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Examining the Relationship Between Career Maturity and Work Readiness Among Psychology Students

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the relationship between career maturity and work readiness among students of the Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Informatika dan Bisnis Indonesia (UNIBI). The study used a quantitative method with a correlational design. The study population was students of the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI, intake 2021–2024, with a sample of 115 students selected using a stratified random sampling technique. Data collection was carried out using the Career Maturity Inventory-Revised (CMI-R) developed by Crites and Savickas, and The Work Readiness Scale (WRS) developed by Caballero, Walker, and Fuller-Tyszkiewicz. The data were analyzed with Pearson's product–moment correlation using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26. The results showed that there was a significant positive relationship between career maturity and work readiness with a correlation coefficient value of $r = 0.655$ and a significance of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$), which indicates a strong relationship. The categorization results show that the majority of students have high career maturity (55.65%), while for the work readiness variable, the distribution of respondents is relatively balanced between the high (50.43%) and low (49.57%) categories. These findings indicate that students are still in the career exploration stage, so their levels of career maturity and work readiness tend to be unstable. Therefore, universities need to provide more optimal career development programs and work experiences to improve students' work readiness.

Keywords: Career Maturity, Work Readiness, Psychology Students

1 INTRODUCTION

As the world of work becomes more complex and dynamic, graduates need adequate competencies to meet professional demands. Graduates are not only required to master academic knowledge, but also to possess the skills, attitudes, and abilities to face changes and challenges in the workplace. Therefore, students as prospective workers need to prepare themselves by developing various relevant competencies and possessing optimal work readiness before entering the professional world. This work readiness is crucial for students to be able to effectively implement the knowledge they have acquired during their studies into work practices, thus enabling them to carry out their roles and responsibilities well. The term work readiness refers to the extent to which graduates possess the attributes and attitudes that will enable them to succeed in the workforce [1], [2], [3]. This is especially important during the transition from education to work. Work readiness need a long process to build, influenced by various factors.

In psychological studies on careers, one factor that has received much attention in relation to work readiness is the concept of career maturity [4]. Career maturity reflects an individual's readiness and ability to make career decisions [5]. That is, an individual's ability to fulfill career development tasks according to the stages of their career development. Rahmawati [6] found that career maturity is related to work readiness in vocational high school students. Individuals with high career maturity will strive and be more able to make career goals, career decisions, plan for the future and also face the world of work more effectively [7], [8], [9]. On the other hand, low career maturity in final year students is related to increased anxiety about future careers, difficulty in making career decisions, and also difficulty in adapting when entering the world of work [10]. These results indicate that individuals who have a more mature understanding and career planning tend to show better readiness in facing the world of work.

In Indonesia, college students are generally between the ages of 17 and 22. According to Super's career development theory, individuals between the ages

of 18 and 25 are in the career exploration stage, a period when they begin to explore career options and prepare to enter the workforce [11]. At this stage, adolescents generally have limited information about the world of work. They also do not fully understand their potential and needs, which then leads to low career maturity. However, career maturity plays a crucial role in helping individuals develop career understanding and planning during the exploration period. A similar finding was found among students at the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI. Initial interviews with students from various cohorts revealed that some students lacked a clear understanding of their intended career paths after graduation. Furthermore, they considered their current skills, including professional competence, communication, and problem-solving, insufficient to support their readiness to enter the workforce. This situation indicates a gap between the career development tasks that students should achieve and their actual readiness to face the workforce.

Although career maturity and work readiness have been widely discussed topics in career psychology studies, research linking these two variables in the student population is still relatively limited. Furthermore, most studies have been conducted on vocational high school students or final year students, thus not providing a comprehensive picture of the relationship between these two variables in students with diverse academic characteristics. However, previous research has shown that semester level does not always determine the level of career maturity of a person [9], but rather other factors such as self-concept, future orientation, etc. [12].

Therefore, research is needed to provide empirical evidence regarding the relationship between career maturity and work readiness among psychology students across different cohorts. The results of this study are expected to form the basis for developing career development programs, career guidance services, and psychological interventions aimed at improving students' work readiness before entering the professional world. Furthermore, this research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the study of career psychology and serve as a basis for developing programs to improve student work readiness in higher education settings.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Career Maturity

Donald E. Super [5] was the first person to introduce the term career development theory, which explains the career development tasks that individuals have at each stage of their life. As well as the term career maturity, which refers to an individual's readiness and ability to make career decisions [5]. Career maturity is a variable that can measure the level of career growth from an individual's affective and cognitive perspective [13]. After Super's views emerged in the world of psychology, many theorists were also interested in developing Super's main ideas in the career field, one of which was Crites.

The career maturity theory and measurement instrument developed by Crites were based on Super's career development theory [11]. Initially, Crites' Career Maturity Inventory (CMI) emphasized competency and attitude components. However, the instrument was continuously revised over time, leading to the development of the Career Maturity Inventory-Revised (CMI-R) in 1996 [14] and it is currently available in its latest revised version developed collaboratively with Savickas [15].

The CMI-R instrument consists of four dimensions, namely Concern, Curiosity, Confidence, and Consultation [15]. The following is an explanation:

1. Concern
   Concern can be defined as the extent to which an individual is oriented and involved in the career decision-making process.
2. Curiosity
   Curiosity is the extent to which an individual is able to explore the world of work and seek information about it.
3. Confidence
   Confidence refers to the extent to which an individual is confident in themselves and their ability to make logical career decisions and realistic job prospects.
4. Consultation
   Consultation is an individual's effort to ask for and seek help from others in making career decisions**.**

2.2 Work Readiness

According to Caballero et al. [1], [2], [3], work readiness is a concept that describes the level of ownership of attributes and attitudes in graduates that support their success in entering and living in the world of work. Work readiness is a complex variable because it is formed from various interrelated factors [16]. This variable includes cognitive, affective, and behavioral components, so a comprehensive study is needed to obtain an in-depth picture of a person's work readiness condition. Work readiness is seen as the result of a development process that takes place throughout a student's education at university and is influenced by various interconnected factors [17]. This condition emphasizes the strategic role of universities in preparing graduates who have excellence and competitiveness in the professional work environment [18].

Caballero [2] conceptualizes work readiness as a multidimensional construct consisting of four main

dimensions: personal characteristics, organizational acumen, work competence, and social intelligence. The following is his explanation [2]:

1. Personal Characteristics
   Refers to an individual's internal qualities that support success at work, such as adaptability to change, resilience in the face of stress and negative feedback, self-awareness, self-confidence, and a willingness to continuously learn and develop. This dimension reflects an individual's readiness to manage themselves and face various work demands.
2. Organizational Acumen
   Organizational acumen is an individual's ability to understand the organizational environment, including its structure, culture, rules, work procedures, professionalism, responsibilities, and the importance of learning from experience and other organizational members. This dimension indicates the extent to which an individual understands how the organization operates and the expected behaviors in the workplace.
3. Work Competence
   Refers to an individual's ability to perform work effectively through mastery of relevant knowledge and skills, problem-solving abilities, analytical thinking, creativity, attention to detail, and confidence in applying competencies in the work environment. This dimension reflects an individual's capacity to complete tasks and achieve expected performance standards.
4. Social Intelligence
   Social intelligence is an individual's ability to interact and adapt effectively to social situations in the workplace. This dimension includes the ability to communicate, build interpersonal relationships, work in teams, understand social cues, and adapt behavior to different social conditions.

3 RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a quantitative method, this approach explains that in testing theories and hypotheses researchers must collect and analyze numerical data [19]. The results of the study will be processed statistically using IBM SPPS Statistics version 26. This research was conducted at the Faculty of Psychology UNIBI, located in Bandung City, West Java, Indonesia, which is a higher education institution with diverse student characteristics. The population in this study were students of the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI, spread from the 2021-2024 cohorts. The sampling technique used was a stratified random sampling technique which is a multi-stage sampling technique [20], which in this study categorized the population based on their class, from the 2021-2024 cohorts. The total sample obtained was 115 people. Therefore, stratified random sampling was employed to ensure proportional representation of students from each cohort (2021–2024).

This study was designed to examine the relationship between career maturity and work readiness rather than to compare these variables across entry years. This approach is also supported by previous findings from Dwiratnasari et al. [26], which indicated that although small differences in mean scores were observed across entry years, work readiness levels were generally comparable among cohorts, suggesting no meaningful practical differences between them.

Operationally, career maturity can be defined as the readiness of Faculty of Psychology students in making career choice readiness, which is reflected through the ability to understand themselves, explore career information, plan their future career, and make career decisions responsibly. The measuring instrument used is the Career Maturity Inventory-Revised (CMI-R) constructed by Crites & Savickas [15] with 24 items, and has been translated into Indonesian and back-translated by the researcher. Validity testing using the Corrected Item-Total Correlation test resulted in six invalid items and were not used in the study. The other 18 items were declared valid. Reliability testing using the Cronbach Alpha test, and produced a reliability coefficient of 0.828.

Operationally defined, work readiness can be defined as the extent to which students of the Faculty of Psychology possess attributes and attitudes that can make them successful in the workplace. This variable is measured using The Work Readiness Scale (WRS) constructed by Caballero, Walker, and Fuller Tyszkiewics [2] and has been adapted and modified by Rahmawati [6]. This questionnaire consists of 46 items, its validity was tested using Corrected Item-Total Correlation, resulting in one invalid item. Reliability was tested using the Cronbach's Alpha test and produced a reliability coefficient of 0.924, so it can be said that this measuring instrument is very reliable.

The data collection method used in this study was an online questionnaire distribution through the Google Form platform in May 2025. Respondents who were students of the Faculty of Psychology, from the 2021-2024 intake were given a willingness form to fill out voluntarily and were given instructions for filling out the questionnaire.

Data analysis was conducted using several steps, including descriptive statistical tests, normality tests, linearity tests, and correlation tests. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the characteristics of the respondents. Normality testing used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to determine whether the data were normally distributed and to determine which parametric or non-parametric tests would be performed. This was followed by hypothesis testing using Pearson Product

Moment correlation analysis (if the data were normally distributed) or Spearman Rank correlation analysis (if the data were not normally distributed).

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Result

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics Results

	Category			
Career Maturity	Rendah	X < 46,57	51	44,35%
	Tinggi	X ≥ 46,57	64	55,65%
Work Readiness	Rendah	X < 129,88	57	49,57%
	Tinggi	X ≥ 129,88	58	50,43%

Based on the data in Table 1, categorization of respondents was conducted using the empirical mean score. Respondents with scores equal to or above the empirical mean were classified into the high category, whereas respondents with scores below the empirical mean were classified into the low category. The majority of respondents had a high level of career maturity (55.65%), while 44.35% were in the low category. Regarding work readiness, the distribution of respondents was relatively balanced between the high (50.43%) and low (49.57%) categories.

Table 2. Normality Test Results

	Normality Test Results
Career Maturity	0,053
Work Readiness	0,099

Based on the results of the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test in Table 2, the significance value of the career maturity variable was 0.053 and work readiness was 0.099. Both significance values were greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), so it can be concluded that the data for both variables are normally distributed and meet the assumptions for parametric analysis using the Pearson Product Moment test.

Table 3. Correlation Test Results

Sig.	Correlation Coefficient
0,00	0,655

Based on the data in table 3, it can be seen that the significance value $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). These results indicate that the research hypothesis is accepted, which is there is a relationship between career maturity and work readiness. The results of the Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis show a correlation coefficient value of $r = 0.655$, which means there is a significant positive relationship between career maturity and work readiness. That is, the higher the student's career maturity, the higher their level of work readiness. The coefficient of 0.655, according to Sugiyono [21], is included in the category of a strong relationship. The coefficient of determination is 0.429 ($R^2 = 0.429$) so it can be interpreted that career maturity has a contribution of 42.9% to work readiness. Meanwhile, the remaining 57.1% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

4.2 Discussion

The results of the study indicate a significant positive relationship between career maturity and work readiness among students at the Faculty of Psychology UNIBI. The correlation coefficient of 0.655 indicates a strong relationship between the two variables. This means that the higher a student's career maturity, the higher their readiness for the world of work. On the other hand, students with lower career maturity tend to demonstrate lower levels of work readiness.

This finding is in line with Super's career development theory [5], [11] which states that individuals who are able to complete career development tasks according to their age stage will be better prepared to face the transition to the world of work. Students who have high career maturity generally have a better understanding of their potential, career goals, and the steps needed to achieve their desired career. This condition encourages the emergence of readiness to face the demands and challenges in the work environment.

The results of this study also support previous research conducted by Rahmawati [6] who found a relationship between career maturity and work readiness in vocational high school students. Furthermore, research by Agustina and Dwanoko [8] also showed that individuals with a good future orientation and career maturity tend to be better prepared to face the world of work. Thus, the results of this study strengthen previous empirical findings that career maturity is an important factor related to work readiness.

Based on the categorization results, the majority of students have a high level of career maturity. This indicates that students have begun to pay attention to their future careers, explore information about jobs, and have confidence in their future career decisions. However, the distribution of categories in both variables shows a relatively close proportion between the high and low categories. For the career maturity variable, students in the high category were 55.65% and the low category were 44.35%. Meanwhile, for the work readiness variable, the distribution of respondents was almost equal between the high (50.43%) and low (49.57%) categories. This condition indicates that although some students have good career readiness and planning, there are still quite a number of students who are not fully prepared to face the world of work.

One factor that can contribute to this situation is that students are in a career development transition phase, namely the career exploration stage according to Super [11]. At this stage, individuals are still in the

process of exploring career options, understanding their potential, and adjusting career expectations to the realities of the working world. As a result, students' levels of career maturity and work readiness tend to be unstable and can vary from individual to individual.

In addition, research by Jackson and Bridgstock [18] explains that students' work readiness is not only formed through academic learning, but is also influenced by work experience, organizational activities, and practical experience in a professional environment. Students who do not have this experience tend to feel less prepared to face the world of work even though they have acquired academic knowledge during their studies. This can explain why the number of students with low work readiness is still quite large. In addition, according to Dwiratnasari et al. [26], students basically already have adequate work readiness, but still need strengthening in the dimensions of personal characteristics and social intelligence.

Peersia et al. [17] also explain that work readiness is a multidimensional construct influenced by personal, social, and educational environmental factors. Differences in access to internship experiences, training opportunities, professional networks, and environmental support may lead to uneven development of students' work readiness. Therefore, even though students come from the same study program, their levels of work readiness and career maturity can differ significantly.

In addition, the results of initial interviews with students from the Faculty of Psychology at UNIBI showed that some students still felt a lack of confidence in their professional competence, communication skills, and problem-solving abilities. This condition likely contributed to the low work readiness of some respondents. This finding aligns with research by Aulia and Miftahunnajah [16], which showed that self-efficacy and work motivation influence individual work readiness.

The coefficient of determination value of 42.9% indicates that career maturity makes a significant contribution to work readiness. Meanwhile, the remaining 57.1% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. These factors can include organizational experience, internship experience, self-efficacy, social support, work motivation, communication skills, and previous work experience [22], [23], [24], [25]. Therefore, developing student work readiness can not only be done through increasing career maturity, but also through various other competency development programs.

Thus, the relatively balanced distribution of categories between high and low levels in both variables indicates that the development of career maturity and work readiness in students is still dynamic. This condition also indicates the need for support from universities in providing career development programs and more optimal work experiences to better prepare students before entering the professional world. Practically, universities can provide programs such as career training, career seminars, career counseling, internships, and soft skills development activities to improve students' work readiness before entering the professional world.

5 CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between career maturity and work readiness in students of the Faculty of Psychology, UNIBI, with a correlation coefficient value of $r = 0.655$ and a significance of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). These results indicate that the higher the level of career maturity of students, the higher their work readiness in facing the world of work. Although the majority of students are in the high career maturity category (55.65%), the distribution of categories in both variables shows a relatively close proportion between the high and low categories, especially in the work readiness variable which is almost balanced between the high (50.43%) and low (49.57%) categories. This condition indicates that students are still in the career exploration stage as stated by Super, namely the phase when individuals are still in the process of exploring career options, understanding their potential, and adjusting career expectations to the realities of the world of work. Therefore, the level of career maturity and work readiness of students tends to be not yet completely stable and is still developing dynamically. Thus, universities need to provide more optimal support through career development programs, soft skills training, career counseling, and work experience to help students prepare themselves to enter the professional world. Future researchers are expected to examine other factors that influence work readiness, such as self-efficacy, internship experience, social support, and interpersonal skills, in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of students' work readiness.

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