

Influences of personal and social factors on employability among youth from marginalized communities



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ABSTRACT

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The research focused on the employability of youth from marginalised community in Malaysia. Therefore, the research aimed in investigating impact of personal and social variables in influencing employability of the Malaysian youth from marginalised community. Quantitative research design that uses questionnaire were selected by researcher in conducting the research. Around 1181 Malaysian youth at the age range from 15 to 25 years old from marginalised community were selected to participate in this study. Probability sampling method were used in selecting the participants of the study. The study applied a correlational research design whereby a conceptual model was developed. Findings of the study showed positive association between personal variables (self-efficacy, self-esteem and self-determination) and employability of the Malaysian youth from marginalised community. Hence, youth with high self-efficacy, self-esteem and self-determination reported to have higher employability. Besides that, outcome of the study showed positive association between social variables (parental influences, socioeconomic status and role model) and employability of the Malaysian youth from marginalised community. A youth with higher parental influences, socioeconomic status and role model has higher employability. This research developed a model of theory that explains the influences of personal and social variables on employability of Malaysian youth from marginalised community. So, it can be an effective references and guidance in assisting the Malaysian youth from marginalised community towards career development.

Contribution/ Originality: It plays a prominent role in indicating personal and social influence on employability of marginalized youth. Identification of the influence helps in creating a path for the younger generation to strive towards a successful career journey. It is a good contribution in reducing unemployment rate among Malaysian marginalised youth.

1. INTRODUCTION

Youth is a specific life stage in human development that involves self-exploration and interpersonal, that helps an individual to understand self, others and the social world (Saladino et al., 2021). During this phase of life, an individual begins to give the initiative in preparing self to enter adulthood which brings changes in physical, sexual, psychology, cognitive and social (Burke et al., 2022). Youth encompasses self-exploration that experienced by an individual to strive towards matured life roles. Besides that, youths play the role as an enzyme that encourages an individual towards development in terms of politics, social, and economic. Participation of the youth in environment

and community is seen as an important element in developing social corporate responsibility (Rakan & Ayman, 2020). Hence, it obviously proved that the development of a country lies in the quality and heredity of the younger generation (Yusuf, Gazali, & Abdullahi, 2018).

In this new era, youth unemployment has become one of the most alarming global issues. According to the latest statistics from the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), unemployment among Malaysian youth in February 2021 increased by 0.4 percentage to 13.9 percent compared to January 2021. Unemployment has the potential to give a direct impact on the deterioration of quality of life and health (Voßemer et al., 2018). Unemployment in the early stages of an individual's life that affects the potential in productivity and employment opportunities is likely to have a negative impact on the career success of a youth (Glatt & Wunnava, 2018). Youth unemployment in Malaysia affects society psychologically and economically. Thus, the unemployment problem at the youth level is as an element that affects the mental health of the youth (Tentama & Nur, 2021). Previous studies also highlighted social problems such as crime, violence, murder, robberies, and thefts closely related to unemployment (Ghani, 2017; Hussin, Abd Aziz, Ab Halim, & Ashik, 2020; Jawadi, Mallick, Cheffou, & Augustine, 2021; Prescott & Pyle, 2019). In relation to this, there is a strong belief in the tendency of unemployment to arouse the efforts of an individual to plunge into violence, crime, and other activities that may violate the existing rules.

The weak economic condition and poor social position in education and training prevent youth from marginalised communities from entering the labour market (Golam, Shamim, & Shibly, 2020). The social and economic marginalisation experienced by the youth is the cause for the youth to get low-paid jobs and create a sense of insecurity about their careers (Dillahunt, Garvin, Held, & Hui, 2021). The marginalisation that is experienced by youth has caused them to lose academic opportunities and basic rights which increases the rate of unemployment. Thus, youth from marginalised communities faced with various challenges and obstacles from personal and social aspects towards employability.

1.1. Personal Factors

Personal factors refer to conditions that facilitate the employability of an individual and issues that are closely related to the perception of the inner world (Álvarez-González, López-Miguens, & Caballero, 2017). Personal aspects play an important role in matters related to career opportunities, especially elements involving career identity and self-concept. However, doubts about internal beliefs on one's ability to succeed will create difficulty in achieving goals (Bardach, Oczlon, Pietschnig, & Lüftenegger, 2020). Therefore, personal factors are defined as an element related to personal decisions and actions that are stimulated by interest, curiosity, personality, job satisfaction, career development, and learning experiences (Nyamwange, 2016). A study by Mncayi (2016) proved the influence of personal factors such as lack of self-confidence can be one of the causes of unemployment.

1.2. Social Factors

Social factors are seen as external forces of society that affect a person's career. There is a positive basic relationship between social factors and career selection and career decision-making that helps an individual entering the labor market (Ajayi, Moosa, & Aloka, 2022). Social factors are emphasised because the material and mental support of the environment and people around is very important for an individual (Wang, Wei, & Chen, 2015). An individual can determine a career path by following footsteps of parents or other family members who are used as role models (Aguiar, Pessoa, Câmara, Perrier, & de Figueiredo, 2009). In addition, young people learn and explore careers through the process of interaction with family, school, community that guides an individual towards a successful career choice (Natalie, 2016). Furthermore, an individual makes career choices based on individual interests and also external factors that include the influence of parents, friends and role models (Afzal Humayon, Raza, Aamir Khan, & Ul Ain Ansari, 2018).

In this study, personal factors are represented by an individual's personal traits consisting of self-efficacy, self-determination and self-esteem while social factors are represented by environmental influences that include parental influence, family socio-economic status and role models. The Figure 1 shows the relationship between personal and social factors towards employability.

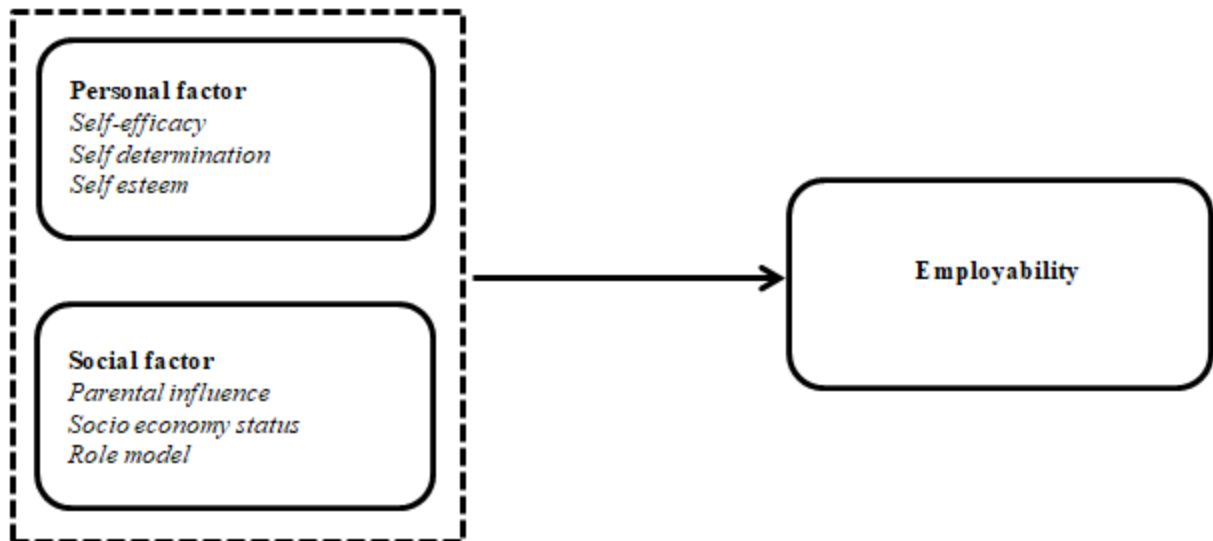


Figure 1. The relationship between personal and social factors towards employability.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1. Research Design

The researcher employed quantitative research in analyzing the relationship between personal and social factors towards employability of youth from marginalised communities. According to Apuke (2017), quantitative research is a research method which is used by the researcher to deal with both quantifying as well as analysis variables with the aim of obtaining the final outcomes.

2.2. Sample and Sampling Method

The population of the study was youth from marginalised communities. Therefore, the researchers selected participants aged between 17 to 25 years old to participate in this study. The researchers selected a total of 1181 participants by using stratified sampling method. It is a probability sampling technique wherein the researchers distribute the entire population into various subgroups or strata, then choose the final participants of the study randomly from the various strata. This sampling method is used to ensure the existence of the key subgroup within the sample.

2.3. Research Instruments

Survey method using questionnaire is used in this research as it is one of the research methods that are widely used in the fields of social science, business, and medicine (Aithal & Aithal, 2020). Hence, a self-developed questionnaire was employed in this study to measure the personal and social factors that influence the employability of the youth from marginalised communities. The questionnaire consists of seven components with 22 items. This scale utilizes the five-point Likert scale, namely: (1) Strongly agree, (2) Agree, (3) Not sure, (4) Disagree (4) and (5) Strongly Disagree in this study.

2.4. Procedure

The researchers gained consent from the participants who volunteered to participate in the study. These questionnaires were administered to the participants who willingly took part in the survey. The questionnaires were distributed, completed, and gathered on the same day. Researchers did not set any time limitation for the participants to complete the questionnaire to create a relaxed and warm atmosphere for the participants to complete the questionnaire. The freedom in completing questionnaires maintains accuracy and reliability of the participants' responses. However, the participants of the study successfully completed the questionnaire within 15 to 20 minutes.

2.5. Data Analysis

Researchers employed the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 27.0 to analyse data. Cronbach's was used to estimate the internal consistency of the instruments. Descriptive statistics were used to give an indication of mean scores on all the variables. The Pearson correlation (r) matrix was used to examine the relationship between the variables in the model. The significance level was set at .05 and .01 for all statistical tests.

Table 1. Reliability analysis of constructs and sub-constructs of the research instrument.

Construct	Sub-construct	Cronbach alpha
Personal factor		0.806
	Self-efficacy	0.732
	Self-determination	0.730
	Self-esteem	0.811
Social factor		0.789
	Role model	0.921
	Parental influence	0.712
	Socio economy status	0.762
Employability		0.741
Overall		0.819

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

3.1. Reliability Analysis

Table 1 shows reliability analysis of constructs and sub-constructs of the research instrument. Based on the reliability analysis, all the constructs and sub-constructs in this research instrument recorded an ideal value of Cronbach Alpha of more than 0.7 as suggested by Nunnally (1978).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the variables.

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation
Self-efficacy	4.06	0.64
Self-determination	4.14	0.58
Self-esteem	4.07	0.64
Role model	3.96	0.74
Parental influence	3.82	0.71
Socio economy status	3.25	0.99
Employability	3.73	0.57

3.2. Descriptive Analysis

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics of the variables. As shown in Table 2, mean and standard deviation of Self-Efficacy scale scores was respectively 4.06 (S.D=0.64), Self-Determination scale was respectively 4.14 (S.D.=0.58), Self Esteem scale was respectively 4.07 (S.D= 0.64), Role Model was respectively 3.96 (S.D=0.74), Parental Influence was respectively 3.82 (S.D=0.71), Socio Economy Status was respectively 3.25 (S.D=0.99) and Employability scale was respectively 3.73(S.D=0.57).

Table 3. Correlation analysis between self-efficacy and employability.

Variables	Employability
Self-efficacy	0.317**

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

3.3. Correlation Analysis

3.3.1. Relationship between Personal Variables on Employability among Youth from Marginalised Community

Table 3 exhibits correlation analysis between self-efficacy and employability. The relationship between self-efficacy and employability among youth was analysed by using Karl’s Pearson’s coefficient of correlation. The correlation analysis indicated a positive correlation of 0.317. The data showed there is a significant positive correlation when level of significance is 0.01. It revealed that there is medium positive correlation between self-efficacy and employability ($r=0.371$, $n=1181$, $p<0.01$). This means if self-efficacy increases, the employability of the individual increases and vice versa. This proved that self-efficacy is one of the significant components in guiding an individual towards employability.

Table 4. Correlation analysis between self-determination and employability.

Variables	Employability
Self-determination	0.364**

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 illustrates the correlation analysis between self-determination and employability. The relationship between self-determination and employability among youth was analysed by using Karl’s Pearson’s coefficient of correlation. The correlation analysis indicated a positive correlation of 0.364. The data showed there is a significant positive correlation when level of significance is 0.01. It revealed that there is medium positive correlation between self-efficacy and employability ($r=0.364$, $n=1181$, $p<0.01$). This means if self-determination increases, the employability of the individual increases and vice versa. This proved that self-determination plays an important role in leading an individual towards employability.

Table 5. Correlation analysis between self-esteem and employability.

Variables	Employability
Self-esteem	0.382**

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 presents correlation analysis between self-esteem and employability. The relationship between self-esteem and employability among youth was analysed by using Karl’s Pearson’s coefficient of correlation. The correlation analysis indicated a positive correlation of 0.382. The data showed there is a significant positive correlation when level of significance is 0.01. It revealed that there is medium positive correlation between self-esteem and employability ($r=0.364$, $n=1181$, $p<0.01$). This means if self-esteem increases, the employability of the individual increases and vice versa. This proved that self-esteem plays an important role in leading an individual towards employability.

Table 6. Correlation analysis between role model and employability.

Variables	Employability
Role model	0.361**

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

3.3.2. Relationship between Social Variables on Employability among Youth from Marginalized Community

Table 6 exhibits correlation analysis between role model and employability. The relationship between role model and employability among youth was analysed by using Karl's Pearson's coefficient of correlation. The correlation analysis indicated a positive correlation of 0.361. The data showed there is a significant positive correlation when level of significance is 0.01. It revealed that there is medium positive correlation between role model and employability ($r=0.361$, $n=1181$, $p<0.01$). This means if the influence of role model increases, the employability of the individual increases and vice versa. This proved that role models play an important role in leading an individual towards employability.

Table 7. Correlation analysis between parental influence and employability.

Variables	Employability
Parental influence	0.290**

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 shows correlation analysis between parental influence and employability. The relationship between parental influence and employability among youth was analysed by using Karl's Pearson's coefficient of correlation. The correlation analysis indicated a positive correlation of 0.290. The data showed there is a significant positive correlation when level of significance is 0.01. It revealed that there is weak positive correlation between role model and employability ($r=0.290$, $n=1181$, $p<0.01$). This means if the parental influences increases, the employability of the individual increases and vice versa. This proved that parental influences is one of the factor that influence employability.

Table 8. Correlation analysis between socioeconomic status and employability.

Variables	Employability
Socio economy status	0.100**

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

Table 8 illustrates correlation analysis between socioeconomic status and employability. The relationship between socioeconomic status and employability among youth was analysed by using Karl's Pearson's coefficient of correlation. The correlation analysis indicated a positive correlation of 0.100. The data showed there is a significant positive correlation when level of significance is 0.01. It revealed that there is weak positive correlation between socioeconomic status and employability ($r=0.100$, $n=1181$, $p<0.01$). This means if the socioeconomic status increases, the employability of the individual increases and vice versa. This proved that socioeconomic status is one of the factors that influences employability.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Influence of Personal Variables on the Employability among Youth from Marginalised Community

Self-determination related to work motivation that influences the relationship between autonomy support and competency support that encompass career participation, job satisfaction and job choice that match career preferences (Mehdipour, Arshadi, & Neisi, 2019). Self-determination provides the ability for an individual to decide on a career (Mamahit, 2014; Munfarida, 2017). Hence, experiencing autonomy in career develops high spirit and determination in assisting an individual to adapt well with the working environment. An increase in a person's level of self-determination can increase their ability in job search and career decision making (Lim & Yang, 2021). Self-determination is one of the agents that motivate an individual to complete a task that can influence an individual's career behaviour (Lim & Yang, 2021). There is a positive association between self-determination and career decision-making (Munfarida, 2017). In the process of career exploration, an individual should have the initiative and motivation that can give the ability in making career decision. Therefore, self-determination is considered as one of

the personal variables that create opportunity to equip oneself with appropriate employability skills which assist an individual to enter and sustain in the labour market.

The results confirmed that the self-efficacy influenced employability of the youth from marginalised communities. It is noted that the self-efficacy was correlated with employability in the model which is supported by previous research (Ahmed, Nawaz, & Rasheed, 2019; Chow, Wong, & Lim, 2019; Rätty et al., 2019; Sultana & Malik, 2020; Tentama & Nur, 2021). Previous studies have proven that self-efficacy is positively related to employability (Ahmed et al., 2019; Liu, Cheng, Hu, Pan, & Zhao, 2020; Zhao, Peng, & Liu, 2021; Zhong, Qian, & Wang, 2020). Self-efficacy has the potential in facilitating an individual to increase the internal and external employability (Sultana & Malik, 2020). It is seen as one of the personal traits that play a significant role in providing skills to an individual in terms of translating theoretical knowledge that gained through education into employability (Quiring, Boys, & Harris, 2017). Self-efficacy and personal development are the factors that perceived as a dominant indicator in selecting employees by most of the organisations (De Cuyper et al., 2014; Dries & De Gieter, 2014; Hazenberg, Lashley, & Denny, 2016; Richard Hazenberg, Seddon, & Denny, 2015). Hence, self-efficacy is classified as one of the aspects of skills that develop employability of an individual (Salman, Yusoff, Salleh, & Abdullah, 2018). Self-efficacy is the belief in the capability which empowers an individual in completing career related tasks and decisions. It is capable in providing strength to the youth from marginalised communities to handle any career related obstacles to enter the world of work successfully. Similarly, the association between self-esteem and employability of the youth from marginalised community are positive and statistically significant, and the findings are in alignment with the previous research (Ahmed et al., 2019; Lo Presti, Törnroos, & Pluviano, 2018). An individual's self-esteem has the potential in influencing career adaptation skills (Ismail, 2017; Tolentino et al., 2014). Therefore, it associates with the career attainment of the employee in an organisation (Neff, Sonnentag, Niessen, & Unger, 2015). Self-esteem has the ability in assisting an individual to sustain in a career (Potgieter & Mawande, 2017). In addition, an individual with higher evaluations of self-competence tends to have greater momentum in searching for a job that creates a path to enter and sustain in the labour market. Self-esteem is directly related to career aspirations (Khampirat, 2020) where self-esteem is a dominant value that helps an individual in forming resilience and promotes the formation of future orientation that indirectly has potential in building career aspirations.

4.2. Influence of Social Variables on Employability among Youth from Marginalised Community

The study also indicated a statistically significant relationship between role models and employability. This finding is aligned with other previous studies that measure the association between role models and employability (Molyn, 2020; Valero, Keller, & Hirschi, 2019). The role model is one of the sources that guides an individual to achieve career goals (Valero et al., 2019). The role model is capable in providing practical advice which can influence employability of an individual (Molyn, 2020). The youth seem to perceive their role models as capable agent in assisting career development by demonstrating appropriate behaviour, providing hope and guidance in the process. Therefore, social support from people in the environment is given focus by youth in making career-related decisions (Angeline, 2021). The lack of role models in the environment of youth from marginalised communities is a challenge in motivating them to be ambitious in career-related aspects. Hence, career-related accomplishment of youth is believed to be influenced by role models. The result also indicated the statistically significant relationship between parental influence and employability. This finding is also supported by other studies (Akosah-Twumasi, Emeto, Lindsay, Tsey, & Malau-Aduli, 2018; Đurišić & Bunjevac, 2017; McQuerrey, 2017). In the millennium era, parental influences can be considered as main aspect that impacts the career behaviour of an individual (Gomes & Deuling, 2019). Emotional and verbal kind of support from parents helps the youth to gain confident in making career decisions (Siti, 2018). Youth heavily depend on parental influences to gain confidence in confronting career related challenges. An important role is played by parents in all aspects of children's lives including career selection (Guan et al., 2018; Michele & Francesco, 2018). In conjunction with this, parental action is very important in

guiding youth's career life (Akosah-Twumasi et al., 2018). The marginalised youth who are still immature in career related matters able to achieve vocational maturity by receiving appropriate encouragement, guidance, and support from their parents. Therefore, the parental influences of youth from marginalised communities indicated as a significant element that is given specific attention by the youth in their career development. Besides that, the findings highlighted that there is a significant relationship between socioeconomic status and employability. This finding aligns with other previous research that indicates the influence of socioeconomic status on career choices, career development, and career attainment (Kay, Shane, & Heckhausen, 2017; Renabeni & Lata, 2017). Educational qualifications and household income that indicate the socioeconomic status of an individual give impact on the career selection (Effiom & Petters, 2019; Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017; Udoh & Sanni, 2012). An individual with a high socioeconomic status is predicted to have high career exploration and consistent goals (Hu, Hood, Creed, & Shen, 2022). So, those individuals hold better confidence in their abilities to complete tasks that related to career decision-making. Parents from high socioeconomic who own sufficient amount resources tend to devote appropriate time and effort in providing guidance and encouragement to children towards employability. Therefore, socioeconomic status is considered as one of the variables that help the youth to explore the career opportunities to enter the labour market.

5. IMPLICATIONS

This study has numerous implications at both the theoretical and practical levels. It offers values and knowledge to other studies that focus on the same theme in other societies. The study provides inputs that can be helpful in the planning and implementation process of education programs that create smooth career paths to the youth. Hence, raising awareness of the personal and social factors that influence the employability by designing and conducting workshops for youth, teachers and parents may indirectly contribute to enhance employability skills of the youth. In other words, the research can be an eye opener and significant reference to manage the unemployment issue of the youth from marginalised communities.

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Institutional Review Board Statement: The Ethical Committee of the University Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia has granted approval for this study (Ref. No. LRGS/2013/UMK-UKM/SS/04).

Transparency: The authors state that the manuscript is honest, truthful, and transparent, that no key aspects of the investigation have been omitted, and that any differences from the study as planned have been clarified. This study followed all writing ethics.

Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Authors' Contributions: Both authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study. Both authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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