

# The Impact of Career-Related Self-Efficacy and Parent-Child Career Goal Congruence on Career Engagement among University Student

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**Abstract.** This study aimed to examine the influence of career – related self-efficacy and parent- child goal congruence as predictors of career engagement among university students. The participants comprised 237 active students (17.7% male, 82.9% female) aged 19-21 (M = 19.23, SD = .97), selected from the Faculty of Psychology at a private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The study adopted a quantitative method with three instruments such as the career-related self-efficacy, the parent-child career goal congruence, and the career engagement scales. Furthermore, the data obtained were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis. The results showed that career – related self – efficacy and parent – child career goal congruence significantly predicted career engagement, accounting for 19.6% of the variance. This suggested that students who possessed higher self-efficacy and stronger congruence between career goal and parental expectation were associated with increased career engagement. In conclusion, the study provided valuable insights for parents and counselors in supporting students' career engagement.

**Keywords:** career-related self-efficacy, parent-child career goal congruence, career engagement

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## Introduction

Adulthood is a transitional period from adolescence, marked by adjustments to new life roles and social expectations. During this stage, individuals are expected to relinquish dependence on parents and begin to develop independence as adults. Among the key developmental tasks is establishing a mature career and employment path (Hurlock, 2012). Specifically, individuals are expected to successfully navigate career development tasks. These include engaging in self-discovery, exploring opportunities, and developing work readiness, as well as making and implementing informed career decisions (Lent & Brown, 2013).

The ability to independently develop a career, including exploration and planning, is closely related to career engagement (Lent & Brown, 2013). This is defined by the degree to which individuals proactively develop careers through various designated behaviors (Hirschi et al., 2014). Career engagement does not only refer to internal self-management strategies but rather to tangible behaviors undertaken to achieve goals. Importantly, it is distinct from desired aspirations and not limited to behaviors aimed solely at promotion or career advancement within an organization.

According to Hirschi et al. (2014), career engagement comprises several key behaviors such as career planning, self-exploration, environmental exploration, networking, and voluntary human capital development. Career planning includes setting goals and developing a future-oriented strategy, while self-exploration entails acquiring personal insights from various sources. Environmental exploration refers to obtaining relevant information from the external environment. Networking behavior plays a crucial role in establishing and maintaining professional relationships, while Voluntary human capital and skill development is defined as participation in self-initiated learning activities. Individuals who show high career engagement actively pursue career goals, integrate self- and environmental insights, as well as participate in developmental activities that support professional development. Previous studies have shown that career engagement is positively associated with academic achievement and career satisfaction among students, as well as job satisfaction among employees (Hirschi et al., 2014; Hirschi & Jaensch, 2015; Nugraheni et al., 2021).

Based on observation, not all students show active engagement in career development. Previous evidence

suggests limited participation in career planning and insufficient preparation for the competencies required in the workforce. Students, particularly those in final semesters, tend to be more passive, less creative, and less productive in developing potential (Kurniawan et al., 2023). Other studies have shown difficulty in determining career goals, due to indecision, limited self-awareness, inadequate understanding of career-related environments, or interpersonal conflicts regarding aspirations (Arjanggi, 2017), signifying a low level of career engagement.

Studies on career engagement in early adulthood have previously explored various internal and external influencing factors. Internal factors include career adaptability (Nugraheni et al., 2021), personality traits, decision-making self-efficacy, burnout, general self-efficacy, and career optimism (Hodkinson et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2023; McIlveen & Perera, 2016; Mulyawati & Saraswati, 2021; Nilforooshan & Salimi, 2016). External factors comprise career interventions, social support, and perceived career barriers (Hirschi, 2011; Hirschi & Freund, 2014; Salma & Suharso, 2023; Wibasari & Kustanti, 2023). However, the underlying drivers of career engagement remain not fully understood (Hirschi & Freund, 2014).

A theoretical framework that explains the complex interaction between individual and contextual factors in career development is the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (Lent & Brown, 2013). According to the theory, career choices and individual development are shaped by three core components such as self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals. SCCT posits that both individual personality, interest, and value) and contextual factors (parental support, socio-economic status, and discrimination) contribute to learning experiences. These experiences are cognitively processed, leading to the formation of self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations. In combination or independently, the two factors influence the development of career interests, which are then translated into specific goals and intentions. Furthermore, these career goals drive individuals to engage in proactive behaviors to achieve desired outcomes.

In line with SCCT, participation in career development, including career engagement, is closely related to self-efficacy, which is defined as an individual's belief in the ability to produce good performance (Bandura, 1991). Building on this perspective, career-related self-efficacy denotes confidence in the ability to attain career goals. This is developed through a continuous process of evaluation of expectations, behaviors, and their consequences (Rigotti et al., 2020). Individuals who possess high levels of career-related self-efficacy tend to approach career challenges in the future with confidence (Schyns

& von Collani, 2002). Previous studies have found that career-related self-efficacy was associated with success, satisfaction, and work readiness (Baiti et al., 2017; Rigotti et al., 2020).

Career-related self-efficacy is shaped by personal experiences, particularly learning gained from the environment and previous successes. It is believed to influence career behavior both directly and indirectly by encouraging the establishment of challenging career goals, regulating action purposefully, exerting significant effort, and persisting in the face of obstacles (Lent & Brown, 2013). Individuals with high levels of career-related self-efficacy possess confidence in attaining career goals. This belief motivates proactive participation in relevant career development activities, sustained effort, and perseverance under difficulty. Previous studies have shown that high levels of career-related self-efficacy are associated with greater engagement (Hirschi et al., 2014).

SCCT also explains that career development is influenced both directly and indirectly by contextual factors, such as parental support, opportunities for skill development, cultural and gender roles, as well as job availability. These factors can either support or hinder individuals in making and implementing career decisions. Contextual influences affect how individuals translate interests into career goals, and then to actions. Perceived environmental barriers reduce the possibility of progression. Meanwhile, supportive conditions facilitate the progression from interests to goals, then actions (Lent & Brown, 2013).

Parental support constitutes a salient contextual factor influencing career behavior, including career engagement. An expression of this support is parent-child career goal congruence. This is defined as the perceived correspondence between a child's career development needs and parental support, comprising compatibility in interests, goals, and career plans (Sawitri et al., 2013). The construct comprises two components such as complementary and supplementary congruence. Complementary congruence refers to the extent to which individuals perceive that needs for exploration, planning, and goal setting are met by parents, alongside perceived parental satisfaction with developmental progress. Supplementary congruence captures perceived similarity between adolescents and parents in career interests, values, plans, and goals (Sawitri et al., 2013). Previous studies have shown that parent-child career goal congruence is related to self-efficacy, aspirations, and exploration (Sawitri & Creed, 2017; Sawitri & Creed, 2021b). Conversely, low levels of congruence are associated with indecision and reduced career engagement (Widyowati et al., 2024).

Parent-child career goal congruence holds particular importance in collectivist cultures, where

parents play a vital role in shaping career paths. [Jungen \(2008\)](#) described multiple pathways through which parents affect career development, including the transmission of values and expectations, as well as the quality of the parent-child relationship. A balanced relationship, characterized by emotional closeness alongside autonomy for exploration, supports the formation of an independent and confident identity. Jungen further emphasized the importance of parental awareness in providing support and opportunities that allow children to explore career options in line with their personal interests and abilities.

In accordance with SCCT, parent-child career goal congruence is a contextual factor believed to support the conversion of career goals into career-related behaviors. Individuals who perceive high levels of congruence experience parental support that corresponds with their career development needs ([Sawitri et al., 2014](#)). This congruence fosters a sense of being understood and accepted ([Sawitri et al., 2013](#)), which encourages active participation in career development activities. Studies have shown that congruence between children and parents in career goals is positively related to exploration behaviors ([Sawitri & Creed, 2021a](#)), while discrepancies in goals can lead to reduced participation in career-related activities ([Widyowati et al., 2023](#)).

Based on the above explanation, the hypotheses proposed in this study are 1) Major hypothesis: Career-related self-efficacy and parent-child career goal congruence had an impact on career engagement, 2) Minor hypothesis 1: Career-related self-efficacy is positively related to career engagement, and 3) Minor hypothesis 2: Parent-child career goal congruence is positively related to career engagement.

In line with SCCT and the gaps identified in previous literature, this study aimed to address the knowledge gap by investigating the relationship between parent-child career goal congruence and career-related self-efficacy in relation to students' career engagement, an area that has not been widely explored. Theoretically, the result contributes to the development of existing knowledge regarding the role of internal and external factors on career engagement. Practically, it offers insights for parents, universities, and career counselors to support and enhance students' career engagement during early adulthood.

## Methods

### Participants

The participants comprised 237 students (17.7% male and 82.9% female) aged between 19 and 21 years ( $M = 19.23$ ,  $SD = .97$ ). The sample size was determined based on Green's (1991) rule of thumb ( $N > 50 + 8m$ ), where  $m$  is the number of independent variables. With two independent variables in this study, a minimum

sample of 66 was required to achieve adequate statistical power. Therefore, the current sample of 237 was considered more than sufficient to ensure the robustness of the results. The participants were selected from the Faculty of Psychology at a private university in Yogyakarta using a non-probability convenience sampling method. Following the reporting standards and ethical guidelines of [Appelbaum et al. \(2018\)](#), informed consent was provided. Participation was entirely voluntary and anonymous, ensuring full transparency in the reporting of participant characteristics.

### Instrument

The study adopted a survey method, using scales as data collection instruments. All scales applied a 6-point Likert format (1 = Strongly disagree to 6 = Strongly agree), unless otherwise specified. Items were summed to obtain a total score, where higher values signified greater levels of the construct being measured.

### Career Engagement Scale

The Career Engagement Scale was developed by [Hirschi et al. \(2014\)](#) and translated into Indonesian using the back-translation method, comprising two experts who are fluent in Bahasa and English. This translation aimed to ensure content accuracy as well as linguistic and semantic precision. Content validity of the Indonesian version was evaluated by experts in educational psychology and career development, who confirmed that all items were relevant, clear, and culturally appropriate. The scale was based on five aspects of career engagement, namely career planning, self-exploration, networking, exploration of the career environment, as well as voluntary human capital and skill development. Furthermore, it consists of 9 items designed to assess the extent of an individual's career engagement. An example of the item is: "To what extent have you actively planned your future career?" In CFA, the 9-items of the original scale loaded onto a single factor, with loadings from .41 to .85 ([Hirschi et al., 2014](#)). The scale showed good reliability for this scale ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and supported validity through expected relationships with established measures of career self-exploration, environmental exploration, planning, and networking.

In the Indonesian version, construct validity was examined using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The single-factor model provided an acceptable fit to the data ( $\chi^2(16) = 36.45$ ,  $p = .003$ ; CFI = .964; TLI = .938; RMSEA = .077; SRMR = .049). All indicators loaded significantly on the latent construct ( $p < .001$ ), with standardized loadings from .434 to .746, suggesting adequate representation. The scale showed satisfactory internal consistency ( $\omega = .755$ ;  $\alpha = .832$ ), and item analysis supported measurement quality, with

corrected item–total correlations ranging from .53 to .72.

### Career-related Self-efficacy Scale

Career-related self-efficacy was measured using the Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale, originally developed by Schyns and von Collani (2002) and modified by Akmal (2023) for use among Indonesian student populations. An example of the item is: “I will be able to achieve the goals I have set for my own career.” The original scale showed good reliability ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and support for validity alongside positive correlations with general and work-related self-efficacy (Schyns & von Collani, 2002). Reported a Cronbach’s alpha of .85 for the Indonesian version. In the current study, the construct validity of the Indonesian version of the Career-related Self-Efficacy Scale was reexamined using CFA. The results supported a single-factor structure with good model fit ( $\chi^2(16) = 21.42, p = .163$ ; CFI = .988; TLI = .979; RMSEA = .040, 90% CI [.000, .079]; SRMR = .031). All items loaded significantly on the latent factor ( $p < .001$ ), with standardized factor loadings ranging from .51 to .65. The scale showed good internal consistency ( $\omega = .758$ ;  $\alpha = .812$ ). Item analysis further signified good discrimination, with corrected item–total correlations ranging from .54 to .71.

### Parent-child Career Goal Congruence Scale

Parent-child career goal congruence was measured using the Indonesian version of the Parent-Child Career Goal Congruence Scale, which was developed and previously used for Indonesian student samples (Sawitri et al., 2013). This scale assessed the perceived compatibility between the interests, orientations, and career goals of children and their parents. An example of its item is: “My parents support my career plans.” Sawitri et al. (2013) reported that the scale showed good construct validity, with factor loadings ranging from .37 to .84, as well as high internal consistency reliability ( $\alpha = .89$ ). In this study, the scale was re-tested through CFA. The model showed acceptable fit to the data ( $\chi^2(45) = 105.52, p < .001$ ; CFI = .943; TLI = .917; RMSEA = .079; SRMR = .071). All items loaded significantly on the latent construct ( $p < .001$ ), with standardized loadings ranging from .34 to .88. The scale also featured satisfactory internal consistency ( $\alpha = .844$ ;  $\omega = .824$ ). An item showed a relatively lower loading (.34) but was retained because it remained statistically significant and conceptually relevant to the construct. Analysis of the item further signified adequate discrimination, with corrected item–total correlations ranging from .50 to .68.

### Procedure

The scales were distributed directly to students during the class session in printed (hard copy) format, and the procedure was conducted offline. Before the

distribution, the study obtained permission from the relevant course lecturer and approval to distribute the scale at the beginning or end of the class. Participants then completed the questionnaire collectively under supervision. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and data were collected anonymously to ensure confidentiality. The participants received small tokens of appreciation in the form of souvenirs for their engagement.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0 for Windows. CFA was conducted for each scale to assess construct validity and confirm that the items adequately represent the intended constructs. Total scale scores (sum scores) were then computed and used for regression analysis. All items were measured on 5-point Likert scales and treated as approximately continuous variables. Based on empirical evidence, parametric statistics, including regression, can be applied to Likert data even with small sample sizes, unequal variances, or non-normal distributions, without risking invalid conclusions. The data were technically ordinal, and the use of sum scores does not fully account for measurement error. Future studies should consider adopting factor score regression (FSR/CSR) to more rigorously account for latent variable structure and measurement error. Before the hypothesis testing, assumptions of normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were examined.

Table 1.  
Results of the central hypothesis test

Dimension	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Sig.	F	Description
Career-related self-efficacy and parent-child career goal congruence on career engagement	.44	.19	.001	28.44	Significant

Table 2.  
Results of the minor hypothesis test

Dimension	Partial (r)	Sig. F	F	Description
Career-related self-efficacy and career engagement	.29	.001	.181	Significant
Parent-child career goal congruence and career engagement	.40	.001	.179	Significant

## Results and Discussion

### Results

The results of assumption testing showed that the data met the necessary requirements for linear regression

analysis, in accordance with the reporting standards of Appelbaum et al. (2018). The normality test conducted on unstandardized residuals using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method produced a value of .39 ( $p = .20$ ), confirming that the data were normally distributed. Linearity tests showed a linear relationship between career engagement with career-related self-efficacy ( $p = .001$ ) and parent-child career goal congruence ( $p = .001$ ). However, both showed significant deviations from linearity, with  $p$ -values .013 and .015, respectively. Multicollinearity was not a concern, as evidenced by a Tolerance value of .942 and a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) of 1.062 for both independent variables. Following these diagnostics, a multiple linear regression was performed, reflecting a significant relationship among the variables ( $F = 28.44$ ,  $p < .01$ ) with an R-squared value of .196. This suggested that the predictors account for 19.6% of the variance in career engagement.

Based on Table 1, the results of the multiple linear regression analysis showed that the regression coefficients for career-related self-efficacy, parent-child career goal congruence, and career engagement were  $R = .442$ ;  $F = 28.44$ ;  $R^2 = .196$ ;  $p < .001$ . This showed that the major hypothesis was supported, suggesting a significant relationship between the variables. Together, career-related self-efficacy and parent-child career goal congruence contributed 19.6% to the variance in career engagement.

The data analysis further showed a significant relationship between career-related self-efficacy and career engagement, as well as between parent-child career goal congruence and career engagement among students. The detailed results are presented in Table 2.

As shown in Table 2, based on the results of the partial correlation test between career-related self-efficacy and career engagement, a partial correlation coefficient of  $r = .29$ ,  $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < .001$  was obtained. This suggested a positive relationship between career-related self-efficacy and career engagement among students. In the relationship between parent-child career goal congruence and career engagement, a partial correlation coefficient of  $r = .40$ ,  $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < .001$  was obtained, implying a positive relationship.

## Discussion

The study aimed to examine the relationship between career-related self-efficacy and parent-child career goal congruence with students' career engagement. The results confirmed a significant relationship, with both predictors jointly contributing 19.6%. This suggests that students who possess strong confidence in their career-related abilities and perceive congruence between career goals and parental expectations tend to engage more actively in career development. The results are in line with the SCCT proposed by Lent and

Brown (2013), who posits that self-efficacy beliefs influence the ability to convert interests into goals and goals into career behaviors. Furthermore, congruence of goals with parental expectations can serve as a contextual support that enhances career engagement.

Career-related self-efficacy and parent-child career goal congruence together accounted for a significant portion of the variance in career engagement. However, the overall explained variance ( $R^2 = .196$ ) is relatively modest. This result showed that career engagement is a complex construct shaped by various factors beyond individual psychological resources and family expectations. According to SCCT (Lent & Brown, 2013), contextual factors, including perceived labor market conditions, institutional support, access to career-related opportunities, and broader socio-economic barriers, can explain a significant portion of the unexplained variance. Relational influences outside the family, such as peers and teachers, alongside individual factors such as career adaptability, outcome expectations, and perceived barriers, further impact students' participation in career-related activities (Owusu et al., 2018). The current results emphasize the significant but limited influence of self-efficacy and parental congruence within the wider ecological framework of career development.

The results confirmed the first minor hypothesis by identifying a positive relationship between career-related self-efficacy and career engagement. Students who are confident in their abilities and maintain the belief that career obstacles can be overcome tend to be more engaged in their careers, such as by developing networks and planning. According to Lent and Brown (2013), career-related self-efficacy influences behavior in four ways. These include setting challenging goals, directing behavior, exerting great effort, and showing resilience in facing difficulties. Individuals with high career-related self-efficacy set challenging career goals, which promotes greater involvement in career development. Strong efficacy beliefs enable purposeful regulation of behavior toward goal attainment and encourage sustained effort. The individuals engage more actively in career planning and network building, undertake independent self-development, and explore diverse career opportunities. They also maintain persistence when encountering obstacles, which further supports continued engagement in self-exploration, environmental exploration, skill development, and networking activities. The results are in line with a previous study conducted by Ibrahim et al. (2023), where a higher level of career self-efficacy leads to greater ability to explore the career world. Individuals with strong efficacy tend to be more confident in

identifying their abilities, interests, and potential in making career choices.

The results are in line with the study of [Hirschi et al. \(2014\)](#), who stated that confidence in the ability to achieve career goals influences the establishment of clear goals. This encourages students to become more proactive in engaging in various relevant and challenging development activities. Students believe in self-abilities, support the attainment of career goals and effective management of future challenges. This confidence promotes active participation in independent career development activities, including planning, exploration, and network building. Career-related self-efficacy also helps individuals remain resilient in facing various challenges ([Lent & Brown, 2013](#)). Students with high career-related self-efficacy persist in the face of difficulties and maintain confidence in the ability to discover solutions ([Schyns & von Collani, 2002](#)). This belief encourages individuals to engage more deeply in various career-related activities.

The results support the second minor hypothesis, which proposed a positive relationship between parent-child career goal congruence and career engagement. Individuals who perceive correspondence between career needs and parental support, as well as compatibility between parental expectations and their own abilities and goals, show greater engagement in career development, including self-development activities and network building. This result is in line with ([Tynkkynen et al., 2010](#)), who emphasized the role of parents in shaping career goals and providing guidance through the process of achievement.

Previous study showed that parental role in shaping children's future career goals contributes to active engagement in career planning ([Sawitri et al., 2021](#)). In contrast, limited congruence between parental and child career goals may generate stress. This led to difficulties in decision-making and reduced engagement, driven by lower self-confidence and perceived lack of parental support ([Widyowati et al., 2023, 2024](#)).

The results showed that parent-child career goal congruence contributes more to career engagement than career-related self-efficacy. Although self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to manage professional tasks, career engagement entails sustained behavioral investment, including exploration, preparation, and participation in career-related activities ([Hirschi & Freund, 2014](#)). Maintaining the engagement requires not only self-confidence but also a supportive relational environment. In this context, congruence between young adults' career goals and parental expectations may strengthen engagement by providing emotional support and reinforcing the legitimacy of career-related actions. This interpretation

is consistent with evidence underscoring the role of relational support in sustaining career behaviors ([Keller & Whiston, 2008](#)).

The pattern tends to be more pronounced in collectivist cultures, including Indonesia, where young adults' career aspirations and decisions are often shaped by family expectations. In these contexts, engagement in career-related activities depends not only on perceived ability but also on parental acceptance and support. Prior studies have shown that agreement with parents is associated with greater willingness to invest effort in career development within collectivist settings ([Chasanah & Salim, 2019](#); [Sawitri & Creed, 2021a](#)). Accordingly, parent-child career goal congruence may facilitate implementation, which may account for its stronger association with career engagement compared to career-related self-efficacy. This result underscores the importance of considering family context alongside individual psychological factors in understanding career engagement.

In collectivist cultures, where parents play an important role in career choices, children also have an obligation to obey their parents' preferences. [Ma and Yeh \(2005\)](#) stated that in Asia, individual career goals are not solely personal decisions but are also shaped by family roles. The result emphasized the substantial role of family in children's career engagement. The extent to which individuals feel supported or hindered in achieving professional goals can influence the efforts to realize aspirations. When parents are included in career planning, it can contribute to the attainment of future goals. A high congruence between the child's and parents' career goals can enhance engagement as students' perceived sense of support and reduce conflict over decision-making ([Dietrich & Salmela-Aro, 2013](#)). Students who feel that their career goals are in line with parental expectations are more motivated to participate in career-related activities such as completing class assignments, attending workshops or courses, participating in an internship, a part-time job, or volunteering opportunities. Previous study showed that support from the environment, including congruence between career goals and parental expectations, can serve as a major driver for the higher level of young adults' career engagement ([Tynkkynen et al., 2010](#); [Wibasari & Kustanti, 2023](#)).

In addition, the sample of this study was dominated by female participants, a factor that should be taken into account when interpreting the results. Previous investigations suggest that gender differences in career development are influenced by cultural norms and family expectations, and do not represent a consistent pattern across various contexts. For example, [Wang et al. \(2023\)](#) reported that male students tended to receive more family and social

support than females in China. However, the difference was not statistically significant, suggesting gradual progress toward gender equality. In the current study, the strong association between parent-child career goal congruence and career engagement may reflect a combination of the collectivist cultural context and the specific characteristics of the sample, rather than a simple gender-based explanation. Therefore, the results need to be interpreted carefully, and future studies with more balanced gender representation are needed to further examine the relationships.

The present study suggested that career-related self-efficacy and parent-child career goal congruence were associated with higher levels of career engagement among university students. The results carry important implications for parents and career counselors who support students in strengthening career engagement and attaining career goals. Efforts directed toward improving career-related self-efficacy and increasing parent-child career goal congruence may contribute to greater participation in career-related activities. Parents may support career development by providing positive encouragement, facilitating learning through experience, acknowledging achievements, and serving as career role models, all of which strengthen career-related self-efficacy. Career engagement can also increase when parents and children develop greater agreement regarding career goals and expectations. This agreement is promoted through open communication, awareness of diverse career options, and the provision of informational or practical support that encourages independent participation in career planning, networking, and professional development activities. Career counselors can further assist students by promoting constructive communication between parents and children regarding aspirations. Counselors may also encourage parents to become more receptive to their children's career preferences while helping to express aspirations in ways that promote parental understanding and support. Furthermore, counselors may strengthen students' career-related self-efficacy by encouraging experiential learning, promoting the identification of suitable role models, and helping to recognize strengths and accomplishments.

This study has several limitations that need to be addressed. First, the sample was relatively homogeneous, as it was obtained from a single department at the university, which limits the generalizability of the results. Future investigations should use broader samples from various departments or universities or include participants with different characteristics, such as emerging adults who are not enrolled in higher education, the working class, or students from individualistic (non-collectivist) cultures, to enhance the generalizability. Second, the

sample had an unequal gender composition, with more female than male participants, which may have influenced the results. Previous studies have shown that gender roles and societal expectations regarding gender can influence career self-efficacy, particularly among women (Betz & Hackett, 1981). Therefore, future studies should aim for balanced gender representation. Third, further investigation should examine the roles of other variables that may mediate or moderate the relationship between career-related self-efficacy and parent-child career goal congruence with career engagement. This study used a cross-sectional design, with data collected at a single point in time, which limits the ability to confirm causal relationships between variables. Finally, while CFA was conducted to ensure construct validity of the scales, multiple linear regression analyses were performed using sum scores, which do not fully account for measurement error. FSR/CSR was not conducted, and this limitation should be addressed in future investigations to more rigorously account for latent variable structure and measurement error.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, this study contributed to the existing literature by confirming the combined influence of career-related self-efficacy and parent-child career goal congruence on career engagement. Students' belief in the ability to achieve career goals and the congruence of career goals with parental expectations were discovered to support active career engagement. Among the two predictors, parent-child career goal congruence played a greater role. These results offered practical insights for parents and counselors aiming to enhance students' career exploration by fostering both self-efficacy and goal congruence.

### Declaration

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### Author Contributions

Conceptualization: [AW]; Methodology: [RTR]; Data collection and investigation: [RTR]; Data analysis: [RTR]; Writing—Original Draft Preparation: [RTR]; Writing—Review & Editing: [AW]; Supervision: [AW].

### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have inappropriately influenced or biased the work presented in this paper.

### Use of Artificial Intelligence

The authors declare that QuillBot, an AI-assisted language tool, was used solely for paraphrasing and language editing to improve the clarity and readability of the manuscript. All scientific content, data analysis, interpretations, and conclusions were developed, reviewed, and approved by the authors, who take full responsibility for the content of this manuscript

### Ethical Clearance

This study was conducted with permission from Ahmad Dahlan University (Research Permission Letter No. [F.4/2060/D.66/XI/2024]). Prior to data collection, all participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided written informed consent. Participation was voluntary, and the confidentiality and anonymity of participants were maintained throughout the study.

### Data Availability

The datasets generated and analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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