications for career guidance in vocational schools. Because self-efficacy emerged as the principal predictor, career-development programs should provide students with structured opportunities to experience progress and competence. Relevant activities may include interview simulations, career-plan development, occupational exploration, goal-setting exercises, and problem-solving tasks. Such experiences can provide concrete evidence that students are capable of managing career-related demands rather than merely exposing them to information about possible occupations.

Social support should also be maintained, but it needs to be directed more explicitly toward career-development needs. Parents, school counselors, teachers, alumni, and industry partners should offer more than emotional encouragement. Their involvement should include realistic occupational information, guidance regarding further education, feedback on students' strengths, descriptions of industry expectations, and practical assistance with entry into employment. When support is specific and actionable, it may reinforce self-efficacy and broaden the range of career options that students are able to consider.

At the institutional level, career guidance should be integrated with vocational learning and workplace-based training. Post-placement reflection, alumni mentoring, individual counseling, and career-portfolio development may help students connect practical experience with self-knowledge and future planning. This approach is likely to be more useful than providing employment information without helping students develop confidence in interpreting and applying it.

Career interventions should also recognize that students differ in how they process information and engage with learning activities. [Fikri and Nuradina \(2023\)](#) identified variation in students' learning-style preferences within hybrid learning environments. Career information and decision-making exercises should therefore be delivered through multiple formats, including visual materials, discussion, simulation, direct experience, and reflective assignments. A differentiated approach may improve students' ability to understand and use career-related information.

Interventions may also benefit from incorporating coping and resilience development. [Putra and Nuradina \(2023\)](#) emphasized the role of counseling, supportive relationships, and targeted training in fostering adaptive coping and resilience under demanding conditions. Although their study focused on employees during the COVID-19 pandemic, the broader principle is relevant to vocational students facing uncertainty surrounding employment, further education, and the transition from school to work.

4.7.5 Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. The study involved only 53 students from one vocational school, relied on self-report measures, and used a cross-sectional design. In addition, the perceived social support instrument assessed general support rather than assistance specifically related to career development. The results therefore cannot be generalized directly to all vocational students and should not be interpreted as evidence of causal relationships. Future research should involve larger and more diverse samples, distinguish among different sources and forms of social support, and examine additional predictors such as future time perspective, school engagement, coping, work experience, and the quality of career-guidance services.

5. Conclusion

The findings identify self-efficacy as the strongest predictor of career maturity among twelfth-grade students at SMK Bintara Rancaekek. Students who expressed greater confidence in evaluating their abilities, seeking occupational information, selecting goals, developing plans, and managing career-related obstacles also tended to demonstrate stronger readiness to address career-development tasks. This result suggests that vocational competence alone may not be sufficient to support career maturity. Students must also believe that they can apply their knowledge and skills when choosing, preparing for, and pursuing a career pathway.

Perceived social support was positively related to career maturity, but it did not make a statistically significant unique contribution after self-efficacy was taken into account. General encouragement from family members, friends, and other significant figures may therefore be less relevant to career maturity than support that directly addresses students' career needs. Social support may become more useful when it provides occupational information, practical guidance, constructive feedback, and concrete assistance during career exploration and decision-making.

Taken together, self-efficacy and perceived social support formed a statistically significant predictive model that accounted for 52.5% of the variance in career maturity. Nevertheless, the model's principal contribution was attributable to self-efficacy. Career-guidance programs in vocational schools should therefore prioritize activities that strengthen students' confidence through successful task experiences, occupational exploration, decision-making simulations, mentoring, and structured reflection on workplace-based training. Future studies should involve broader and more diverse samples, examine family, peer, teacher, and mentor support separately, and consider additional factors such as future time perspective, school engagement, work experience, and the quality of career-guidance services.

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