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**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM, PRO-ACTIVE
PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL SUPPORT ON CAREER
ADAPTABILITY AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS**

By

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School of Business Management,
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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Master of Human Resource
Management**

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ABSTRACT

Career adaptability refers to the flexible attribute of individuals toward their career endeavor in the face of volatile circumstances. As Malaysia is reaching its goal to achieve an industrialized nation status by 2020 and the increase in ageing population in 2030, there is a need to have a workforce that possess a high level of career adaptability in order to boost workforce efficiency. This can be achieved by having graduates that are highly intellectual, positive work-attitude, spontaneous and flexible to keep abreast with relevant and current skills and technical knowhow in the prevailing labour market in the country. The current level of shortage of required skills and attributes by fresh graduates in the country is alarming, thus drastic measures need to be taken by all stake holders, including the Human resource professionals, career counsellors, lecturers, government and the family institution. This study is to assess the level of career adaptability among undergraduate students by determining the relationship between career adaptability and self-esteem, proactive personality and social support among undergraduate students in public universities in Malaysia. Data was obtained from 188 questionnaires targeting undergraduate final year students of Bachelor of Business administration (BBA) taking the seminar course in Universiti Utara Malaysia, Kedah. The result analyzed with Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) indicates a positive and significant correlation between pro-active personality and social support with the career adaptability level among the undergraduate students; with pro-active personality having the strongest significant positive relationship. It is noteworthy to mention that self-esteem did not indicate a significant relationship with career adaptability, because of the lack of mediating factor such as career exploration. It is recommended that there is a need to form a synergy among career counsellors, human professionals, lecturers and family members in order to boost the career adaptability of these students. This will enable the students to attain the necessary soft skills such as communication, decision making, critical thinking, interpersonal skill and English language proficiency. These skills are highly required in today`s competitive and volatile labour market, so that they can have a smooth school to work transition in the nearest future.

Keywords: career adaptability, self-esteem, pro-active personality, social support.

ABSTRAK

Kebolehsuaian kerjaya (*career adaptability*) merujuk kepada ciri fleksibel individu yang berusaha kearah kerjaya mereka bagi menghadapi keadaan yang tidak menentu. Dalam usaha Malaysia mencapai matlamat bagi menjadi sebuah negara perindustrian menjelang tahun 2020 dan peningkatan kadar penuaan penduduk pada tahun 2030, wujud keperluan untuk mempunyai tenaga kerja yang memiliki tahap kebolehsuaian kerjaya dalam usaha untuk meningkatkan kecekapan tenaga kerja. Ini akan dapat dicapai dengan mempunyai graduan yang intelektual, mempunyai sikap kerja yang positif, spontan dan fleksible bagi melengkapkan diri dengan kemahiran yang relevan dan semasa serta mempunyai maklumat teknikal yang bersesuaian dengan pasaran buruh semasa dalam negara. Kadar pengangguran semasa di negara ini membimbangkan dan langkah-langkah drastik perlu diambil oleh semua pemegang taruh, termasuk golongan profesional sumber manusia, kaunselor kerjaya, pensyarah, kerajaan dan institusi keluarga. Kajian ini melihat tahap kebolehsuaian kerjaya di kalangan mahasiswa dengan menentukan hubungan antara kebolehsuaian kerjaya dengan harga diri, personaliti proaktif dan sokongan sosial di kalangan pelajar di institusi pengajian tinggi awam di Malaysia. Data diperolehi daripada 188 soal selidik yang diedarkan kepada pelajar tahun akhir program Sarjana Muda Pengurusan Sarjana Muda Perniagaan (BBA) yang mengambil kursus seminar di Universiti Utara Malaysia, Kedah. Data dianalisa menggunakan pakej statistik SPSS menunjukkan hubungan yang positif dan signifikan antara personaliti proaktif dan sokongan sosial dengan tahap kebolehsuaian kerjaya di kalangan mahasiswa; dengan personaliti proaktif mempunyai hubungan positif yang paling signifikan. Perlu di nyatakan bahawa faktor harga diri tidak menunjukkan hubungan dengan kebolehsuaian kerjaya, kerana tiada faktor pengantara seperti penerokaan kerjaya. Adalah disyorkan terdapat keperluan untuk membentuk sinergi antara kaunselor kerjaya, pegawai sumber manusia, pensyarah dan ahli keluarga dalam usaha untuk meningkatkan keupayaan menyesuaikan diri kerjaya dikalangan pelajar. Ini akan membolehkan mereka untuk mencapai kemahiran asas yang perlu seperti komunikasi, pembuatan keputusan, pemikiran kritis, kemahiran interpersonal dan kemahiran berbahasa Inggeris. Kemahiran ini amat diperlukan untuk menghadapi keadaan persaingan pasaran masa kini agar mereka boleh bersedia untuk peralihan yang baik dari institusi pendidikan kepada alam pekerjaan dalam masa terdekat.

Kata kunci: kebolehsuaian kerjaya, harga diri, personality proaktif, sokongan sosial

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ABBREVIATION

DV	Dependent variable
IV	Independent variable
SPM	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia
Sijil STPM	Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia
MD	Medical doctor
PhD	Doctor of philosophy
PTPTN	Perbadanan Tabung Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional
Std. Error	Standard Error
Sig.	Significance
ILO	International Labour Organization
SCCT	Social Cognitive Career Theory
CCT	Career construction theory
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science



Universiti Utara Malaysia

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Career adaptability is the competency of a person to create series of transitions effectively, whereby the labor market, organizations and fundamental occupational and organizational knowledge bases undergo significant transformation (Bimrose et al, 2011). This series of transition is necessary because of the increased graduates from Malaysia Universities without necessary skills and abilities to survive in the competitive labor market. This leads to months of futile job search which is mostly caused by the career inflexibility of these young Malaysian graduates. This chapter depicts an outline of the situation with the background of study, statement of the problem, followed by the research questions, research objective, and significance of the study, scope of study / limitation and organization of the chapters in thesis.

1.2 Background of study

Global market competitions and technological developments are upsurging the demand for skills and knowledge of graduates in an extensive range of jobs more than before (Tran, 2013; Nel & Neale-Shutte, 2013). This has influenced people's lives and the manner in which they search for and perform their job duties (Nota et al, 2012). This is related to career exploration by graduates on the most suitable job for their innate skills. This has resulted to individuals choosing to improve professional

skills that is significantly different from the skills and knowledge obligatory in previous centuries' occupation. These skills are trained into graduates and are expected to be up to date, volatile and spontaneous enough in order to continuously adapt to the usage of progressively complex technologies (Maggiori et al, 2013; Nota, 2014). This will enable graduates to be relevant in the generally unpredictable organizations settings of today (Savickas et al., 2009). Graduates are expected to anticipate and be proactive in adapting to the flexible nature of the competitive labor market during their career transition so that they can be relevant enough at their workplace.

A lot of issues have happened around the world regarding economic crisis which lead to competitive labor market, in which only the strong can survive. The economic crisis, has resulted in a volatile and competitive labor market (Judt, 2011). It has been observed that during economic bad times, securing a suitable job is unlikely for new graduates. They are most likely expected to encounter job mismatch and underemployment (Kahn, 2010; ILO, 2011). Graduates are not properly equipped for career fluctuations or skilled in career planning or job exploration. This is because new graduates rely on only their grades and do not have the necessary working experience, flexibility and soft skills required to survive in the labor market during economic bad times.

Rapid growth was experienced for several years in Malaysia. However, the shift in the economic structure caused an upsurge in unemployment. Graduates are obligatory to have the needed precise soft skills such as interpersonal and communication skills in order to maintain or get employed in the services sector. However, securing graduates that possess those potentials has been quite challenging. Firstly, graduates may only undergo the right technical knowledge training without getting trained in soft skills.

Secondly, due to the fact that Malaysia official language, Bahasa Malaysia is used as the medium of teaching in all subjects in primary schools, secondary schools and public tertiary institutions (Ismail, 2011). The graduates may encounter difficulty in communicating in English language when they go into the labor market. This is because they lack the necessary flexibility attributes to anticipate themselves about the labor market and then equip themselves with necessary skills and proficiency, such as English language.

According to the News Straits Times online report published by Grundy (2016), there are about 400,000 unemployed graduates in Malaysia. Likewise, Free Malaysia today online report by Kaur (2016) indicated that about 20,000 Malaysians lost their jobs in year 2015, in which the retrenchment is likely to continue in 2016. It is stated by Abdul Wahid Omar, (the former Minister in the Prime Minister's Department), that graduates between the ages of 20-24 amount to 161,000 from the 400,000 figures of the unemployed people in the country, indicating that 40% of the unemployed are youths (Hunter, 2015).

The reason for these high percentage of joblessness is given by a JobStreet survey which discovered that young graduates in recent times are particularly picky about jobs and anticipate salaries much higher than market rates, which is caused by inflexibility nature in recent graduates from the university (Simon, 2011). In a New Straits Times online newspaper published on the 3rd of February, 2016 by Karim (2016), it cited one of the major reasons of joblessness among Malaysian fresh graduate is due to lack of proficiency in English language. This is because they have failed to anticipate and prepare themselves for the current labor market competitiveness in recent years.

The reality of the above issue is that, when graduates experience uncertainty of career abilities and lack related resources, they stand no chance in securing appropriate jobs and even surviving in the labor market, most especially the private sectors (Kaur, 2016) and also public sectors (Kaur, 2016; Soong, 2015). Thus, this is one of the reasons that hinders Malaysia aspiration to become a completely industrialized country by the year 2020 (Karchner- Ober, 2012).

The importance of English is greatly acknowledged in Malaysia, yet challenges remains for graduates from public universities in Malaysia at job-related tasks in the aspect of thorough overall proficiency of English language (Carol et al., 2011). MacIntyre, (1995) and Horwitz, (2010) declares that language nervousness hinders fabrication of language therefore affecting achievement, which indicates lack of confidence, which is one of the constructs of career adaptability. Darmi and Albion, (2013) stresses that students partake in English language learning for educational use only. This means that they have no anticipation to utilize the English language in the real world, indicating that they have not been curious enough to know what their career aspiration is all about, and also plan a future orientation on how to secure desired jobs.

Researches shows that career adaptability has positive relationship with personal attributes related to successful career outcomes such as self-efficacy, future work self, future job search, individual-environment fit, employment status (Guan et al., 2014) and satisfaction of career (Zacher, 2014), which is really needed by these graduates lacking soft-skills and required English proficiency. This indicates that graduates' chances of locating a fitting job and additionally encourage an effective school-to-work transition may be increased by career adaptability resources (Koen, Klehe,

Vianen, and Annelies, 2012). This will ensure the anticipation of the challenges in the labor market, and also inquiry about skills currently sought after in the labor market, thus they will be equipped with these skills and the assurance of securing suitable job, a strategic and consistent job search will be initiated and each resume will be tailored to each job application.

It was emphasized by Darmi and Albion, (2013) that Malaysia aims to achieve the status of a developed nation by 2020. Hence, for intercultural communication in relation to international involvement, English language is reasonably essential because it is the world's lingua franca. Nevertheless, these look rather gloomy with the statistics by trading economics online report, (2016). The lack of fluency in English and other soft skills, decreases the chance of graduates from getting suitable job positions and from attaining the relevant career aspirations and outcomes, therefore, there will be reduced Gross domestic product and the economy will be unable to attain the status of a developed nation by 2020.

Finally, other impending challenges in Malaysia include the fact that Malaysia will soon become an ageing society by the year 2030 (Khazanah research institute, 2014), which will decrease productivity in the society. A workforce with high career development will prevent such situation. Career adaptability which is a focal point of career development among the workforce can increase efficiency and withstand the challenging time. This type of workforce will have to be spontaneous, and flexible according the changes and variation in the labor market.

1.3 Problem statement

In this knowledge based economy, 20 Public Higher Institutions of education (IPTA) and 437 Private Higher Institutions of education (IPTS) (The Ministry of Higher Learning, Malaysia, 2011) produce graduates necessary for such economy. Due to this increased number of higher institutions in Malaysia, there has been large amount of graduates entering into the labor market.

This is supported by the ACU Perspectives, (2016) which gave the statistics of the entire figure of Malaysians enrolled in tertiary institutions in November, 2015 at 1,174,589 compared to 748,797 in 2007 and 576,439 in 2002. Likewise, there is a need to ensure that the skills required in the labor market are aligned with skills possessed by graduates from the tertiary institutions. Furthermore, there is need to pay more attention in checking the labor market skills requirements due to the increased number of tertiary institutions because of the occurrence of disproportionality of graduates supply with the labor market demand (Teichler, 2000; Ismail, 2011). This is to avoid redundancy, job mismatch and unqualified graduates in this competitive labor market era.

Furthermore, the global economic meltdown has affected the economy of virtually all countries around the world including Malaysia. This has resulted to graduates scrambling for the jobs in the competitive labor market. This jobs require the most competitive, capable and highly skilled graduates that can adapt to the spontaneous work settings in these volatile global market (Klehe, Zikic, Van Vianen, Koen, & Buyken, 2012). This is because to stay competitive in the labor market companies

require the most flexible and spontaneous employees having the required skills to keep the organization competitive amidst global economic meltdown.

The consequences of the above situation is a multitude of graduates having limited prior experience of work. Hence, they often face challenges securing appropriate job when in the labor market (Koen, Klehe, & Van Vianen, 2012) due to the fact that they do not have the career development in them to make proper planning and career related tasks and decisions in order to secure these jobs.

Many perceptions exists on the reason for joblessness amongst graduates in Malaysia. Research discloses the feeble state of graduates in Malaysia in the aspect of English language proficiency, lack of soft skills required by organizations, initiatives, and job dependency, possess low interpersonal relationship. Furthermore, graduates have attitudes problem resulting to being extremely picky about jobs, incapable of working as a team, non-competitive in securing a suitable job and deficiency of pro-activeness in ensuring employment regardless of geographical location, not enthusiastic about learning and request for high salary (Wei, 2011), regardless of the insufficient skills portrayed by the graduates.

This is supported a survey on jobstreet.com by Simon (2011) which shows that unworkable demand for exorbitant salary and benefits mostly contributed to the level of joblessness among graduates. In addition, it is an international phenomena whereby people are required to be more flexible in the organizations, placing more prominence on soft skills factors and general professional capabilities such as verbal, interpersonal and people skills (Spenser & Spenser, 1993), this makes the school to work transition for fresh graduates more difficult.

Consequently, in school to work transition, graduates struggle due to the fact that they lack the career adaptability to help in managing a smooth career transitions. This is supported by Phillips (1982) and Koen et. al., (2012), opine that career adaptability level of university graduates has a general tendency to lessen. They further explained that career search declines for as time goes by, when graduates keep searching for job without any positive outcome, they tend to reduce the search, due to lowered confidence in themselves, thus losing the enthusiasm to search for job much further.

Earlier research by Wanberg et al., (2002); Aaronson, Mazumder, & Schechter, (2010) supports this, stating that lengthy job seeking seems to reduce job exploration activities of new graduates, thus reducing chances of securing an appropriate job. Sung et al., (in press); Savickas, (1997); ILO, (2011) also supports this by concluding that it will discourage graduates from anticipating the achievement of vital career growth and development skills pursuing career goals and career goals.

Further, it is imperative to note that graduates that are about to enter the school to work transition phase mostly look forward to entering the labor market to find a suitable job. During this transition important career-related decisions have to be made which can influence their future careers (Koen, Klehe, & Van Vianen, 2012). However, many people are struggling when entering the labor market. Transitions from school to fitting work are slow and difficult nowadays, this is because graduates lack skills required for the suitable job in which they yearn for. It takes graduates longer time to secure an appropriate job during an economic crisis, and chances of a permanent position and a high salary are limited (SEO, 2013). An effective transition occurs when graduates match their personality traits and skills to work environments in which they are required to use those traits and skills (Solberg, Howard, Blustein, &

Close, 2002). Therefore, having implications for employees in terms of changing working conditions and flexible career requirements.

Investigation carried out by Ranjit (2008), revealed that Malaysian graduates have deficiency of soft skills namely communication, planning, organizing, decision-making, time and self-management, problem-solving, critical thinking skills, leadership, creativity and networking skills. Therefore, these outcomes begs the question about the Malaysian graduate career adaptability level in surviving in executing volatile job tasks resulting to perceived lower graduates' performance, which is less than the employers' anticipation regarding all types of communication skills in English (Kaur & Lee, 2006).

Additionally graduate from the fields of study including social science, humanities, and education lack the technical skills desired by recent labor market (Teichler, 2000). This technical skills include information systems and computer application skills such as SAP, human resource information system, management information system skills, customer service management/information systems skills, industrial data management skills etc. An example is a marketing graduates applying for a marketing job, possession of technical skills such as SaaS offerings knowledge, SAP's marketing software, customer relations management (CRM) software, Adobe Creative Suite etc. Thus, they possess less prospects to compete in the labor market. This means they are not in high demand compared to other relevant technical field of study such as engineering, information technology and medicine (Ismail, 2011).

This is supported by Kougioumoutzaki & Kalamatianou, (2008) that graduates in technology and science field of study appear to have higher labor market prospects in

securing a job compared to graduates in the field of social science and humanities. Allen (1998) and Drewes (2002) also support this preposition that social science graduates are deprived by lack of technical skills and incapacity to associate with their occupations. Although their level of career adaptability can enable them to perform well and at par with applied courses of study graduates later on in their career life. It is also emphasized by Singh and Singh (2008) that graduates must possess information and communication technology (ICT) skills, team player, English proficiency and interpersonal skills in order to have a successful career.

The youths and young professionals' willingness to explore overseas opportunities is another challenge. There is a necessity for institutional deviations of mentality to overcome the fundamental problems of quality rather than quantity and the transformation the mentality of the citizens for the need to work harder. This could be achieved through their proactive personality to leave their comfort zone and not be gratified to permit future generations to work in the current environment while the world is moving at a rapid speed. Thus, there is a need to change the current environmental situation.

The paradox is that while there is growing joblessness in some countries such as Malaysia, South Korea, Philippines etc, there are millions of jobs which remain unoccupied: eight million in Europe and the United States alone (Grundy, 2016). These jobs could be filled up by adequately skilled and English proficient Malaysian graduates. This is as a result of new graduates coming out from the University system looking for jobs but they lack the right or minimal skills required to fill such position. Young people today need to be armed with the skills that hiring organizations are looking for and the experience to get them started.

Ismail (2011) opines that good grades alone cannot guarantee being competitive in the current labor market. However, a high proficiency in English language and other soft skills namely; independence, computer skills, analytical thinking, leadership, communication skills and job experience is imperative for graduates to possess, which can be obtained when in possession of a high level of career adaptability.

Ming et al (2012) opines that 73% of the youth seem to agree that securing a job in Malaysia is not the problem. However the main issue is getting a job one likes. Findings designate that inadequate availability of opportunities is not the major challenge of the employment situation in Malaysia; rather the youth employment may be disadvantaged by their discerning attitudes in choosing for a job. There were also acknowledgements that although all subjects learnt were in the English medium, it was only limited to carrying out projects and examinations. Thus, they concurred that a thorough proficiency in English language was essential to their career (Arumugam et al, 2014).

Consequently, it is affirmed by Omar et al, (2016) that self-confidence, which is one of the constructs of career adaptability, will propel graduates to gain knowledge and skills needed in an organization. When graduates are confident enough, they will be able to try out new ways to make themselves better and update their skills and knowledge. Through the experience gained, graduates will be able to possess critical thinking skills in solving problems efficiently, thus increases productivity. Subsequently, it is discovered by the Graduate Tracer Study Report (2009) that 81.7% of the unemployed graduates stated their desperate need for additional English language and other trainings. These include trainings of English language abilities, information technology skills, entrepreneurial skills, relational abilities and vocation

improvement (Graduates Tracer Study System by Ministry of Higher Education, 2009). All these are attributes of career inadaptability among graduates in Malaysia, most particularly among local university graduates.

The lack of career adaptability among graduates makes it more difficult to secure job, especially in this highly competitive era and volatile nature of the labor market in Malaysia. Thus, there is a need to look at the relationship between self-esteem, proactive personality and social support on the level of career adaptability among the undergraduate students, which are personal factors and situational factors. This is because of the need to examine the personality attribute and the situational factors surrounding these students to know if these factors have a significance on their career adaptability needed to reduce in order to prepare them for the uncertainty in industry.

Consequently, the increasing turnover rate predominantly among the graduates is a major concern of HR managers within Malaysia (Queiri et al, 2015). This has been highlighted in various news media and to convey the HR practitioners' concerns that the turnover rate among these fresh graduates is becoming prevalent. Omar and Noordin, (2013) argues that career adaptability will prevent the employees, most especially professionals to intend leaving their career. Therefore, there is a need to inject a highly career adaptive workforce into the society.

These study is vital in the volatile labor market that exists in Malaysia, this is because career related skills attainment such as career adaptability is vital for the development of the students as they transit from University to the work place (Duff, 2010), because this will make them prepared for the uncertainty and volatile nature of the industry. Career adaptability has been researched to be positively related with some individual

characteristics and social factors such as self-esteem (Duffy, 2010), proactive personality adaptability (Tolentino, 2014) and social support (Wang & Fu, 2015). Hence, this research is aimed at identifying the relationship between self-esteem, proactive personality and social support on the career adaptability level of final year undergraduate students who are soon to enter into the labor market, by examining factors of self-esteem, pro-active personality and social support towards their career adaptability.

There has been several researches done regarding career development of undergraduate students such as Douglass and Duffy, (2015), Duffy, Douglass and Autin, (2015), Ismail, Ferreira and Coetzee, (2016), Hasrin Mahadi, Ph'ng, Hasan, and Ariffin, (2015), Kiong & Yin-Fah, (2016). However there has been no research done to the best of my knowledge about assessing the career adaptability among undergraduate students particularly at local institutions in Malaysia.

1.4 Research question

The resolve of the research in study is to answer questions as expressed beneath:

- i. Does self-esteem affect career adaptability?
- ii. Does pro-active personality affect career adaptability?
- iii. Does social support affect career adaptability?

1.5 Research objectives

The motivation behind this research is to recognize and assess the relationship between self-esteem, pro-active personality and social support towards the career adaptability level of undergraduate students. The aims of this study are:

- i. To examine the relationship between self-esteem and career adaptability.
- ii. To investigate the relationship of pro-active personality and career adaptability.
- iii. To determine the relationship of social support and career adaptability.

1.6 Contribution/significance of the study

This study aims to investigate the relationship between self-esteem, proactive personality and social support with the career adaptability level of final year undergraduate students in UUM. Investigating the level of career adaptability of final year undergraduate students through relationship with the three independent variables, will enable policy makers to address issues of shortage in relevant skills that graduates should be equipped with in order to adapt to challenges in the industry and their career.

Equipping students transiting from school to work with career adaptability skills will enable a more motivated, self-regulated workforce in Malaysia, and this will increase productivity and performance of organizations and the economy as a whole.

Encouraging career adaptability may benefit university graduates to secure suitable jobs, despite the high economic uncertainty.

1.7 Scope of study/ limitation

This research focus on the final year undergraduate students studying at Universiti Utara Malaysia. Universiti Utara Malaysia is Malaysia's Eminent management University and also a management focused public university in Malaysia. The University's management presence in the country and prestige will help increase the quality of undergraduates beings produced on a yearly basis. This is necessary because they would soon transit from university to the workplace. Thus, there is a need to assess the relationship between self-esteem, proactive personality and social support with their level of career adaptability. Besides, currently the social science courses have more supply than required by the labor market. Therefore, there is a need to assess and evaluate their career adaptability using these three variables in order to proffer necessary intervention to make them more flexible and ready for the challenges in the labor market. However, the study is limited to undergraduate final year students enrolled in the Bachelor of business administration (BBA) study programme at Universiti utara Malaysia (UUM).

1.8 Definition of key terms

The definition of key terms for this study are as follows;

1.8.1 Career adaptability

Career adaptability (CA) is defined as an individual ability to respond to transition in career role (Hou, Wu & Liu, 2014).

1.8.2 Self-esteem

Self-esteem is the way people sees themselves and it communicates states of mind of self-endorsement or self-dismissal and self-judgment with respect to competency and value (Donnellan et al, 2011).

1.8.3 Proactive personality

Proactive personality is an individual stable disposition to pursue the balance with situational factors to attain behavioral results (Bo & Zi-Jing, 2014).

1.8.4 Social support

Social support is the psychological or physical assistance received by individuals through social connections which aims to reduce mental stress, ease pressure, and improve social adaptation competences (Wang & Fu, 2015).

1.9 Organization of chapters

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Introduction in the first place passage will be the outline of the entire research; research background is presented followed by problem statement, then followed by research question, research objectives, and finally the contribution / significance of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The significant dependent variable and independent variable in this research will be characterized, while theories and past studies related to the topic will be reviewed and exhibited. The research framework will likewise be highlighted subsequent to reviewing past researches based on the dependent and independent variables.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This part stipulates the research design, data collection methods and sampling design. Moreover, research instrument which comprises of questionnaire design and pilot test are exhibited. This is trailed by measuring of the instrument operational meaning of constructs measurement scales, finishing with data processing and techniques for data analysis. 200 sets of questionnaire will be circulated, and the objective is to gather at least 180 completely filled survey responses.

Chapter 4: Findings

This part displays the general results and discoveries from the investigation of the survey. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) will be used to analyse the data. Interpretation is further explained indepth in the results.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

This part comprises of the research findings, in which furthermore discussions about the significant findings will be discussed. Additionally, it talks about the study limitations and in addition give future research recommendations. Finally, overall conclusion of the whole research project is stated.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the literature assessments are deliberated for variables regarding career adaptability, self-esteem, pro-active personality and social support. The literature review are obtained from various sources such as articles, journals and online newspaper. The chapter include the discussion of dependent variable which is career adaptability and independent variables namely self-esteem, pro-active personality and social support. This chapter includes research framework and development of hypotheses. The research framework indicates the dependent and independent variables. The development of hypotheses is aimed at deriving the relationship of the selected variables.

2.2 Conceptualization of Career adaptability

Hou, Wu & Liu, (2014) defined career adaptability (CA) as an individual ability to respond to transition in career role. Career adaptability is considered as the strategic ability through which career success is achieved in this rapidly changing era. Career adaptability will push people to take actions to improve their career environment and plan for imminent variations in the environment (Savickas, 2013). Nota et al., (2012) defines career adaptability as the penchant to reasonably manage development tasks, in order to get ready for and take an interest in a working role. Likewise, career adaptability is characterized as the readiness, reactions of a person and adapting

resources utilized by the person to plan, investigate and advise choices with respect to the future conceivable outcomes of their careers (Rossier et al., 2012).

Career adaptability additionally denotes the individual's availability to adapt to the anticipated assignments, (for example, planning, preparing and taking part in work) and the eccentric requests of the organization (Klehe et al., 2011). Furthermore, Savickas, (2013) opines that career adaptability relates to the self-regulatory psychosocial resources that is required for people to effectively cope with contemporary and predictable career shifts and changes throughout one's career lifetime. Although different definitions of adaptability exists, majority of researchers settle with the fact that adaptability is associated to the way people manage and adjust to change. In other words, people's adjustment to their career environments (Hamtiaux et al., 2013; Rottinghaus et al., 2005).

Adaptability refers to the smooth transition of individuals, due to their reaction and eagerness to change. People who address and go up against changing situations will have more elevated amounts of adaptation (result) because they are usually ready (adaptive) and capable (adaptability) (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012). Therefore it is certain that career adaptability assumes a vital part in young adults, most especially fresh graduates and soon to graduate students' career improvement even within recent volatile labor market.

This career lifetime relates to the career paths and patterns which are characterized by volatility and more imprecision with the globalization and workforces across borders mobilization and organizations (Hess et al., 2012; Hall, 2013). This is because once an individual graduates and enter into the labor market, their career path starts. There

is a need to know what this individuals need in order to succeed in the volatile and unpredictable labor market. Therefore, the emphasis of career adaptability is on the individual and their psychosocial resources, as opposed to employability, in which employers and their needs tend to rule. This is supported by Duarte, (2004) who posited that career belongs to the person, not the organization.

Career adaptability is not all about abilities or qualifications or previous work experience. It is about a potential candidate being flexible and showing a potential employer that he/she is adaptable; these entails being willing to and capable of anticipating something different and unfamiliar and approaching it with optimism and confidence (Johnson, 2016). This is what is highly required of graduates in recent years and this attributes will enable them to survive and succeed in the volatile career paths. Graduates with optimism and confidence can persevere and excel in bringing out innovative ideas which can add great values to organizations. Hence, graduates should ensure that they are equipped with necessary skills, such as flexibility to work in any given situation and the self-assurance that they can perform well enough.

In addition, individuals need adaptability characteristics in their career transitions to manage responsibilities, in which concept of career adaptability specifies (Savickas, 1997; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Hence, career adaptability is the people`s obligation to make cognizant professional choices and thereby having the zeal to reasonably observe themselves accomplishing the set career goals. In order to accomplish this set goals, career practices, such as, investigation and planning are viewed as complementary (Super, Savickas and Super, 1996; Savickas, 1997, 2005). Likewise, career adaptability is a valuable concept to measure a person's quality, permitting self-planning for career related changes in the future (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012), helps

graduates to have a suitable workplace and adequately deal with career variations and difficulties (Savickas, 1997; Zacher et al., 2015).

Having a high career adaptability among students will empower them to settle on great career choice and self-controls. Career adaptability is a focal build in youthful career improvement (Hirschi, 2009). A career is normally thought to be the lifelong sequence of role-related encounters of people (Hall, 2002). This is as a result of the fact that career adaptability is malleable and thus can be trained. Verbruggen and Sels, (2008) suggest that adaptability should be viewed as a trait instead of a competence that can be gained. This was also supported by Griffin and Hesketh (2003) who considers career adaptability as a stable personality trait. However Koen et al. (2012) and Akkermans (2013) support Savickas and Porfeli's (2012) view on career adaptability as a dynamic construct, which can be improved with intervention.

This indicates that career adaptability is malleable in nature, thus it can be trained and learnt to students before the process of school to work transition. Career adaptability consists of four dimensions which are control, curiosity, concern, and confidence (Savickas, 2005). Each of those represent an adaptive resource or plan that could be used to cope with transitions, tasks, and shocks while constructing their careers (Savickas, 2005). These are:

- Exhibiting curiosity by discovering potential selves and forthcoming situations.
- Increasing individual control over one's own prospective career.
- Establishment of the confidence to follow one's own goals.
- Becoming concerned about one's own future as a worker.

These career adaptability domains are perceived to identify with imperative professional development tasks, in which career adaptability is the focal construct. This include a primary adaptive objective that, in which when fulfilled, forms a reason for profession achievement, development and future adaptability (Hartung, 2013).

Curiosity instigates career investigation initiated from a curious state of mind concerning one's own career (Hartung, 2013). This is supported by Savickas (2013), stating that people must show curious demeanor and participate in investigation by testing, taking risks and being inquisitive in order to adjust to varying circumstances. This will enable well rounded knowledge about one`s own career opportunities, needs and how to work up to attain them.

Control entails assuming accountability for one's own future and the career decision-making responsibilities that it comprises through self-regulations and self-direction (Hartung, 2013). Issues about control in career can be manifested as uncertainty of career. The low feeling of career control leads to indecisiveness and instability in the present workplace. This means that people handle uncertainty and corresponding nervousness better when they are empowered by displaying control over their career (Del Corso, 2013).

Confidence is resounded by resolving issues through an efficacious attitude and developing the future through adequate preventions exploration (Hartung, 2013). It indicates peoples` self-viability to beat deterrents during actualization of their career objectives (Savickas, 2005, 2013; Savickas and Porfeli, 2012; Del Corso, 2013). In contrast, career hesitance in people results to the feeling that they are unequipped to

work in a volatile working environment (Savickas, 2005, 2013). Confidence in one's career is validated in the way people manage countless causes of stress which are experienced amid the journey in their career; examples include family battles, unexpected working environment difficulties, wellbeing issues (Del Corso, 2013).

Concern includes orientation about the future, which implies the act of being hopeful around one's own career and showing a strategic demeanor about the future (Hartung, 2013). This means for a person being cognizant, included and preparatory, it must be as a result of being worried about one's future (Savickas, 2005, 2013).

The fusion and successful implementation of the above dimensions will instill career adaptability in a person. This will enhance the smooth transition from school to work by graduates entering into the labor market (Coolen, 2014). This is supported by several studies which demonstrates that youths higher in career adaptability experience smoother and better vocational transitions (Germeijs and Verschueren, 2007; Neuenschwander and Garrett, 2008; Hirschi, 2009). Moreover, Zikic and Klehe (2006) found that the perception of one's own competence, looking at one's own choices in career and arranging one's own career which demonstrate solid similarities with the career adaptability measurements curiosity, concern and confidence builds the likelihood of finding an appropriate employment.

This will consequently lead to job seekers with more adaptive behavior before their career transition, regularly reporting higher quality of employment (Koen et al., 2010) and career achievement (Hirschi, 2010) which is precisely what graduates need. Thus, to successfully manage the school to work transition, it is important that graduates have future plans, make career-related decisions properly, explore themselves and

their environment and be confident. This is because when graduates have future plans for their career, they will be able to make relevant decisions after reassessing their abilities, strength and weaknesses, which will enable them to seek suitable job roles leading to job satisfaction and career success.

This indicates the reason why youths with high level of career adaptability exhibit lower level of career uncertainty, more powerful critical thinking abilities, and more flexibility in career decision-making than youths demonstrating lesser level of career adaptability (Hirschi, 2009). Rottinghaus, Day, and Borgen (2005) discovered that university students possessing career identity showed higher level of career adaptability than those without career identity. Therefore in order to have a clear career identity, a high career adaptability need to be built in a graduate, this will lead to career success. Career identity will make this graduate identify with a particular career in which they are keen about, and are willing to give it their best to succeed in that career.

This was emphasized by O'Connell, McNeely and Hall, (2008), that career adaptability is the vital competency to make a career successful, thereby empowering people in their job-related roles by meritoriously implementing their self-concepts into it, thus developing their professions and building their work lives. Savickas, (2012) also emphasized that career is not seemingly a lifetime guarantee to one employer, however it is seen as a cyclical marketing of updated skills and innovative services to a chain of employers looking for accomplished results. This indicates that having career adaptability is about individuality or employees making themselves relevant and competitive in the labor market and not about organizations or employers.

This was also supported by Omar & Noordin, (2013) that career adaptability was discovered to be one of the significant aspects for employees to survive in their career. Career adaptability are essential self-regulatory psychosocial resources for a person`s unremitting knowledge and employability (Bezuidenhout, 2011). Hence, career adaptability of individuals will enable them to sustain employability, and also enable them to adjust and be flexible between varied life roles and jobs at a frequency never experienced before now (Del Corso, 2013).

The school to work transition is not the only transition that most workers face during their careers. Individuals face career to career transition, transition from one geographical location to another geographical location of job and even organizations to organizations transition. This is supported by Savickas, (2005) defined career adaptability as a person`s eagerness and attributes for managing existing and imminent career development responsibilities, work-related shifts, and individual strains in which it explicitly considered the possibility of serious career disruptions and economic stressors. Inherent in this notion of career adaptability are two core features: (a) a person-centered perspective, and (b) a positive and rather proactive outlook into the future even in the face of traumas.

Moreover, career adaptability implies not only adapting to one`s own surrounding circumstances, but also adapt the environment in order to fit in properly (Pratzner & Ashley, 1984). This is because of the proactive and innovative nature of career adaptable individuals who are willing to change their environment so that they can better work in a more suitable condition which will boost career satisfaction. This could be engaging in self-employment such as consultation, freelance jobs within the

career spectrum. This will enable individuals high in career adaptability to create job in their career when it seems that there are shortages of demand by organizations.

2.3 Predictors of Career adaptability

Career adaptability is functionalized as future work self. Future work self is defined as a person's hope and ambition in connection to work life in the future (Strauss, Griffin, & Parker, 2012; Guan, Guo, Bond, Cai, Zhou, Xu et al., 2014). This means that if a person has a positive hope regarding his or her career life, the person will be optimistic and confident in performing with flexibility. Hence, to this operationalization, it is discovered that there is a significant relationship between future work-self with job exploration, proactive personality, job search success and self-efficacy (Strauss et al., 2012; Guan et al., 2014).

Additionally, career adaptability is identified with numerous life and work results including, career fulfillment, career commitment, achievement, turnover, work execution assessments, promotability, work engagement, self-esteem and prosperity (Van Vianen et al., 2012; Koen et al., 2012; Porfeli and Savickas, 2012; Guan et al., 2013; Maggiori et al., 2013; Tolentino, Garcia, Restubog, Bordia, and Tang, 2013; Chan and Mai, 2015).

This indicates that adaptability helps youngsters manage professional advancement assignments, occupational shifts, and a widespread assortment work circumstances which are capricious and uncertain. The latter can be new and surprising circumstances perceived as issues, which can be ineffectively characterized, multifaceted therefore, problem solving capacities are required (Savickas et al., 2009).

This means that young people who partake in career direction exercises are able to see career decisions issues as an issue to be understood and solved (Nota and Soresi, 2004). Accordingly, the successful administration of complex issue circumstances requests critical thinking capacities and particular decisional strategies (Heppner, 2008).

Coetzee et al. (2015) shows that there is positive association between teamwork and higher levels of career adaptability. Likewise, De Guzman and Choi (2013) opined that problem-solving and decision-making skills, interactive skills, and communication skills are strong predictors of career adaptability.

2.4 Variables of the study

2.4.1 Conceptualization of Self-esteem

Self-esteem can be defined as the way people sees themselves and it communicates states of mind of self-endorsement or self-dismissal and self-judgment with respect to competency and value (Donnellan et al, 2011). Self-esteem is also defined as a socially constructed emotion about an individual's numerous self-perceptions and images which are based on their psychological need for approval and fitting within one's group (Maslow, 1970; Battle, 1997; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Coetzee, 2005; Hewitt, 2002; Potgieter, 2012). These subsequently suggests that it alludes to one's own assessment regarding one's self as an individual (Rosenberg, 1965; Harter, 1990). Therefore, it is the self-esteem that individuals put on themselves that makes

them have confidence and be able to work effectively in a volatile organization work setting.

Sluss, Ashforth, and Gibson (2012) found that the higher an individual's degree of self-esteem, the stronger the correlation between work adjustment and task significance. Likewise, high self-esteem people are discovered to have high perception of their own competence, imagery of themselves and expectancy of success (Miner, 1992). Therefore, individuals are driven to set stimulating objectives of career and accomplish these objectives by partaking in activities because they have high level of self-esteem (Ellis & Taylor, 1983; Crook, Healy, & O'Shea, 1984). People with higher self-esteem will take part in career investigation practices, which assists people to shape a higher career adaptability level. Therefore, there is a contention of a high probability that people with high self-esteem are most expected to partake in investigation of career, keeping in mind the end goals being the accomplishment of constructive career objectives (Patton, Bartrum, & Creed, 2004).

Moreover, Mannarini (2010) emphasizes that even though an evaluation of oneself may vary, self-esteem is depicted as an enduring personality trait. This is supported by Cai et al., (2015) that extraordinarily self-esteem people are inclined to consider themselves as skilled, important and commendable, while low self-esteem people frequently doubt their capabilities. Salmela-Aro, and Nurmi, (2007) depicts that self-esteem through self-exploration would make an individual achieve a long term career success due to a high state of work engagement, and occupation fulfillment, and a low level of burnout. This is conclusively accepted that high self-esteem, which is an ideal worldwide assessment of the self, gives an establishment to accomplishment in managing work and career difficulties. Thus, low level of self-esteem, being an

unfavorable assessment of oneself, may prompt difficulties during school to work transition. Likewise, Omar and Noordin, (2013) believes that low self-esteem leads to career inadaptability because graduates might tend to leave the organization or career within few months of employment. This is because graduates do not have self-confidence, besides there was no career exploration done, therefore, they did not assess their abilities with the job they applied for, causing burnout and job stress because of their incompatibility with the chosen job.

A good illustration is the shift into working life, in which studies have shown that individuals high in self-esteem is connected to a less probability of joblessness (Winefield et al., 1992; kokko and Pulkkinen, 1998). It is important to note that several mechanism exists in which the move to working life and job connected dispositions amid graduates may be affected by self-esteem. Consequently, high self-esteem youths are dynamic in managing career related matters.

In addition, it is opined by Salmela-Aro and Nurmi (2007) that self-esteem amid university period would be prescient of people's achievement in managing another challenging phase of life, such as the move to work. This is supported by studies that showed that initially minute self-esteem level during university days anticipated being jobless 10 years later, while a high state of self-esteem anticipated stable, satisfying job. This is because university students with high self-esteem feel more confident and prepared to search for suitable jobs which is aligned to the strengths and goals.

This is supported by Kanfer et al. (2001) self-esteem has been connected to a heightened employment search intensity. Further, Shamir (1986) stated that high self-esteem people will probably indicate initiative and emphatic effort amid job search,

getting more noteworthy information from their surroundings, preparing themselves with relevant skills and attitude to secure the job and therefore, achieving desired career goals leading to career adaptability and success.

2.4.2 Conceptualization of Pro-active personality

Bo & Zi-Jing, (2014) defined proactive personality as an individual stable disposition to pursue the balance with situational factors to attain behavioral results. It alludes to the dispositional inclination to participate in proactive conduct in an assortment of circumstances. Proactive people change their conditions deliberately, which include their physical surroundings (Buss, 1987). Tolentino et al, (2014) opines that proactive people are better able to successfully adjust due to their propensity to choose, make, and influence their work situation.

It therefore strengthens the theoretical assumption that adaptability along with willingness to adjust to changing conditions also entails a proactive stance, as exemplified by readiness to take action to improve one's career conditions and prepare for imminent job-related changes (Savickas, 2013). Additionally, adaptability involves readiness to take action keeping in mind the end goal to enhance one's career conditions (Savickas, 2013). Therefore, Tolentino et al, (2014) further conceptualize adaptability in terms of proactive personality which pertains to an individual's inclination to start activity aimed at affecting one's own surroundings (Bateman & Crant, 1993).

For proactive personality and career adaptability, the individual's inclination to be proactive has been observed to be connected with self-regulative strategies, for

example, objective setting (Fugate et al., 2004); optimism (Rottinghaus et.al, 2005), adapting, information seeking, and self-direction (Seibert et al, 2001). Past researches has exhibited proactive personality positive relationship to various critical occupation related results such as job performance, tolerance for hassle in challenging jobs and leadership efficiency (Bateman and Crant, 1993; Crant, 1995; Deluga, 1998; Parker and Sprigg, 1999; Crant and Bateman, 2000). This indicates that proactive individuals can anticipate what they want in their career, set goals and objectives, and take necessary steps toward achieving the career goals, even if it takes engaging in activities that will enhance their skills and language proficiency. This will lead to a high level of career adaptability.

Similarly, career researchers pointed out the role of proactivity in relation to a boundaryless career mindset (Jackson, 1996; Mirvis & Hall, 1996) and protean career orientation (Creed, Macpherson, & Hood, 2010). Further empirical studies also support the positive association between proactivity and desirable career outcomes, such as career planning, career success and socialization and organization entry (Morrison, 1993; Ashford & Black, 1996; Frese, Fay, Hillburger, Leng, & Tag, 1997; Seibert et al., 1999, 2001). It entails youths working towards a suitable job that fits their capabilities and desire, by doing self-assessment and career/job task assessment, building one's skills and capabilities to achieve the desired career tasks, therefore, one can endure the tasking job responsibilities without burnout.

This is supported by Seibert et al., (2001); Thompson, (2005) and Major et al., (2006) that proactive people search circumstances that prompt knowledge attainment, adjustment, and develop attributes required for work accomplishment. These people will be fruitful at adjusting to the changing career objectives in the varying career

stages and in addition to the changeable and boundary less career designs (Briscoe et al., 2006; Uy et al., 2015).

People having heightened proactive personality will create striking high career adaptability through identifying and exploring career related issues. People involved in activities that advance their adaptive capabilities are motivated by their proactive personality, which entails exploring one's current abilities and projecting one's desired abilities in order to explore potential satisfying occupation. This is emphasized by Bakker, Tims & Derks, (2012) that graduates with proactive personality are highly prone to involve in job crafting, in order to make them engaged with their job effectively and get better performance. This has been said to pertain to career adaptability by recreating a job activities in order to make the job more fun and meaningful.

It can be concluded that there is positive significant influence between proactive personality and career adaptability among graduate students (Hou, Wu & Liu, 2014). This indicates that proactive graduates when faced with a career transition, refuse to be the passive recipients of environmental constraints. However, they choose to make changes to improve their environment, actively search for opportunities, and take necessary actions to achieve high career adaptability level.

2.4.3 Conceptualization of Social support

Social support relates to how much a person perceives that they are generally supported by others (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet & Farelly, 1988). Cobb (1976) characterized social support as a person's conviction that he or she is nurtured and

cherished, regarded and respected, and possess a place with a system of communication and common commitments. Social support is the capability of the system to give assistance in circumstances when required. Social support is a potential resource for career particular information and guidance (Seibert et al., 2001; Kracke, 2002) and represent an essential resource for anybody adapting generally with the demands of change (Cutrona, 1996). This indicates that individuals going through transitions such as school to work transitions can benefit from social support in order to have a successful transition.

This is highlighted in the researches by Wang & Fu (2015) about the importance of social impacts in people's career development by signifying that social support plays an important role in career adaptability of graduates. Based on previous findings by Schultheiss, (2003) confirmed the significance of social interactions in assisting people to manage the volatile competitive career environment. Graduates need support resources to develop self-confidence when encountered with the alteration setting of transition from school-to-work in order to deal with anticipated career linked responsibilities. If the graduates do not have social support such as family support, they tend to lose confidence and lose focus on their career, therefore affecting their career outcome. Social support such as advice, guidance and reassurance from family, information dissemination by government will go a long way to encourage graduates to pursue career goals and objectives, leading to career adaptability.

Social backings accessible to youth students regularly comprise of the educational establishment, the working environment, family and companions (Weisenberg and Aghakhani, 2007). Past research has discovered companions to have the best impact

in the career domain (Steinberg et al., 1992). This could be because of the intimacy involved, couple with the psychological support and balance a companion can give, which will go a long way in boosting morale and confidence of a graduate.

Subsequently, this has resulted to researches by Parasuraman, et al., (1992) and Viswesvaran et al., (1999) signifying that career hassle, work over-burden and family-work clashes and increased work fulfillment can be diminished by social support. This is due to the fact that people are not autonomous of the social environment. Thus, adapting to career concerns likewise depends on situational aspects (Weisenberg & Aghakhani, 2007). It is opined by Kanfer et al., (2001) that social backing can influence people to appreciate work search as a positive interest, and also giving encouragement and pragmatic assistance during the procedure. This will ensure the wellbeing of the people in their career and life.

Langford et al., (1997) opines that social support is a multi-dimensional idea predicting people's wellbeing and prosperity and has a negative relation with stress (Glozah & Pevalin, 2014). Subsequently, Hirschi et al., (2011) stated that the more anticipated social support, the higher the career preparation commitment. This will lead to a thorough career assessment and self-assessment, which will build confidence in the graduate. A suitable job or career which fits the graduates can be chosen from information sharing within social support platform will prepare the graduate about the career details and what can be done to achieve the career goals, which will lead to career adaptability.

Consequently, research found that social support was a huge indicator of career adaptability improvement (Hirschi, 2009). Ponders uncover that students' career is

highly influenced by the part of the family. Moreover, study showed that undergraduates' career improvement was connected with family backing (Metheny&McWhirter, 2013). Family process factors such as warmth, self-rule, bolster, connection affected a large group of career constructs (Whiston & Keller, 2004). In addition, significant others such as spouses' social support affected youths' career exploration (Creed et al., 2009) by making them to explore relevant skills in the organization against their available skill, and therefore training to get more skills to achieve the career goals.

Additionally, social support may decrease turnover rate (Chiu, Chung, Wu & Ho, 2009) because when a graduate had conducted necessary career exploration before securing a suitable job, he or she would have high job engagement which will lead to career satisfaction. Nevertheless, Tian and Fan, (2014), pronounces social support backing, particularly support from family of graduates is a valuable technique in enhancing their career adaptability. This is the most pronounced social support that has a big impact on individuals' career success and adaptability.

Research on proactivity in general and proactive coping in particular highlights the importance of good social support (Greenglass, 2002 & Parker et al., 2010). It is important to note that, employees' perceived support for competency advancement was positively connected with their apparent career achievement (DeVos et al., 2011). Likewise, research by Hirschi (2009) showed social support correlate with adaptability. Therefore, it is important for a graduate to have a good family relationship and bond, so that the graduate can be morale, psychological and information support to make necessary career decisions which will lead to career adaptability.

2.5 Hypothesis development

This section discusses how the hypothesis is developed by reviewing the relationship between self-esteem, proactive personality, and social support with career adaptability based on previous literatures on the variables.

2.5.1 Relationship between self-esteem and career adaptability

Rosenberg, (1965) as cited by Duffy, (2010) defined self-esteem as a person's degree of sentiment, either positive or negative, concerning themselves. Numerous researches have been done to examine the link between self-esteem and career adaptability (Duffy, 2010). Career adaptability which is a malleable attribute, can be influenced and acquired through learning and training (Koen, Klehe & Van Vianen, 2012). This indicates that career adaptabilities impact numerous work related variables such as work engagement, job satisfaction, successful job transitions, or work-stress, (Brown, Bimrose, Barnes, & Hughes, 2012; Rossier, Zecca, Stauffer, Maggiori, & Dauwalder, 2012) through the way in which they feel about themselves, which is self-esteem (Salmela-Aro, & Nurmi, 2007).

This is because the entrance into working life focus in career features and also numerous evaluative components of work, such as job-related gratification and commitment (Schaufeli, Maslach, & Marek, 1993). Graduates having self-esteem will boost work engagement which will in turn lead to job satisfaction and reduce career anxiety, thus making job transition among graduates stress free which is an attribute of career adaptability. This is important because employers are in need of such attributes in graduates, which means graduates can easily secure suitable job position amidst competitive labor market.

This is supported by Duffy, (2010) discovered that career adaptability have positive association with self-esteem. This shows that more self-esteemed people will build high adaptability level of career by participating in additional investigation exercises regarding their career (Cai et al, 2015). This means that highly self-esteemed people conducts self-assessment and organization assessments based on required skills and attributes. It also entail setting career goals and furnishing oneself with the necessary skills and attitude to achieve these goals which leads to career success and adaptability.

Van Vianen, Klehe, Koen, and Dries (2012) found that career adaptability is positively related to self-esteem. This is due to that fact that if they have positive self-esteem, there will be higher chance of attaining a suitable job amidst tough economic situation and competitive labor market. Therefore, it believed that individuals with high career adaptability keep up a positive self-esteem in spite of being unemployed. In this manner, there is a need to examine the relationship between self-esteem and career adaptability, among students in Malaysia.

Thus, the following proposition is made;

H1: There is relationship between self-esteem and career adaptability.

2.5.2 Relationship between pro-active personality and career adaptability

Vigorous negotiating activities interrelating with the environment need to be initiated by people. This will assist in work transitions, traumas management and manage any expected and unforeseen challenges during the course of career development

(Savickas, 1997, 2005; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). The idea of proactive personality was initiated to mirror one's own propensity to take actions in identifying external prospects and influence his or her surroundings (Bateman and Crant, 1993; Crant, 2000). These means that proactive individual will explore their career and take necessary steps to know about build themselves and also their environment so that they can achieve desired career goals. Research findings has discovered that proactive people devote exertions in their career development and have more probability to attain enhanced career objectives (Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Fuller & Marler, 2009) which is an indication of career adaptability. Bateman and Crant, (1993) and Seibert,at al., (1999) support this by explaining that at the point when confronted with the need for career adjustment, proactive people are likely to effectively plan for and arrange career related changes given their affinity to distinguish open doors for development and make workplaces that are harmonious with their professional needs.

These have enabled individuals to be resourceful and adaptive, and proactive individuals tend to be equipped for such career development and challenges which will result to desired career goals. Thus, researches linked proactive personality to career success, which is a career variable (Fuller & Marler, 2009; Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999), which is the result of being career adaptable. This is because employees that are extremely proactive pursue opportunities that results to learning and flexibility, thus, develop resources needed for job performance (Seibert et al., 2001; Thompson, 2005; Major et al., 2006; Tolentino et al, 2014). They are more likely to be successful at adapting to the changing career goals in the various career

stages as well as to the volatile and limitless patterns in career (Briscoe et al., 2006; Uy et al., 2015).

Furthermore, employees having high proactive personality are active, think and plan with a future orientation, and persist when facing obstacles, which are part of the constructs of career adaptability; curiosity, concern and control. They are more likely to manage emotional job demands by proactive coping which has been advocated by many researchers (e.g., Greenglass & Nash, 2008; Lau, Wong, & Chow, 2013) as an effective way to deal with emotional demands at work. This shows that proactive people can withstand challenges of labor market while actively job searching and conducting career exploration, which will lead to a high level of career adaptability.

Research conducted by Bateman and Crant, (1993); Seibert, Crant, and Kraimer, (1999) shows that when people encounter career adaptation necessity, proactive people are likely to successfully prepare for and negotiate career-related changes given their propensity to identify opportunities for improvement and create work environments that are congruent with their vocational needs. Therefore, it is expected that proactive people are more responsive in actively influencing their work environment and developing their career adaptability resources.

Tolentino, et al, (2014) says that proactive personality relates positively to career adaptability. This is due to the fact that people adapt successfully because of their propensity to choose, create and influence the environment of their work. It therefore strengthens the theoretical assumption that adaptability along with willingness to adjust to changing conditions also entails a proactive stance, as exemplified by

readiness to take action to improve one's career circumstances and prepare for imminent work-related variations (Savickas, 2013).

Researches indicate that there is a positive relationship between proactive personality and career adaptability. This means that people with extraordinary level of proactive personality will create high level of career adaptability resources by participating in additional investigation exercises regarding their career (Cai et al, 2015). This will enable them to assess their available skills and the relevant skills needed in the labor market, thereby updating their skills and attitudes. Likewise, it also showed that more efforts is spent in developing the careers of proactive people and they are more expected to accomplish better career objectives (Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Fuller & Marler, 2009) which is as a result of career adaptability. In this study, it is put forward for consideration that individuals with proactive personality have relationship with career adaptability. Thus, the following proposition is made;

H2: There is relationship between proactive personality and career adaptability.

2.5.3 Relationship between social support and career adaptability

Social support relates to the degree to which a person feels generally supported by others (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farely, 1988). Investigation by career theorists shows that in recently, there is greater thoughtfulness on social factors as a systematic set of multiple predictors of career adaptability. This is supported by Hirschi (2009) that growth in career adaptability is significantly predicted by social support,

indicating that the intervention of family and friends is significant in the career development of youths, which is essential for the individuals during transition from school to work. Social support and career adaptability is also said to be strongly related (Wang, & Fu, 2015).

Social support has been researched to significantly relate to career adaptability in the face of economic stress (Zikic & Klehe, 2006). This means that individuals that have strong support from families, friends, significant others and the societal support will be able to adjust to the demanding job tasks due to economic downturn during transition from school to work. It can also support graduates re-entering labor market by giving them a sound mind to pursue re-employment into a suitable job. This is supported by Wang & Fu (2015) that emphasized the positive roles of social factors in the career development of people by signifying that social support boosts the career adaptability of graduates. In addition, social support from family is a vital factor that impact on students' career adaptability (Tian & Fan, 2014) because the family can give emotional and psychological support for these students to carry out a thorough job search after conducting career exploration in the midst of a competitive labor market.

Subsequently, Family, friends and schoolmates' social support are significantly correlated with career adaptability of graduates (Wang & Fu, 2015). Further, families support for students lead to less career indecisions, because they believe that they will be more successful in their chosen career, and easily adapt to the school to work transition (Hamamcı & Hamurlu, 2005; Kenny, Blustein, Chaves, Grossman, & Gallagher, 2003; Philips, Blustein, Jobin-Davis, & White, 2002). Furthermore, studies recommend that when supported by close relatives, students will be more

capable of adapting to the working condition (Zacher, 2014). This is because of the well-being and self-confidence as a result of social support. People tend to perform better in a volatile work setting and handle work related stress much easily when they feel loved and supported by those close to them, thereby leading to career adaptability.

Research indicated by Kracke, (2002) showed that perceived support from the social setting is vital for successful occupational preparation of graduates. Further, Rogers et al., (2008) stated that social support has a lot of effect on adolescent career development, in which career adaptability is the central construct (Savickas, 2013). This indicate that when graduates are in school to work transition, family support, friends support and government support play a vital role for them to succeed in their career and attain career adaptability. Thus, the following proposition is made;

H3: There is relationship between social support and career adaptability.

2.6 Related Theories on the Variables

Career construction theory (Savickas, 1997, 2005, 2013) and Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) by Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994; 2000) are used to determine the relationship between career adaptability and self-esteem, proactive personality and social support. Career adaptability which is embedded in career construction theory (Savickas, 2013) refers to a person's readiness to participate in the process of attaining person-environment integration. Individuals' career construction actions are directed by a motivational force of career adaptability (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). This indicates that career adaptability signifies a vital construct in career construction theory (Savickas, 1997, 2005).

This is mirrored in the engaged collection of persons' behaviors, competencies and attitudes that makes them fit themselves into a suitable job (Savickas, 2005). This has made career adaptability significantly predict proactive career conducts of people, job hunt self-efficacy and success of job hunt (Strauss et al., 2012; Guan et al., 2014). Additionally, adaptive skills is needed by people in order to cope with their transitions of career tasks. The idea of career adaptability highlights these abilities (Savickas, 1997; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

Researches by Pouyaud, Vignoli, Dosnon, & Lallemand, (2012); Rossier, Zecca, Stauffer, Maggiori, & Dauwalder, (2012); Guan, Deng, Sun, Wang, Cai, Ye et al., (2013) established that career adaptability have a favorable impact on people's career-

related results. It is discovered that proactive personality and self-esteem significantly predicts the career adaptability of individuals (Öncel, 2014 ; Tolentino, Garcia, Lu, Restubog, Bordia, & Plewa, 2014). Therefore, this theory is valid to support the relationship of career adaptability with proactive personality and self-esteem in this study.

Likewise, Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) by Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994; 2000), highlights cognitive-person variables that enable people to influence their own career development, and also perceived affection variables that enhance or constrain personal intervention. Furthermore, it signifies efforts to understand the processes through which people form interests, make selections, and accomplish varying levels of success in occupational pursuits (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). This means that it entails an individual's plan in achieving career success through making career choices identified through the family social support.

This is demonstrated by Lent et al., (2000); Ali, McWhirter, & Chronister, (2005); Constantine, Wallace, & Kindaichi, (2005); Gushue & Whitson, (2006); Metheny, McWhirter, & O'Neil, (2008) that significant peoples` influence on career development process has been recently given much attention. Research results supported the relationships between vocational outcome expectations and social support (Isik, 2013).

In fact, social support researches confirmed that it is recognized by students that a significant source of support in their career decisions, career information gathering process is their family (Schultheiss, Kress, Manzi, & Glasscock, 2001; Schultheiss, Palma, Predragovich, & Glass- cock, 2002). This indicates that students who perceive

families support make more valid career decisions, and have faith in the fact that they will be more prosperous in their chosen career. Therefore, they easily adapt to the school to work transition (Philips, Blustein, Jobin-Davis, & White, 2002; Kenny, Blustein, Chaves, Grossman, & Gallagher, 2003; Hamamcı & Hamurlu, 2005).

Hence, Career construction theory (CCT) and Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) is recommended in this study to support the research framework in order to examine the relationship between career adaptability with self-esteem, proactive personality and social support.

2.6.1 Research framework

This research framework is developed based on the problem statement and literature review in the bid to answer the research questions and attain the research objectives. The purpose is to display the relationship between self-esteem, proactive personality and social support (Independent Variables) and career adaptability (Dependent Variable). Based on past researches which shows that self-esteem, proactive personality and social support has a significant relationship with career adaptability (Duffy, 2010; Tolentino, et al, 2014; Wang, & Fu, 2015).

The research framework is further described by the diagram below;

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

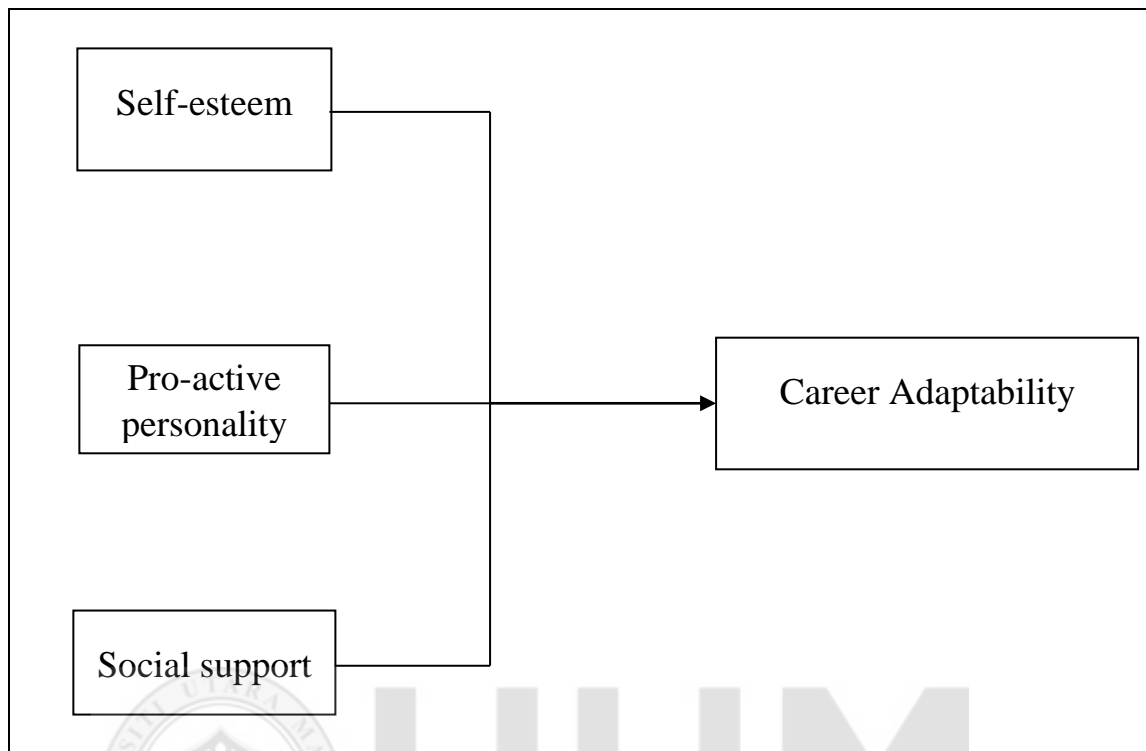


Figure 2. 1
Research Framework

2.7 Conclusion

The chapter shows the literature review about self-esteem, pro-active personality, social support and career adaptability. The relationship between the independent variables, self-esteem, pro-active personality, social support and the dependent variable, which is career adaptability was also discussed. The next chapter will be discussing about the methodology and procedure that was utilized in data gathering and analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter discusses about the exploration outline and technique utilized as a part of this study. Additionally, it clarifies the instruments chosen for information gathering, the population and sample and the survey procedure utilized. This section stipulates the research design, information accumulation strategies and sampling design. Moreover, research instrument which comprises of survey design and pilot test are likewise displayed in this section. This is trailed by measuring of the instrument, operational meaning of constructs measurement scales, finishing with data processing and techniques for information analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The objective of research design is to use the best strategized research action in order to solve the problem by gathering appropriate information. The study examines the relationship between the dependent variable (career adaptability) and independent variables (self-esteem, proactive personality and social support).

There are two types of research design approach, which is the qualitative and quantitative research approach.

Qualitative research is an all-encompassing method that includes discovery. It is a narration model that ensues in a natural setting which makes the researcher to develop a detailed narration from intense participation in the actual experiences (Creswell, 2013). Leedy and Ormrod (2001) argues that qualitative research is less structured in description because it formulates and builds new theories. Furthermore, qualitative research builds its premises on inductive, rather than deductive reasoning. The observational elements pose questions which is then attempted to be explained. What makes qualitative research distinct, is the strong correlation between the observer and the data.

Quantitative research comprises gathering of data so that information can be quantified and then subjected to statistical analysis in order to support or disprove “alternate knowledge claims” (Creswell, 2013). Quantitative research method involves statistical approach to research design. This is supported by Leedy and Ormrod (2001) that quantitative research builds upon existing theories, in which surveying and experimentation is conducted. It is noted that research is autonomous of the researcher in a quantitative research approach which consequently, indicates that there is objectivity of result when measuring data. The most useful methods in research area are quantitative research methods due to a few reasons such as time saving, less effort and easy conducting.

Quantitative method will be utilized for gathering data in order to examine the relationships between the dependent variable and independent variables. The demographics will also be analysed using descriptive frequency tables. Complete set of questionnaires are used as an instrument for this study. Multiple regression analysis is used to examine the relationship between the dependent variable and independent

variables. Correlation analysis is also used to examine the relationship between the variables. This research design indicates the relationship between career adaptability, self-esteem, proactive personality and social support.

Quantitative research method is being used for this study because it is faster and easier to conduct research and generalize the results. The advantage of using questionnaire is that people are more truthful while responding to the questionnaires due to the fact that their responses are anonymous, however the drawbacks is that majority of the respondents who receive questionnaires don't return them and those who do, might not be representative of the originally selected sample (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001).



3.3 Unit of analysis

The survey was conducted at University Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia. The Participants are 188 final year undergraduate students from the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) programme at Universiti Utara Malaysia.

3.4 Population and sampling Technique

The population being surveyed are final year undergraduate students in Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) programme. Samples were taken from the final year students who are currently taking Seminar course this semester, prior to their practicum in the following semester.

The type of non-probability sampling used for this survey is the purposive sampling, this is chosen because of time constraint, cost saving, ease of conducting the survey and the focus on specific respondents due to the nature of the research topic and objective.

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method and occurs when respondents designated for the sample are chosen by the researcher's judgment (Black, 2011). There are different types of purposive sampling, however, homogenous sampling will be used because of the subgroup chosen among final year undergraduate students are those taking the seminar course. Homogeneous sampling is the sampling method that focuses on one particular subgroup in which all the sample members are similar, such as university students taking a particular course (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012).

These group are the 257 undergraduate final year students of the Bachelor of business administration (BBA) taking the seminar course before going for their industrial training in the next coming semester. The reason for these target participants is to identify the relationship between their self-esteem, proactive personality, and social support with their level of career adaptability before they actually get into the labor market. This will give feedback on what attribute and skills the students have attained throughout their study years in University Utara Malaysia (UUM).

3.5 Measurement/Instrumentation

Since this study uses the quantitative survey method, it was prepared to combine the four instruments utilized in this study. The questionnaire was segmented into five sections. The first section covered on career adaptability which is the dependent variable, while the second section focused on self-esteem, the third section had instruments on proactive personality, the fourth section focused on social support and the fifth section, covered information on the demographic profile of respondents` age, gender, race/ethnicity, number of siblings, most influence on the respondent`s education and career plans, marital status, highest education of parents/guardian, combined monthly income of parent/guardian, how university education is paid for, and first family member to attend university.

The measurements used by each variable has been tested and have a high reliability test. Career adaptabilities scale (CAAS) International form 2.0 has a Cronbach alpha at 0.96 while Rosenberg self-esteem scale has a Cronbach alpha at 0.90. Furthermore, proactive personality scale by Bateman and Crant (1993) has a Cronbach alpha 0.87 and lastly, the social support multidimensional scale of perceived social support (MSPSS) has a Cronbach alpha of 0.91.

Likert scale and multiple-choice questions was utilized as a part of the structure questions. The research gives a selection of answers and respondents are solicited to choose at least one from the option given. At that point, the likert scale is an estimation scale with five reaction categories running from "strongly disagree" as 1 to "strongly agree" as 5. In this study, there are several statistical technique that are utilized to dissect gathered information, example is, frequency analysis, reliability

test, descriptive statistics, correlation test and regression. For information analysis, all information gathered from respondent were examined utilizing Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 2.0.

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha (α) is used to measure the reliability of questionnaire items used. For a quality study to be produced, the data accuracy should be attained with the higher reliability degree of the instrument; thus, Cronbach's alpha is utilized as a tool to examine the measurements internal consistency.

3.5.1 Career Adaptability

A survey research using the multidimensional and hierarchical career adaptabilities scale (CAAS) International form 2.0 was conducted. This international form was developed by Savickas and Porfeli (2012) with Cronbach alpha of 0.96 and it includes 24 items which are very useful to measure career adaptabilities of individuals in terms of four psychosocial career adaptability resources. Respondents were required to provide responses based on their level of career adaptability through the division of the questions according to the four constructs of career adaptability through these 24 questions measurement using a five-point Likert scale from 1- indicating strongly disagree to 5 - indicating strongly agree.

Tian & Fan, (2014) tested the career adaptability scale developed by Savickas and Porfeli, (2012), overall scale of Cronbach's alpha for the study's indicates .93. The same instrument was also utilized by Chan et al, (2016) with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.95; while, Chan, & Mai, (2015) utilized the same career adaptability scale and

obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94. Therefore, the instrument have been tested by various authors and have indicated high reliability results ranging from 0.95 till 0.93.

The operational explanation and items are displayed in Table 3.1

Table 3. 1
Operational definition and items for Career Adaptability

Dimension	Operational Definition	Items
Career Adaptability	Is an individual's resources for coping with current and anticipated tasks, transitions, traumas in their occupational roles, in which to a certain degree, large or small, alter their social integration.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thinking about what my future will be like. 2. Realizing that today's choices shape my future. 3. Preparing for the future. 4. Becoming aware of the educational and career choices that I must make. 5. Planning how to achieve my goals. 6. Concerned about my career. 7. Keeping upbeat. 8. Making decisions by myself. 9. Taking responsibility for my actions. 10. Sticking up for my beliefs. 11. Counting on myself. 12. Doing what's right for me. 13. Exploring my surroundings. 14. Looking for opportunities to grow as a person. 15. Investigating options before making a choice. 16. Observing different ways of doing things. 17. Probing deeply into questions I have. 18. Becoming curious about new opportunities. 19. Performing tasks efficiently. 20. Taking care to do things well. 21. Learning new skills. 22. Working up to my ability. 23. Overcoming obstacles. 24. Solving problems.

Source: Savickas & Porfeli (2012)

3.5.2 Self-esteem

Rosenberg self-esteem scale is the 10-item Likert version developed by Rosenberg (1965) containing five positive worded items and five reverse worded items with Cronbach alpha of 0.90. Respondents were required to provide responses based on their level of self-esteem through these 10 questions measurement using a five-point Likert scale from 1- indicating strongly disagree to 5 - indicating strongly agree.

Tinakon & Nahathai, (2012) tested the self-esteem scale developed by Rosenberg M. (1965), the Internal consistency was with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86 in the first sample and 0.84 in the second sample, which indicates its good quality. The same instrument was tested by Mannarini (2010) with the Cronbach's alpha value of 0.85. While, Lordello et al, (2014) tested the same instrument and achieved a Cronbach's alpha of 0.75. Therefore, the instrument have been tested by various researchers and have indicated high reliability results ranging from 0.86 till 0.75. For this study, question no. 8 was removed making it nine (9) items being used. The operational definition and its items are displayed in Table 3.2

Table 3. 2
Operational definition and items for Self-esteem

Dimension	Operational Definition	Items
Self-esteem	The individual's degree of positive or negative sentiment toward themselves.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. 2. At times I think I am no good at all ®. 3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. 4. I am able to do things as well as most other people. 5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of ®. 6. I certainly feel useless at times ®. 7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. 8. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure ®. 9. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Source: Rosenberg, M. (1965)

® - Reverse coding

3.5.3 Pro-active personality

Proactive personality of respondents was measured by Bateman and Crant (1993) scale measurement with the Cronbach alpha of 0.87. Respondents were required to provide responses based on their level of proactive personality through these 10 questions measurement using five-point Likert scale from 1- indicating strongly disagree to 5 - indicating strongly agree.

Gudermann (2011) tested the proactive personality scale measurement established by Bateman and Crant (1993) and achieved the Cronbach's alpha of 0.81. The same instrument was also tested by Hsieh and Huang (2014) with a Cronbach's alpha of

0.76. While, Jawahar and Liu (2016) obtained a Cronbach`s alpha of 0.86 after testing the given measurement. Therefore, the instrument have been tested by various authors and have indicated high reliability results ranging from 0.86 till 0.76. The operational explanation and items are displayed in Table 3.3

Table 3. 3
Operational definition and items for Proactive personality

Dimension	Operational Definition	Items
Proactive Personality	Disposition toward taking personal resourcefulness to impact one`s environment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life. 2. Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful force for constructive change. 3. Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality. 4. If I see something I don't like, I fix it. 5. No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen. 6. I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition. 7. I excel at identifying opportunities. 8. I am always looking for better ways to do things. 9. If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen. 10. I can spot a good opportunity long before others can.

Source: Bateman and Crant (1993)

3.5.4 Social Support

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) which was developed by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet & Farley (1988) with Cronbach alpha of 0.91. It is a psychometrically sound instrument which possess adequate internal and test-retest reliability which have been demonstrated as well as strong factorial validity and moderate construct validity. The 12-item scale consists of three 4-item subscales assessing family support, friend support, and significant other support. Moreover, as a self-explanatory 12-item inventory, it is brief and simple to use, making it ideal for research when time limitations are involved.

The social support scale developed by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet & Farley (1988) was tested by Tian & Fan (2014), the total Cronbach's alpha was 0.95. The same instrument was used by Isik (2013) as a Turkish adapted MSPSS Eker & Arkar (1995); Eker, Arkar, & Yıldız (2001), and obtained a Cronbach's alpha ranging between 0.80 and 0.95. The same instrument was utilized by Duffy (2010) and obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92. Therefore, the instruments have been tested by various researchers and have indicated high reliability results ranging from 0.95 until 0.80.

The operational definitions and its items are shown in Table 3.4 below;

Table 3. 4

Operational definition and items for social support

Variables	Operational Definition	Items
Social Support	An individual's perception of how resources can act as a buffer between stressful events and symptoms.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a special person who is around when I am in need. 2. There is a special person with whom I can share my joys and sorrows. 3. My family really tries to help me. 4. I get the emotional help and support I need from my family. 5. I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me. 6. My friends really try to help me. 7. I can count on my friends when things go wrong. 8. I can talk about my problems with my family. 9. I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows. 10. There is a special person in my life who cares about my feelings. 11. My family is willing to help me make decisions. 12. I can talk about my problems with my friends.

Source: Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet & Farley, (1988)

3.6 Pilot Testing

A total of 28 respondents from an undergraduate class of human resource management students in their final year were selected as the pilot study. The pilot test was intended to test the level of career adaptability by assessing the relationship between self-esteem, proactive personality and social support of 257 final year students taking seminar course. Connelly (2008), suggests that a pilot study sample should be 10% of the sample projected for the larger parent study. Cooper and Schindler, (2003) made a slightly different opinion that the size of participant for pilot

test should be between 25 - 100 participants. Hence, for this current study, 28 students is enough to give a highlight on how the main study will be and to identify any unforeseen situation before the main survey distribution. The questionnaires were distributed in the said class and the questionnaires were immediately collected back after 15 minutes. The response was positive with the respondents indicating that the survey was clear and well understood.

The objective of the pilot test was to pretest the questionnaire with the respondents and ensure that there was no ambiguity in the questionnaire. The respondents had no major issues with the questionnaire.

The consistency of Cronbach's Alpha for each variable was measured and showed in Table 3.5. The results of coefficients (α) are between 0.95 and 0.64. Career adaptability displayed the coefficients (α) at 0.95. The coefficient (α) for self-esteem was at 0.64 which is a sufficient reliability result according to Sekaran & Bougie (2010); this low coefficient (α) was due to the small sample size of 28 respondents, and besides most students indicated neutral response for the reverse worded questions. While, coefficient (α) for proactive personality is at 0.84, and social support is 0.88, which are considered very good reliability. Thus, since the reliability results are greater than 0.6 for all the dimensions, all of the questions were used in the actual studies. The reliability results are shown in Table 3.5

Table 3. 5
Test of Reliability for Pilot study

Variables	Cronbach`s alpha (α)	No of Items (N)
Career adaptability	0.95	24
Self esteem	0.64	10
Pro-active personality	0.84	10
Social support	0.88	12

3.7 Data Collection

This current study survey was conducted in the month of November, 2016. Hard copy questionnaires were distributed personally to undergraduate final year students taking the seminar course. Six seminar classes out of seven seminar classes were surveyed. The surveyed questionnaires were completed within 15 minutes and collected immediately from the respondents. All the 194 questionnaire forms were completely returned because of the close monitoring. However, 188 questionnaires were utilized because 4 of the questionnaires were not completely filled and also 2 questionnaires were deleted due to being outliers. The feedback from the lecturers conducting the seminar class was very supportive and the students were motivated to participate in the survey. It is important to note that 257 students registered for this seminar course, however 188 questionnaires was utilized, meaning 73% of the total purposive sampling of undergraduate final year students in BBA seminar course were covered.

3.8 Data Analysis

All the data collected from the survey were entered and coded into dataset using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 2.0. For the self-esteem measurement scale, it had five reverse questions. For each response for the reverse questions, reverse manner was used in keying in the data; for example reverse question 2: “At times I think I am no good at all”, if a response of 1- strongly disagree was selected, then 5- Strongly Agree would be keyed in. If “2” was selected, “4” would be keyed in and if “5” was selected, “1” would be keyed in.

The survey results were analyzed, generated and précised into statistical analysis which consist of descriptive analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis.

3.8.1 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics are used to describe the basic features of the data in a study. They offer simple summaries regarding the sample and measures. A graphic analysis form the basis of the quantitative analysis of data. Descriptive analysis comprises the process of transforming data of general characteristics. Cronbach’s alpha coefficients (internal consistency reliability), mean, medians, modes, variance, range, and standard deviation, were explained in descriptive analysis (Zikmund et. al., 2013).

In this study, descriptive analysis described and summarized the respondents` demographic profile consisting of age, gender, race/ethnicity, number of siblings, most influential person in the education and career plan, marital status, highest education level of guardian/parent, combined salary of guardian/parent, source of university education fees, and response on whether they are the first family member to

attend university, because literature review indicated that person-centered factors impact research results (Van der Heijden et al., 2009; Brown et al., 2012; João & Coetzee, 2012).

3.8.2 Correlation Analysis

Correlation is defined as the strength of association that exist between two variables. When two or more variables possess a strong relationship with each other is means that a strong correlation exists, while variables that are not related means a weak correlation exists. This is supported by Sekaran & Bougie, (2011) that correlation analysis is used to measure the strength and significant relationship between variables. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) is used to analyze correlation. Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is used to show the linear relationship between two variables, career adaptability with self-esteem, pro-active personality and social support in the correlation analysis. Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient (r) was utilized to analyze the direction and strength between variables (Whitlock & Schluter, 2009) as follows:

- A negative value indicated an inverse relationship.
- The absolute value of $p \leq .05$. determines the strength of the linear relationship
- A strong correlation does not suggest a cause–effect relationship

This implies that there is a positive linear relationship if the two variables value of r is close to (+1) and negative linear relationship if the two variables value of r is closed to (-1). However, if the value of r closed to 0 there is no linear relationship or weak relationship between the two variables. The 95% confidence level ($p \leq .05$) is set as

the significant value in order to oppose the probability of a type I error. Consequently, ($p \leq .05$) is treated as significant (Curran-Everett, 2009).

According to Beaumont (2012), the value of pearson coefficient ranges from -1 to +1. Phanny (2014) rule of thumb in explaining correlation purport that correlation value (r) 0.0 indicates no correlation; $0.0 \leq (r) \leq 0.2$ is considered very weak correlation; $0.2 \leq (r) \leq 0.4$ is considered weak correlation; $0.4 \leq (r) \leq 0.6$ is considered moderately strong correlation; $0.6 \leq (r) \leq 0.8$ is considered strong correlation; $0.8 \leq (r) \leq 1.0$ is considered very strong correlation and $1.0 = (r)$ is a perfect correlation.

3.8.3 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is used to find the association between dependent variable and independent variables. In this study, regression tests are initiated to determine the relationship between career adaptability and self-esteem, proactive personality and social support. This study is using Multiple Regression Analysis to determine which independent variables is that has the most significant effect on career adaptability.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter which is methodology was used to collect, analyze and interpreting the data. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 2.0 was used in conducting the analysis and interpretation. Questionnaire survey was used to obtain information from the respondents. The target population which was purposive sampling, the measurement of the variables and the instruments used including the nominal, ordinal and Likert scales were discussed. The pilot testing and the data

collection procedures was discussed. The data analysis using descriptive, correlation and regression analysis was also mentioned in this chapter.

The next chapter will be talking about the findings of analysis conducted, which are the descriptive, correlation and regression analysis. This will be used to interpret the data received and also determine if there is any significance between the variables.



CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the study is presented. Data retrieved from the participants were analyzed using various statistical analysis. Frequency analysis was utilized to analyze the demographic details of the participants, especially details regarding age, gender, race/ethnicity, number of siblings, the most influential person in their education and career plans, marital status, highest education of their parents or guardian, combined monthly income of their parents or guardian, source of their university education funding, and are they the first family member to attend university.

The correlation analysis was used to determine the strength of a relationship between two variables; that is career adaptability with self-esteem, proactive personality and social support.

Subsequently, the regression analysis was used to examine the significant relationship of self-esteem, proactive personality and social support on career adaptability.

4.2 Profiles of Participants

The frequency analysis was used to describe the demographic details of the participants. This indicated that out of the total participants of 188. 107 (56.9%) of the

participants were 23 years old, while 4 (2.1%) of the participants identified their age as others, which indicates 25 years old and above.

In terms of gender, 144 (76.6%) were female students, while 44 (23.4%) were male students. For ethnicity, 123 (65.4%) of participants were Malays. In terms of numbers of siblings, 42 (22.3%) of participants indicated having 4 siblings.

The participants indicated that the most influential person in their education and career plans are their parents at 149 (79.3%). Most of the participants are single at 185 (98.4%) while 3 (1.6%) are married.

79 (42.0%) of participants' highest education of their parents/guardians Bachelor degree. In terms of the participants' parents/guardian combined monthly income. 84 (44.7%) participants indicated less than RM2000.

150 (79.8%) of the participants uses PTPTN as a source of their university education funding. Lastly, 90 (47.9%) of the participants revealed that they were the first in their family member to attend university, while 98 (52.1%) indicated otherwise. The demographic of respondent being illustrated in Table 4.1 below;

Table 4. 1
Participants' Demographic Profile

Demographic Characteristic		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	21 years old	0	0
	22 years old	64	34.0
	23 years old	107	56.9
	24 years old	13	6.9
	Others	4	2.1
Gender	Male	44	23.4
	Female	144	76.6
Race/ethnicity	Malay	123	65.4
	Chinese	55	29.3
	Indian	6	3.2
	Others	4	2.1
No. of Siblings	0	4	2.1
	1	22	11.7
	2	30	16.0
	3	42	22.3
	4	31	16.5
	5	21	11.2
	> 6	38	20.2
Most Influence on Education and career	Parents	149	79.3
	Siblings	15	8.0
	Friend	19	10.1
	Others	5	2.7
Marital status	Single	185	98.4
	Married	3	1.6
Highest education received by parents/guardian	Primary school	9	4.8
	Secondary school	26	13.8
	SPM	27	14.4
	STPM	26	13.8
	Certificate	3	1.6
	Diploma	11	5.9
	Bachelor`s degree	79	42.0
	Master degree	3	1.6
	MD/PhD or other advanced degree	3	1.6
	Others	1	0.5

Demographic Characteristic		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Monthly combined income of parents/guardian	Less than RM2,000	84	44.7
	RM2,001 - RM4,000	66	35.1
	RM4,001 - RM6,000	19	10.1
	RM6,001 - RM8,000	10	5.3
	RM8,001 - RM10,000	4	2.1
	RM10,001 and Above	5	2.7
Source of University education funding	Parents	13	6.9
	Family member	1	0.5
	Loans	5	2.7
	Scholarships	14	7.4
	Myself	5	2.7
	PTPTN	150	79.8
First family member to attend University?	Yes	90	47.9
	No	98	52.1

4.3 Descriptive statistics and Normality Test

The measurement used for this study are the 5-point Likert scale where 1 - indicates strongly disagree while 5- indicates strongly agree. Results from the descriptive statistics revealed that the means for career adaptability and social support are highest at 4.17 and 4.15 respectively. The mean for Proactive personality and self-esteem are at 3.85 and 3.39 respectively which are considerably high. Career adaptability reported a standard deviation of 0.38 with a skewness value of 0.08 and a kurtosis of -0.37. This indicates that the response for career adaptability is normally distributed. Self-esteem's standard deviation was 0.44 with a skewness of 0.49 and a kurtosis of -0.30. Responses for Self-esteem also exhibited a normal distribution. Proactive

personality reported a standard deviation of 0.44 with a skewness value of 0.30 and a kurtosis of -0.20. Finally, Social support reported a standard deviation value of 0.53 which a skewness of -0.43 and a kurtosis value of -0.27 which also translates to a normally distributed response. The skewness and kurtosis results are normal because if a sample (N=188) is more than 50 and less than 300, it means failed to reject the null hypothesis at absolute z-value below 3.29, which corresponds with alpha level 0.05 (Kim, 2013), therefore the variable is normally distributed. The results of the descriptive statistics and Normality Tests of the data are depicted in Table 4.2. The Normality Tests for all the variables are also exhibited in Figure 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4

Table 4. 2
Descriptive statistics and Normality Test for career adaptability, self-esteem, proactive personality and social support.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	SE-Skewness	Z-Skewness	Kurt	SE-Kurt	Z-Kurt
CA	188	4.17	.38	.08	0.17	0.47	-.37	0.35	-1.06
SE	188	3.39	.44	.50	0.17	2.94	-.30	0.35	-0.86
PP	188	3.85	.44	.30	0.17	1.76	-0.20	0.35	-0.57
SS	188	4.15	.53	-.43	0.17	-2.53	-.30	0.35	-0.86

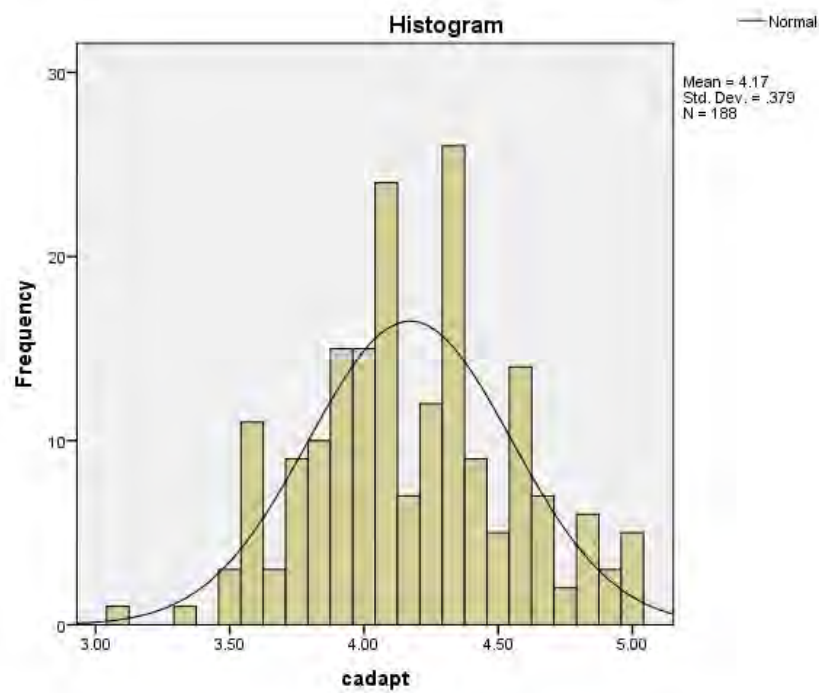


Figure 4. 1
Normality test of career adaptability

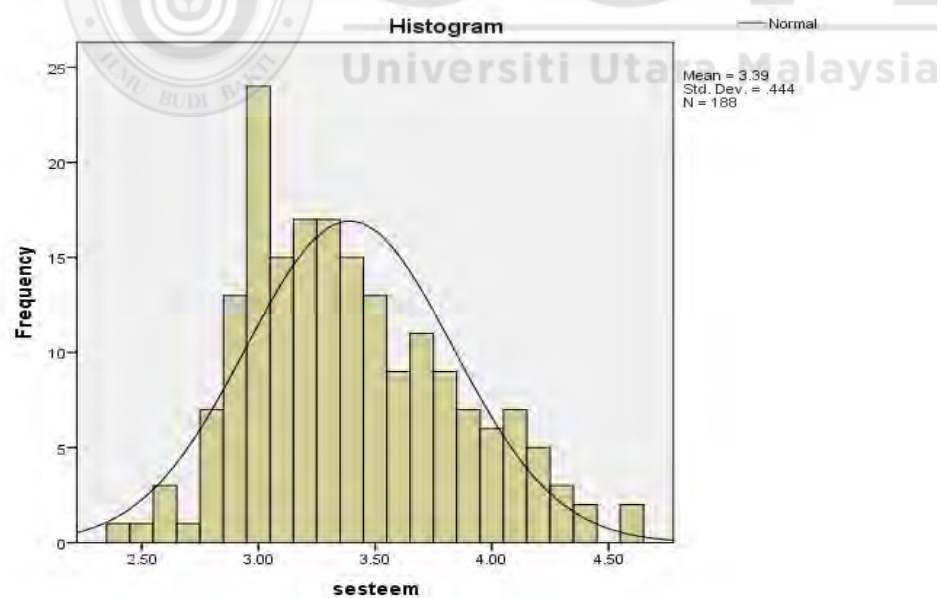


Figure 4. 2
Normality test for self-esteem

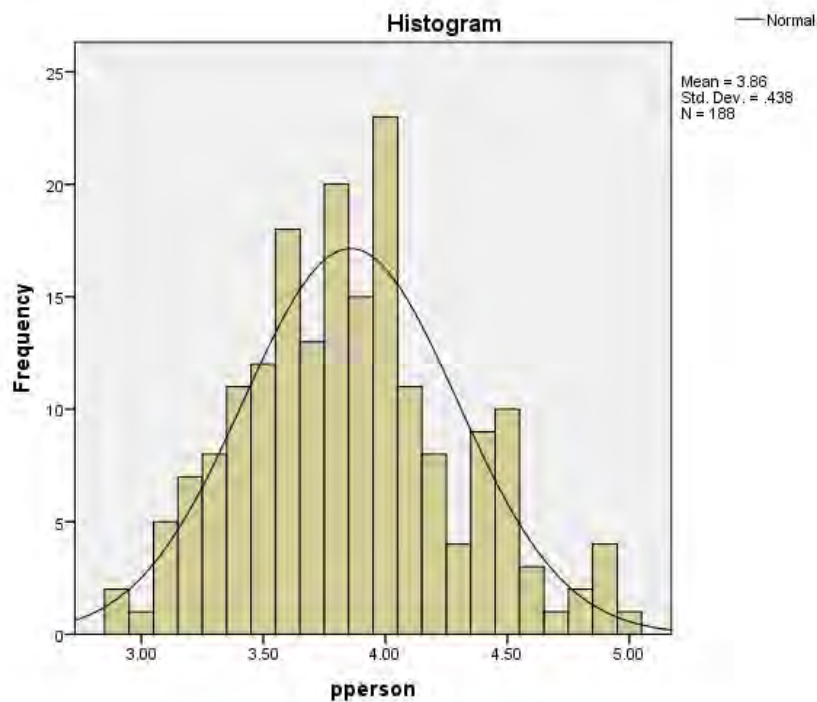


Figure 4. 3
Normality test for pro-active personality

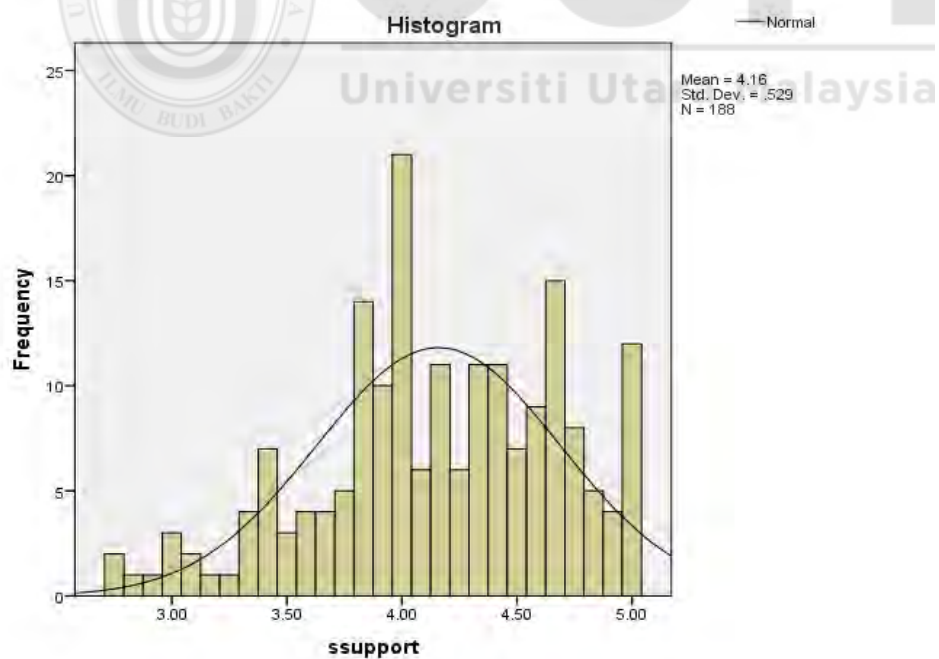


Figure 4. 4
Normality test for social support

The conducted descriptive analysis also revealed the levels of career adaptability, self-esteem, proactive personality as well as social support of the respondents. This was conducted by looking at both the mean and median values of the variables. In the case where the mean of a variable is lower than its median, it would therefore be considered that the students response rate are higher than average and consequently in cases where the mean of the variable is higher than its median it would be considered that the rating of the students is lower than the average response. The results of the mean and median analysis of the variables are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4. 3

Descriptive statistics mean, median, standard deviation and Cronbach alpha for career adaptability, self-esteem, proactive personality and social support.

Variable	N	Mean	Median	Standard deviation
Career Adaptability	188	4.17	4.16	.38
Self-esteem	188	3.39	3.30	.44
Pro-active personality	188	3.85	3.80	.44
Social support	188	4.15	4.16	.53

Career adaptability reported a mean value of 4.17 and a median value of 4.16. This indicates that the average level of career adaptability response is higher among the final year students of Bachelor of Business administration (BBA) undergraduate students at Universiti Utara Malaysia. Likewise, self-esteem showed a mean value of 3.39 and a median value of 3.30. This indicates that the average self-esteem response level is a bit above average among the final year undergraduate students. Pro-active

personality showed a mean value of 3.85 and median value of 3.80, portraying that the average rate of pro-active personality response level is slightly higher among the final year undergraduate students. However, the average rate of social support response level is slightly lower among the students with a mean value of 4.15 and a median value of 4.16. This shows that there is a considerable high amount of social support among final year BBA undergraduate students at Universiti Utara Malaysia.

The Cronbach alpha reliability test was used to observe each variables measurement in the questionnaire. The alpha coefficient of career adaptability being 0.91, self-esteem being 0.71, proactive personality being 0.79 and social support being 0.86. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), all the constructs used are discovered to have the internal consistency reliability if the result passed the minimum acceptable level of 0.7. Therefore, all the constructs show cronbach's alpha values of more than 0.7, which means consistencies and appropriateness of the measurement in this research. It is important to note that question eight (8), was removed from the original measurement scale of self-esteem in order to make it valid at 0.71, making it a total of nine (9) measurement scale questions used. Table 4.4 shows the results of the Cronbach reliability test.

Table 4. 4
Test of Reliability for the variables of career adaptability, self-esteem, proactive personality and social support.

Variables	Cronbach`s alpha (α)	No of Items (N)
Career adaptability	.91	24
Self esteem	.71	9
Proactive personality	.79	10
Social support	.86	12

4.4 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson Correlation Analysis is used to measure the strength and significance relationship between variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2011). Table 4.5 show the results of the pearson correlation analysis of the variables.

Table 4. 5
Pearson correlation analysis of the variables

No.	Variables	Career adaptability	Self-esteem	Proactive personality	Social support
1	Career adaptability	1.00			
2	Self-esteem	.07	1.00		
3	Proactive personality	.59**	.08	1.00	
4	Social support	.53**	.15*	.44**	1.00

** $p \leq 0.01$ level (2-tailed) ; * $p \leq 0.05$ level (2-tailed)

Pearson correlation was used in analyzing the data. The result of the correlation analysis result indicates that variables under consideration have significant positive relationship with one another except the relationship between self-esteem and career adaptability which have no significant relationship.

Career adaptability and proactive personality have a positive moderately strong significant correlation at $r = 0.59$ ($p \leq 0.01$). Likewise, career adaptability and social support have a positive moderately strong significant correlation at $r = 0.53$ ($p \leq 0.01$). Likewise, proactive personality is moderate to large significantly correlated with social support at $r = 0.44$ ($p \leq 0.01$). However, career adaptability and self-esteem have no correlation and not significant at $r = 0.07$.

4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is conducted on the three independent variables which are self-esteem, proactive personality and social support. This is to determine if there is a significant relationship with the dependent variable, career adaptability. The results are shown in Table 4.6

Table 4. 6

Multiple regression analysis of independent variables on Career adaptability

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.713	.245		6.989	
Self-esteem	-.014	.047	-.02	-.295	.769
Proactive personality	.391	.053	.45	7.392	.000
Social support	.240	.044	.34	5.431	.000
<hr/>					
$r^2 = 0.447$	R= .669		F= 49.59		$p \leq 0.05$

From the regression result, the value of r^2 was seen to be .447 meaning that the independent variable (self-esteem, proactive personality and social support) explain 44.7% variability of the dependent variable (career adaptability), having $F(3,184) = 49.59$, $p < .05$, with r^2 of .447. Also from the regression analysis, it was found that proactive personality and social support have significant influence on career adaptability. This means that an increase in the proactive personality level and increased social support on the undergraduate students will cause a higher level of career adaptability among them.

The results revealed that with the standardized beta value of 0.45, proactive personality is the most significant in influencing career adaptability compared to the other two independent variables, social support and self-esteem. Social support has a standardized beta value of 0.34, which indicates its significant influence on career adaptability. However, self-esteem beta value is -0.02, which indicates that self-esteem does not have significant influence on career adaptability.

Hence, it can be concluded that career adaptability is malleable and people should make conscious effort in maintaining or increasing their adaptability (Koen et. al., 2012) through participating in interactive and personality building activities.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter showed the analysis results which were conducted on the data. Frequency, descriptive statistics, normality test, Cronbach alpha, correlation, and regression analysis were used in conducting the analysis. It shed light on the relationship of the variables as well as its significance and the reliability of the measurement scales used in the survey. The next chapter will discuss about the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the study obtained from the analysis performed on the data gathered. The discussion will be directed by the objectives presented earlier in Chapter 1. The results are expected to provide valuable insight to the objectives.

5.2 Discussion

This study aims to examine the relationship between three independent variables of self-esteem, pro-active personality and social support with final year undergraduate students' career adaptability. The study attempts to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To examine the influence between self-esteem and career adaptability.
- ii. To investigate the influence between pro-active personality and career adaptability.
- iii. To determine the influence between social support and career adaptability.

5.2.1 The relationship between self-esteem and career adaptability

The Pearson Correlation Analysis (refer to Table 4.5) revealed that self-esteem and career adaptability has no correlation and insignificantly correlated ($r = 0.07$).

The multiple regression analysis result (Table 4.6) showed that self-esteem does not have significant relationship with career adaptability. Although with the mean value of 3.39, the students have a considerable amount of self-esteem. This indicates that the self-esteem level of the final year undergraduate students does not influence their career adaptability because as they emerge into the labor market from the school transition, their considerably high level of self-esteem does not necessarily mean that they possess career adaptability. Their level of self-esteem can be due to the support of their parents (79.3%) and siblings (8.0%) which is indicated in the demographics. This support is greatly because almost half of the respondents' parents possess Bachelor degree at 42%, thus they get the motivation and confidence from their parents assurance.

This indicates that students feel enough confidence to be able to do things as well as other people, which is a trait of self-esteem however, it does not necessarily leads to show their level of career adaptability, most especially because they have not yet started searching for job. Possibly, they have not assessed themselves properly and assessed the labor market to know what relevant skills they need to succeed in their career. Hence, these students can use their self-esteem to conduct career exploration and analyze their career choices through the means of self-assessment and organization assessment. Consequently, they can choose suitable career decision and

goals, which will result to career adaptability. The lack of self-exploration as a mediating factor could have caused the insignificant relationship.

This shows that self-esteem might later have a significant influence on the respondents' career adaptability level, when they are done with university studies and are actively searching for job.

This is supported by researches which indicates positive correlation but insignificant relationship between self-esteem and career adaptability (Cai, et. al, 2015). It further says that variables such as career exploration was utilized to mediate self-esteem in order to have strong and significant correlation with career adaptability. Indicating that when the students begin to carry out career exploration activities such as assessing their own abilities and the required abilities needed in the organization, and then updating their skills and capacity such as interpersonal, decision making, leadership, critical thinking skills, to be at par with organizations' need. These will lead to achieving career adaptability.

Therefore, we can reject the hypothesis because self-esteem does not have a relationship and influence on the career adaptability.

5.2.2 The relationship between pro-active personality and career adaptability

The Pearson Correlation Analysis (refer to Table 4.5) revealed that the relationship between pro-active personality and career adaptability is significant and positively correlated ($r = 0.59$, $p \leq 0.01$). This result is also supported by the multiple regression analysis result which shows that pro-active personality does have a significant relationship with career adaptability at 0.000 ($p \leq 0.05$). This means that proactive

personality level of the undergraduate student influences their level of career adaptability. With the mean value of 3.85, it can be said that the students have a high level of proactive personality traits. This means that they are proactive in continuously looking for fresh ways to improve their lives and also finding better ways to do things such as changing their work setting to suit themselves and assigning meaning to tasks. This could be due to the various activities on campus, such as intergroup-society programmes and extra-curriculum activities etc.

This indicates that in a volatile career environment, the final year undergraduate students will have propensity to impact environmental change by participating in proactive conduct in an assortment of circumstances. Hence, they will easily have a smooth school to work transition, and achieve career adaptability.

This is supported by researches which expressed that proactive personality significantly contributes to predicting career adaptability (Tolentino et al., 2014; Cai, et al., 2015). Further, proactive people have more tendency to be successful at adapting to spontaneous career goals in various career stages (Briscoe et al., 2006; Uy et al., 2015) which is an indication of a high career adaptability. Likewise, proactive personality has been positively associated with career satisfaction (e.g. Barnett and Bradley, 2007; Joo and Ready, 2012), which is also a sign of having career adaptability.

Therefore, we accept the hypothesis because proactive personality have relationship and influence on the career adaptability.

5.2.3 The relationship between social support and career adaptability

The Pearson Correlation Analysis (refer to Table 4.5) revealed that the relationship between social support and career adaptability is significantly and positively correlated ($r = 0.53$, $p \leq 0.01$). This result is also supported by the multiple regression analysis result which shows that social support does have a significant relationship with career adaptability at 0.000 ($p \leq 0.05$).

The mean value of 4.15 indicates that the students have a high level of perceived supports from their families and friends. This is proven in the demographic results showing that 149 (79.3%) of the respondents believe that their parents influence their education and career the most. It is also supported by the respondents of students in the social support measurement questions, with most students having the perception that their family really tries to help them and they also get emotional assistance and support that they need from their family.

This indicates that undergraduate final year students have strong family supports which indicates a high career adaptability level, hence they will most likely experience a smooth school to work transition amidst labor market complications.

When undergraduate students feel generally supported by others, most especially their parents and siblings, they will be more motivated to make the right career decision making through career exploration, build their confidence and explore their career options properly, thereby achieving a high career adaptability level. Self-confidence need to be built by utilizing support resources when graduates encounter school-to-work transition complications. This can be obtained from family members, friends, and schoolmates. The result of this support will enable students embark in activities to

upgrade their interpersonal, communication, critical thinking skills and English proficiency, in order to experience a smooth school to work transition. Therefore, contributing significantly to higher level of career adaptability.

This is supported by previous research by Byrne et al (2012) that the parents significantly influence students to make career decision, thereby build high career adaptability. Further, Social support and career adaptability were found to be significant related (Wang & Fu, 2015 & Schultheiss, 2003). This was also confirmed by Murphy and Lambrechts (2015) that social support such as parental influence has a strong relationship with career adaptability among students.

Previous research also indicated that social support encourages university graduates' career adaptability (Wang & Fu, 2015) which re-assures the importance of social connections in assisting people to cope with this highly competitive labor market.

It can be said that students have a high level of career adaptability because of the high level of social support from their family. Therefore, we accept the hypothesis because social support has relationship and influence on the career adaptability.

5.3 Implication of the study

This section discusses about the implication of this study to the academic industry, the policy makers in the government, the graduates and to the family.

5.3.1 Theoretical Implication

This research has been able to examine the factors that influence career adaptability among final year undergraduate students from the Career construction theory (CCT) and Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). This contribution is valuable because there is a limited study in the relationship of independent variables (self-esteem, proactive personality and social support) and career adaptability level among final year undergraduate students, most especially in Malaysia public universities. The results showed that proactive personality and social support have significant positive relationship towards career adaptability of undergraduate students that are soon to enter into the working environment or the labor market.

5.3.2 Practical Implication

The implication of this study based on the research findings, shows that proactive personality and social support has a positive and significant relationship with career adaptability. It is clearly shown by the mean value of all the variables that most of the participants have a good amount of self-esteem, proactive personality, social support and career adaptability. It is clearly explained that since proactive personality and social support have influence on career adaptability, the final year undergraduate students can boost up their career adaptability during the school to work transition. This can be boosted by encouraging more pro-active attitude in students, through motivational programmes, highly intuitive and interactive competitions and other programmes that boosts proactive personality among students. It can relate to programmes encouraging teamwork, critical thinking, leadership skills, lifelong learning and the enhancement of the English language proficiency.

Universities can prepare undergraduate students curriculum and programs in order to boost the undergraduate students' proactive personality and also create enough social support for the students, such as career advisory unit, social support societies, students' English society, interactive society etc, in order to enhance their career adaptability.

Further, the family members, most especially the parents and siblings have a lot to be aware about their importance in assisting and supporting the final year undergraduate students to possess a high level of career adaptability. This could include encouraging them to pursue extra curriculum activities to boost their English language proficiency, and also other relevant soft skills like interpersonal skills, communication skills and giving moral supports etc.

Lastly, this study creates an awareness for the government about the importance of social support in enhancing their career adaptability in the face of competitive labor market and economic recession. The government intervention in ensuring a high career adaptable workforce, by providing social support can be done by providing information portal for fresh graduates and also other necessary social supports. Further, workshops and training can be organized to provide the required relevant soft skills such as problem solving skills, creativity, networking skills and possession of right attitudes. When fresh graduates have the right attitudes, they will not ask for ridiculous salary, but will be willing to work in a flexible way to achieve personal and organizational objectives. This will enable them to secure suitable job and be able to succeed in their career.

This practical implications is applicable to undergraduate students in other universities in Malaysia.

5.4 Limitation of the study

The limitations of the study include the following:

Identifying the schedule of the classes and also the absence of some of the students made it difficult to attain an initial planned amount of sample size which was 257 respondents. The type of sampling used which was purposive sampling, therefore, there was a need to distribute the survey only in the Bachelor of Business Administration students (BBA) Final year undergraduate students taking the Seminar course class.

The data for the study was obtained from the use of questionnaires only. Oversight on the part of some of the respondents occurred during the survey, resulting to some sections or a particular question in a section not answered. This is indicated in the amount of keyed in responses. Out of 194 questionnaires, 4 were not useful due to incompletely filled questionnaire and 2 others were removed due to being outliers. The English proficiency level of some of the students was also an issue. Thus, some could not properly understand the questions asked, most especially the reverse worded questions under the self-esteem section.

The study conducted was limited to three independent variables namely self-esteem, proactive personality and social support. An analysis of the model summary revealed an r^2 value of 0.447 (refer to Table 4.6) which suggests that only 44.7% of the

variance is answered by this model. Hence, the independent variables are not adequate to explain the level of career adaptability of undergraduate students and subsequently, other variables such as self-efficacy, approaches to learning, and social Status might be significant to explain the other 55.3% of the variance not explained in this study.

Although the findings of the study shed some light on the relationship between self-esteem, proactive personality, social support and career adaptability in the Malaysian setting, it is impossible to generalize the results to include the broader population because of the demographic restrictions as well as the small size of the sample (N=188). The sample was limited to Bachelor of Business Administration final year undergraduate students taking the seminar course in Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Sintok, Kedah. Thus, the results should not be generalized to all public universities in Malaysia. A sample size of 188 does not appear large enough to conclusively establish whether there is a definite relationship between the variables of between self-esteem, proactive personality, social support and career adaptability. Thus, the findings cannot be generalized to other undergraduate students taking other programmes such as IT, Public Administration, Law and Engineering.

This study contradicts with issues highlighted about students not having enough career adaptability, because the mean and median of career adaptability was 4.17 and 4.16 respectively, indicating a high career adaptability level among the students. This could probably be due to the various training, co-curriculum activities, societal and development activities undertaken during their course of study in the university.

5.5 Recommendation

Based on this study findings, there is a need to infuse a mediating factor such as career exploration with the self-esteem of undergraduate students. This can be done when they have actually graduated and searching for job. Thus, at that period, it will be possible to find a significant relationship between self-esteem and career adaptability through the mediating factor of career-exploration.

Proactive personality being the most significant contributor to career adaptability in undergraduate students according to this study analysis result, should be enhanced and maintained through the intervention of career education and extra-curriculum activities by career counselors, lecturers and HR professionals. This means that these stakeholders should equip the undergraduate students` with activities to make them proactive, so that they can anticipate their career situation and their career future. This will make them work hard to ensure they possess the necessary skills such as interpersonal skills, critical thinking skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills in order to have a smooth school to work transition.

This could include intervention programmes on how to secure suitable job positions and some extra curriculum activities to ensure that they possess necessary soft skills, such as creative thinking, communication, English language proficiency and decision making skills to be flexible in the labor market.

Furthermore, introduction of career education and counseling could benefit university undergraduate students to create more support-oriented interpersonal connections, provide guidance to evade misappropriation of social comparisons, and provide precise activities to enable career-related tasks in order to enhance undergraduate

students' career adaptability. This will boost their self-confidence, high positive morals and attitude. This will enable the undergraduate students to smoothly adapt during school-to-work transition.

Consequently, there should be synergy among lecturers, employers, human resource professionals and career counsellors in order to come to a common ground on the importance of and on how to assist young adults in boosting their career adaptability level in the face of economic meltdown and fierce labor market. This should include organizing workshops to create awareness to fresh graduates or students in the school to work transition, about the need to have relevant skills wanted by organization. The fresh graduate without relevant skills should be trained in developing and augmenting their soft skills such as decision-making skills, interpersonal communication skills, English language proficiency, analytical thinking and problem-solving skills, presenting and applying information skills, moral and responsibility behavior and lifelong learning orientation.

Career counsellors and human resource professionals can further assist university students in enhancing their career adaptability by scheduling training programmes and interventions to assist them in gaining these necessary skills. Mentors can be assigned to these university students or fresh graduates to ensure that their state of mind is intact despite the overpowering tasks with which they may encounter. This, in turn, will enhance their career adaptability.

The study is to identify the relationship between self-esteem, proactive personality and social support on career adaptability among undergraduate students. It is recommended that future research should include other variables such as self-efficacy

and social status in order to shed more light on other factors influencing career adaptability among undergraduate students. Future researches should be done in other universities in Malaysia for comparison and to check the consistency of the results from this study.

5.6 Conclusion

Based on the problem statement generated, research questions, objectives, relevant literatures reviewed, analysis conducted on the data, generated results as well as the discussion made, this study is concluded with the following statements:

The dependent variable, career adaptability of the undergraduate students has no influence by the self-esteem level of the students. Therefore, it is important to look into other variables and also to use mediating and moderating variables to determine if there could be an influence. This result is supported by past researches. In this study, proactive personality is the most significant contributor to career adaptability, followed by social support.

These indicates that when proactive personality and social support of undergraduate students increase due to training interventions, their career adaptability will also increase.

Lastly, it can be concluded that proactive personality, social support and self-esteem mean value is high among the undergraduate students, indicating that most of the undergraduate students have a high level of proactive personality, social support and self-esteem. Therefore, they can easily tap into their resources to boost up their career

adaptability through extra training and intervention activities which enable the undergraduate students to receive initiatives to embark on relevant needed soft skills and attitude for them to have a successful school to work transition and career in the long run.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - QUESTIONNAIRE



ASSESSING CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Dear students,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research.

The following survey is being conducted for a partial fulfillment for the Masters in Human resource management research paper requirement at University Utara Malaysia. This research paper is attempting to assess the level of career adaptability of students that are soon to transit from college to work environment.

I would appreciate if you could answer the questions honestly because the information you provide will influence the accuracy and success of this research. It will take less than 20 minutes to answer this questionnaire. Feedback is confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this study.

Thank you for the assistance given and the time taken to answer the questionnaire.

Yours sincerely,

Olawole Olanre Fawehinmi


MSc. Human Resource Management

School of Business Management (COB)

PART ONE (CAREER ADAPTABILITY)

CAREER ADAPTABILITY is the capacity to cope with and capitalize on change in the future, level of comfort with new work responsibilities, and ability to recover when unforeseen events alter career plans.

Indicate your level of agreement on the following statements by circling the number that best relates to you choosing from 1- strongly disagree to 5-Strongly Agree.

	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
1. Thinking about what my future will be like.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. Realizing that today's choices shape my future.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. Preparing for the future.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. Becoming aware of the educational and career choices that I must make.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. Planning how to achieve my goals.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. Concerned about my career.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. Keeping upbeat (full of hope)	1	2	3	4	5	
8. Making decisions by myself.	1	2	3	4	5	
9. Taking responsibility for my actions.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. Sticking up for my beliefs.	1	2	3	4	5	
11. Counting on myself.	1	2	3	4	5	
12. Doing what's right for me.	1	2	3	4	5	
13. Exploring my surroundings.	1	2	3	4	5	
14. Looking for opportunities to grow as a person.	1	2	3	4	5	
15. Investigating options before making a choice.	1	2	3	4	5	
16. Observing different ways of doing things.	1	2	3	4	5	
17. Probing deeply into questions I have.	1	2	3	4	5	
18. Becoming curious about new opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5	

19. Performing tasks efficiently.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Taking care to do things well.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Learning new skills.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Working up to my ability.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Overcoming obstacles.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Solving problems.	1	2	3	4	5



PART TWO (SELF-ESTEEM)

SELF-ESTEEM is an individual's degree of positive or negative sentiment toward themselves.

Circle the number that best relates to yourself, choosing from 1- strongly disagree to 5-Strongly Agree.

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4	5
2. At times I think I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I certainly feel useless at times.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1	2	3	4	5

PART THREE (PROACTIVE PERSONALITY)

PROACTIVE PERSONALITY is a disposition toward taking personal initiative to influence one's environment.

Circle the number that best relates to yourself, choosing from 1- strongly disagree to 5-Strongly Agree.

	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	Strongly Agree
1. I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful force for constructive change.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. If I see something I don't like, I fix it.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. I excel at identifying opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. I am always looking for better ways to do things.	1	2	3	4	5	
9. If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. I can spot a good opportunity long before others can.	1	2	3	4	5	

PART FOUR (SOCIAL SUPPORT)

SOCIAL SUPPORT is the perceived or actual instrumental and/or expressive provisions supplied by the community, social networks, and confiding partners.

Circle the number that best relates to yourself, choosing from 1- strongly disagree to 5-Strongly Agree.

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
1. There is a special person who is around when I am in need.	1	2	3	4	5
2. There is a special person with whom I can share my joys and sorrows.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My family really tries to help me.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I get the emotional help and support I need from my family.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My friends really try to help me.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I can count on my friends when things go wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I can talk about my problems with my family.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows.	1	2	3	4	5
10. There is a special person in my life who cares about my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My family is willing to help me make decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I can talk about my problems with my friends.	1	2	3	4	5

DEMOGRAPHY

Please tick the suitable option that best describes you.

1. Age

☐ 21 years ☐ 22 years

☐ 23 years ☐ 24 years

Others, please specify _____

2. Gender (Tick one)

☐ Male ☐ Female

3. Race/ethnicity (Tick one)

☐ Malay ☐ Indian

☐ Chinese Others, (Please Specify): _____

4. Number of Brothers and/or Sisters that you have (Tick one)

☐ 0 ☐ 3 ☐ 6 or more

☐ 1 ☐ 4

☐ 2 ☐ 5

5. Which of the following people have had the MOST influence on your education and career plans? (Tick one)

☐ Parents ☐ Grandparents

☐ Siblings ☐ Step-Parent

☐ Friend ☐ Legal Guardian

Others, (Please list): _____

6. Marital Status (Tick one)

☐ Single ☐ Divorced

☐ Married

7. Highest Education received by persons who raised you (Tick one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primary School | <input type="checkbox"/> Diploma |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary school | <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SPM | <input type="checkbox"/> Master Degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STPM | <input type="checkbox"/> MD/PhD or other advanced degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate | Other (please list): _____ |

8. What is the combined monthly income of the persons who raised you (parent/guardian) (Tick one)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than RM2, 000 | <input type="checkbox"/> RM 8,001 - RM 10,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RM 2,001- RM 4,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> RM 10,001 and above |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RM 4,001- RM 6,000 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RM 6,001 - RM 8,000 | |

9. How do you pay for your university education? (Please tick the MAIN source of money used to pay for your education) (Tick one)

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family member | <input type="checkbox"/> Myself |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend | <input type="checkbox"/> PTPN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loans | Other (please describe): _____ |

10. Are you a first family member to attend University?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

APPENDIX B: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF VARIABLES

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Career Adaptability	4.1722	.37907	188
Self-esteem	3.3904	.44351	188
Proactive personality	3.8569	.43755	188
Social support	4.1587	.52910	188

APPENDIX C: PEARSON CORRELATION RESULT

Correlations					
		cadapt	sesteem	pperson	ssupport
cadapt	Pearson Correlation	1	.074	.598**	.532**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.314	.000	.000
	N	188	188	188	188
sesteem	Pearson Correlation	.074	1	.088	.151*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.314		.230	.039
	N	188	188	188	188
pperson	Pearson Correlation	.598**	.088	1	.442**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.230		.000
	N	188	188	188	188
ssupport	Pearson Correlation	.532**	.151*	.442**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.039	.000	
	N	188	188	188	188

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

APPENDIX D: MULTIPLE REGRESSION RESULT

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.713	.245	6.989	.000		
	sesteem	-.014	.047	-.295	.769	.977	1.024
	pperson	.391	.053	7.392	.000	.804	1.244
	ssupport	.240	.044	5.431	.000	.792	1.263

a. Dependent Variable: cadapt

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.669 ^a	.447	.438	.28416	1.350

a. Predictors: (Constant), ssupport, sesteem, pperson

b. Dependent Variable: cadapt