

THE EFFECT OF SELF-EFFICACY AND CAREER MOTIVATION ON GENERATION Z'S WORK READINESS IN BEKASI CITY

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the influence of self-efficacy and career motivation on the workforce preparedness of Generation Z individuals residing in Bekasi City. Adopting a quantitative framework with a descriptive-explanatory approach, the study employed a non-probability purposive sampling strategy, yielding a sample of 97 respondents calculated using the Lemeshow formula. Primary data were gathered through a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire and subsequently subjected to multiple linear regression analysis. The analysis demonstrates that self-efficacy has a notably positive and statistically meaningful effect on work readiness. Similarly, career motivation exhibits a positive and significant impact, with a relatively stronger contribution than self-efficacy. When assessed collectively, the two independent variables exert a substantial simultaneous influence on work readiness, reflected in an R^2 coefficient of 0.857—indicating that the model accounts for 85.7% of the total variance. The practical implications highlight the necessity of reinforcing intrinsic psychological attributes, namely self-efficacy, and career motivation, to boost the employability of Gen Z. Hence, academic institutions should design educational programs that prioritize soft skills development and structured career planning, ensuring that graduates are better equipped to meet labor market demands.

Keywords: self-efficacy; career motivation; work readiness; generation z

INTRODUCTION

Developments in the world of work during the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and Society 5.0 currently demand a workforce that not only possesses academic competencies but is also supported by appropriate work behavior. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) for 2025 on the Open Unemployment Rate (OUR) by educational background shows that vocational high school graduates have the highest OUR at 8.63%, followed by

general high school graduates at 6.88%, bachelor's degree holders at 5.39%, and diploma holders at 4.31%. This highlights the reality that unemployment rates among educated groups remain relatively high, posing a challenge for human resource development.

Furthermore, Generation Z is expected to dominate the working-age population in the coming years and will need to navigate the difficulties of a changing employment landscape. However, Generation Z's proximity to the

workforce has not yet been accompanied by adequate work readiness (Karimah et al., 2025).

Work readiness represents the capabilities, expertise, and mindsets enabling new alumni to add value toward achieving company objectives. Work readiness is essential for producing high-quality prospective workers (Suniyarti et al., 2025). This makes a thorough grasp of the elements driving career readiness essential, particularly for Generation Z, which is currently in a transitional phase toward the workforce and will dominate the labor force in the future.

Past research has regularly shown that psychological aspects, particularly motivation and self-efficacy, are crucial for boosting the work readiness of students and future employees (Novita, 2023; Nursyafaah et al., 2026; Ramadhani et al., 2025; S. Fatimah et al., 2021). However, the majority of the studies conceptualize motivation as a general construct and do not specifically investigate career motivation. Thus, there is little empirical evidence about the unique contribution of career motivation to work readiness. Current literature also shows a few other gaps. To begin with, prior investigations mainly looked at narrow educational categories, like

vocational high school students or college students, thereby limiting the ability to generalize the findings to Generation Z as a broader workforce group. Second, many studies examine self-efficacy or career motivation separately, rather than simultaneously, even though these two psychological constructs have the potential to influence one another in shaping work readiness. Third, many previous studies have examined motivation as a broad construct, such as learning motivation or work motivation, rather than focusing specifically on career motivation. Consequently, empirical evidence regarding the role of career motivation as a distinct psychological construct in predicting work readiness remains limited. Fourth, the availability of empirical evidence from highly competitive metropolitan labor markets, such as Bekasi City, remains limited, even though these areas present specific employment challenges for Generation Z.

This paper intends to address these gaps by looking at how career motivation and self-efficacy together impact the work readiness of Generation Z in Bekasi City. This research offers a deeper understanding of how psychological elements affect the work readiness of Generation Z by examining career

motivation specifically rather than general motivation. These findings should enrich existing research by demonstrating how career motivation and self-efficacy together help Generation Z transition from school to the workplace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work Readiness

Work readiness refers to the core competencies, information, and behaviors that allow people to assist productively in reaching (Suniyarti et al., 2025). Work readiness is essential for producing a high-quality workforce. Indicators of work readiness, according to (Adelia et al., 2025) include skills, knowledge, understanding, and personal attributes.

Work readiness acts as a crucial element in deciding graduate employment potential, since it connects individuals who hold high levels of work readiness are generally better equipped to handle job responsibilities, adapt to organizational culture, and demonstrate professional work competencies.

Multiple papers highlight that career readiness depends on both intrinsic and extrinsic elements, including psychological aspects such as self-efficacy, motivation, and competence. Empirical evidence suggests that self-

efficacy contributes significantly to work readiness, although it may interact with other factors in shaping overall readiness (Annisa et al., 2021).

Furthermore, career preparedness depends on soft skills like problem-solving, adaptability, and communication alongside technical expertise, all of which are essential for success in today's work environment.

Self-Efficacy

Many define self-efficacy as a person's confidence in their capacity to handle challenges and complete tasks effectively, shaping the way they manage job-related scenarios (Hariyati et al., 2022).

In terms of career development, this psychological trait is generally viewed as a foundational factor that aids individuals as they get ready for the workforce. People possessing strong self-belief usually show higher capacity to build relevant skills, take proactive steps, and remain determined when facing hurdles during the shift from school to employment.

Empirical studies show that self-efficacy significantly influences work readiness. To illustrate, research conducted by (Innab et al., 2024) revealed that professional readiness is strongly

affected by self-belief, which acts as a mediating variable that links skills to career preparedness.

Furthermore, people with strong self-efficacy usually show enhanced preparation for entering the job market, alongside greater resilience in finishing tasks, deeper initiative, and higher confidence in their own capabilities. Self-efficacy motivates individuals to take action, exert greater effort, and remain persistent when facing challenges, thereby enhancing their readiness for work (Tiyanti et al., 2025). These results emphasize that besides acting as a direct predictor for employment readiness, self-efficacy also strengthens other supporting factors.

People holding low self-efficacy often encounter uncertainty, feel insecure, and display greater anxiety during tough situations (Wijaya, 2024). Conversely, those possessing high self-belief maintain deep trust in their skills, manage to push through tough times, and adjust better to employment expectations. According to (S. Fatimah et al., 2021), measures of self-efficacy involve the scale or difficulty level of assignments, the breadth of skills, and conviction strength. Previous research has shown that self-belief heavily influences professional preparedness

(Novita, 2023; Puspitasari, 2024; Wiharja et al., 2020).

Career Motivation

A primary element prompting people to take action is motivation (Adelia et al., 2025). In a career context, career motivation is the internal motivation that affects the behavior and career choice of an individual. This is demonstrated in three key dimensions: career insight, professional identity, and career resilience. Career insight is the knowledge of one's career goals and planning; career identity is the degree to which a career is an important part of one's self-identity; and career resilience is one's ability to adapt and persevere when facing challenges during the course of career development (Lathifah, 2022).

According to several studies, career motivation is of great importance in preparing people for the profession. People with a strong motivation to succeed are more likely to have a clearer goal, a stronger sense of their professional identity and a greater capacity to adjust to changes and difficulties in the job. This puts them in a better position to transition into the professional workforce (C. Silvester et al., 2023; Fatimah et al., 2022).

RESEARCH METHOD

A quantitative approach utilizing an explanatory design along with descriptive-analytic methods is applied in this research. The chosen explanatory framework seeks to clarify how independent and dependent variables relate to one another by testing pre-determined hypotheses (Yuliawati & Oktavianti, 2024).

Generation Z individuals living in Bekasi City serve as the population for this research. To select participants who meet specific, pre-established requirements aligned with the research goals, a purposive sampling technique within a non-probability approach was adopted. Inclusion criteria were: (1) being a member of Generation Z, (2) residing in Bekasi City, and (3) being in the transition to the workforce, e.g., recent college graduates or students in their final academic year

Because the exact size of the population could not be determined, the minimum number of participants required was computed using the Lemeshow formula (Nuranafi & Nurhakim, 2025) as follows:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 x P(1 - P)}{d^2}$$

Notes:

n = Sample size

Z = 90% confidence level = 1.645

P = maximum estimate of 10% = 0.10

d2 = 5% error limit = 0.05

Based on the application of this formula, the minimum required sample is:

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{Z^2 x P(1 - P)}{d^2} \\ n &= \frac{Z^2 x P(1 - P)}{d^2} \\ &= 97.4169 \\ &= 97 \end{aligned}$$

Consequently, a final sample of 97 respondents participated in this project.

Gathering data involved distributing web-based questionnaires to participants matching the inclusion criteria, alongside a thorough literature review conducted to establish a solid theoretical framework. The specific indicators utilized to measure variables in the research instrument were modified from previously validated and reliable instruments. Self-efficacy (X_1) The magnitude, generality, and strength dimensions of self-efficacy (X_1) were adopted from (S. Fatimah et al., 2021). Based on the adaptation of Lathifah (2022), career motivation (X_2) was operationalized through three main dimensions: career resilience, career identity, and career insight. Work readiness (Y) is measured by the dimensions of skills, knowledge,

understanding and personal attributes which was adapted from (Adelia et al., 2025). To ensure the survey aligned with the specific background of Generation Z in Bekasi City, every questionnaire item underwent linguistic translation to fit the research context while maintaining the original conceptual meaning of each indicator.

The measurement tool comprised thirteen items evaluating work readiness, alongside nine items each for career motivation and self-efficacy. A 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree).

Prior to primary data gathering, a preliminary trial was conducted involving participants who shared comparable traits with the target population. This pilot's study aimed to check the suitability, comprehensibility, and clarity of the survey questions. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation technique was subsequently applied to evaluate instrument validity. Survey items achieved validity if their computed correlation coefficient (r-value) exceeded the r-table value, or if the significance value fell below 0.05. To determine the instrument's reliability, internal consistency was evaluated via Cronbach's

Alpha, where a coefficient value of 0.60 or above represented an acceptable level.

IBM SPSS Statistics version 27 was utilized to process the research data. Initial procedures involved running descriptive statistics, followed by instrument quality checks through reliability and validity testing. To confirm the regression model satisfied all required prerequisites, classical assumption evaluations including heteroscedasticity, multicollinearity, and normality tests were executed.

A multiple linear regression analysis was then conducted to evaluate how career motivation and self-efficacy influence the work readiness of Generation Z in Bekasi City. These proposed hypotheses were tested using partial and simultaneous tests of significance. To evaluate the partial impact of individual independent variables on the dependent factor, a t-test was employed, whereas the combined influence of all independent variables was measured using an F-test. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was computed to gauge how much variation in work readiness could be explained by these predictors. The execution of all statistical evaluations adhered to a 5% significance threshold ($p < 0.05$).

Research Hypothesis

Guided by prior literature and theoretical frameworks, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

H1: Self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on work readiness of Generation Z in Bekasi City.

H2: Career motivation has a positive and significant effect on work readiness of Generation Z in Bekasi City.

H3: Self-efficacy and career motivation simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on the work readiness of Generation Z in Bekasi City.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Classical Assumption Test

To evaluate how career motivation and self-efficacy impact the work readiness of Generation Z in Bekasi City, this study utilized a multiple linear regression framework. Prior to running this model, classical assumption diagnostics were performed to confirm that the dataset satisfied all required statistical parameters. These checks specifically encompassed heteroscedasticity, multicollinearity, and normality test.

Evaluating the distribution of the regression model's residuals was achieved through a normality check. Utilizing a

significance criteria of 0.05, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test examined residual normality. An unfulfilled normality assumption is indicated if the resulting significance value drops below 0.05, showing that the errors deviate from a normal distribution.

The results of the normality test are presented in Table 1.

Table. 1 Normality Test Result

Model	Test Method	Sig
Regression	Kolmogorov–Smirnov	0.057

Applying the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method allowed for the verification of normality regarding the regression residuals. Table 1 indicates a significance value of 0.057, exceeding the baseline alpha level of 0.05. Consequently, the errors follow a normal distribution, confirming that the normality prerequisite has been successfully met.

Table 2. Multicollinearity Test Results

Tolerance	VIF
0.346	2.887
0.346	2.887

Examining the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance scores allowed for the evaluation of multicollinearity. As presented in Table 2, both career motivation and self-efficacy shared a tolerance value of 0.346,

comfortably exceeding the 0.10 minimum limit. Furthermore, the recorded VIF value of 2.887 remained well below the maximum allowed threshold of 10. These outcomes demonstrate the absence of multicollinearity among the predictors, indicating the regression framework complies with the multicollinearity requirement.

Table 3. Heteroscedasticity Test Results

Variable	Sig.
Self-efficacy (X1)	0.473
Career motivation (X2)	0.333

The Glejser approach was employed to regress absolute residual values on independent variables to test for heteroscedasticity. The outcomes in Table 3 reveal significance p-values of 0.333 for career motivation and 0.473 for self-efficacy. Since both parameters exceed the standard 0.05 significance benchmark, no heteroscedasticity is present within the model. This satisfies the homoscedasticity condition, validating the suitability of the regression framework for subsequent testing.

Validity Tests

Instrument validity was assessed through the Pearson Product-Moment correlation method, which matches the score of individual survey items against

the aggregate score of the corresponding variable. An item achieves validity if its computed correlation coefficient (r-calculated) surpasses the critical benchmark threshold ($r\text{-table} = 0.200$; $n = 97$; $\alpha = 0.05$).

Table 4. Validity Test Results Self-efficacy (X1)

Indicators	r-calculation	r-table	Result
X1.1	0.655	0.200	Valid
X1.2	0.827	0.200	Valid
X1.3	0.877	0.200	Valid
X1.4	0.833	0.200	Valid
X1.5	0.872	0.200	Valid
X1.6	0.866	0.200	Valid
X1.7	0.826	0.200	Valid
X1.8	0.786	0.200	Valid
X1.9	0.765	0.200	Valid

Table 5. Validity Test Results Career Motivation (X2)

Indicators	r-calculation	r-table	Result
X2.1	0.815	0.200	Valid
X2.2	0.847	0.200	Valid
X2.3	0.878	0.200	Valid
X2.4	0.851	0.200	Valid
X2.5	0.793	0.200	Valid
X2.6	0.840	0.200	Valid
X2.7	0.876	0.200	Valid
X2.8	0.882	0.200	Valid
X2.9	0.884	0.200	Valid

Table 6. Validity Test Results Work readiness (Y)

Indicators	r-calculation	r-table	Result
Y1	0.836	0.200	Valid
Y2	0.796	0.200	Valid
Y3	0.863	0.200	Valid
Y4	0.864	0.200	Valid
Y5	0.876	0.200	Valid
Y6	0.840	0.200	Valid
Y7	0.909	0.200	Valid
Y8	0.899	0.200	Valid
Y.9	0.866	0.200	Valid
Y.10	0.875	0.200	Valid
Y.11	0.883	0.200	Valid
Y.12	0.868	0.200	Valid
Y.13	0.845	0.200	Valid

Based on the data in Tables 4 to 6, every indicator for self-efficacy (X1) yielded an r-calculated score between 0.655 and 0.877, exceeding the baseline r-table standard of 0.200. Similarly, r-calculated coefficients for the career motivation variable (X2) spanned from 0.793 to 0.884, while work readiness (Y) indicators demonstrated values between 0.796 and 0.909. Since every computed correlation coefficient surpassed the required r-table threshold, all measurement items successfully fulfilled the criteria for validity.

These outcomes indicate that the questionnaire items possess the capacity to accurately evaluate each specific construct (self-efficacy, career motivation, and work readiness). Thus, all measurement items are considered valid and can be retained for further analyses. Furthermore, this broad indicator validity confirms that the survey maintains adequate construct validity, making it appropriate for deeper statistical steps including multiple linear regression analysis, classical assumption testing, and reliability evaluations.

Reliability Test

Evaluating the stability and consistency of the research instrument

across all variables was achieved through reliability testing. The assessment relied on the Cronbach's Alpha metric, where a minimum Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.60 served as the benchmark to establish instrument reliability.

Table 7. Reliability Test Results

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	Description
Self-efficacy	0.934	Reliable
Career motivation	0.953	Reliable
Work readiness	0.971	Reliable

As presented in Table 7, the recorded Cronbach's Alpha coefficients reached 0.971 for the work readiness variable, 0.953 for career motivation, and 0.934 for self-efficacy. These outcomes comfortably exceed the 0.60 standard threshold, demonstrating that all three measures possess a strong degree of reliability.

Multiple Linear Regression Test

To evaluate how the independent predictors, career motivation and self-efficacy relate to the dependent variable of work readiness, a multiple linear regression analysis was executed. The findings from this statistical procedure are detailed in Table 8.

Table 8. Multiple Linear Regression

Variables	Parameter Coefficient Value
Constants	3.461
Self-efficacy	0.481
Career motivation	0.916

From this calculation, the formulated multiple linear regression equation is presented below:

$$Y=3.461+0.481X_1+0.916X_2$$

According to the regression formula, the constant baseline value of 3.461 represents the anticipated score for work readiness if self-efficacy and career motivation are both fixed at zero. Furthermore, the regression coefficient for self-efficacy stands at 0.481, indicating that every one unit rise in self-efficacy corresponds to a 0.481-unit improvement in work readiness, assuming career motivation remains unchanged (*ceteris paribus*).

For career motivation, the regression coefficient is 0.916, signifying that a single unit increase in motivation corresponds to a 0.916 increase in work readiness when self-efficacy scores are held steady. Both independent variables have positive regression weights; they show a direct positive relationship with the dependent outcome. Consequently, greater levels of career motivation and

self-efficacy are linked to enhanced work readiness.

Hypothesis Testing, T-Test (Partial)

A partial t-test framework was applied to evaluate the standalone influence of career motivation and self-efficacy on the dependent measure of work readiness. Table 9 presents the detailed findings from this evaluation.

Table 9. Partial T-test Results

Variables	t-count	Sig.
Self-efficacy (X1)	4.903	<0.001
Career motivation (X2)	9.686	<0.001

Statistical evaluation indicates that self-efficacy obtained a t-value of 4.903 along with a significance value below 0.001. Because this significance level falls short of the pre-established threshold ($\alpha = 0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected, leading to the acceptance of H_1 . These data show that the work readiness of Generation Z is positively and significantly impacted by self-efficacy. Those with elevated levels of self-efficacy typically show stronger preparation for the workforce. People who maintain strong belief in their capabilities are generally better at finishing assigned duties successfully, resolving issues effectively,

and adapting to workplace changes. Consequently, this psychological component acts as a vital element in equipping Generation Z for transitioning into the professional market. These outcomes corroborate prior research by (Novita, 2023; Puspitasari, 2024; Wiharja et al., 2020) who found that self-efficacy has a positive contribution to work readiness. But this is different from many previous studies that investigated vocational or university students. This study contributes to the literature by studying Generation Z within the framework of the metropolitan labor market. It implies that the role of self-efficacy remains relevant even in more competitive employment contexts.

Furthermore, the career motivation variable obtained a t-value of 9.686 with a significance value of < 0.001 . As the significance value is also below 0.05, H_2 is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. This result indicates that career motivation has a positive and statistically significant effect on work readiness. In other words, higher levels of career motivation are associated with higher levels of work readiness.

Based on the standardized regression coefficients (Beta) obtained from the regression analysis, career motivation ($\beta =$

0.643) has a stronger effect on work readiness than self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.325$). The findings reveal that career motivation has a positive and significant effect on work readiness among Generation Z. This demonstrates that people with high career motivation are more likely to prepare themselves for employment by developing competencies, searching for relevant experiences, and planning their future careers. Career motivation is defined as the drive of an individual to achieve career goals and improve professional competence and is therefore directly relevant to work readiness. While previous research has focused mainly on motivation as a general construct (Adelia et al., 2025; Fatimah et al., 2022; Nursyafaah et al., 2026), the present findings suggest that career motivation, a more specific form of motivation focused on career development, also makes a significant contribution to work readiness. The results add to the existing evidence by showing that motivation that is focused on career aspiration and professional development is a significant contributor to preparing Generation Z to enter the workforce.

F-test (Simultaneous)

The simultaneous hypothesis test (F-test) was conducted to determine whether

self-efficacy and career motivation jointly influence work readiness. The results of the simultaneous hypothesis test are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. F-test Result

F-count	Sig.
280.969	0.000

As shown in Table 10, the F-value of the regression model was 280.969, and the significance value was < 0.001 . As the p-value is smaller than the pre-determined significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), H_3 is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected.

Results show that self-efficacy and career motivation have a significant positive effect on work readiness simultaneously. Thus, the suggested regression model is able to explain the relationship between two independent variables and dependent variable significantly. This points out that combined gains in self-efficacy and career motivation are related to higher levels of work readiness.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of self-efficacy and career motivation on the work readiness of Generation Z in Bekasi City. The findings indicate that both self-efficacy and career motivation have a

positive and significant impact on work readiness, both independently and in combination. Of the two predictors, career motivation was more important than self-efficacy, indicating that those with more concrete career goals, a stronger professional identity, and higher career resilience tend to be more ready for work. In addition, the regression model explained 85.7% of the variance of work readiness, which points to a meaningful role of psychological factors in preparing Generation Z for the transition from education to employment.

This study contributes to the literature by offering empirical evidence regarding the combined role of self-efficacy and career motivation in explaining work readiness among Generation Z in a highly competitive metropolitan labor market. This study, unlike many previous ones that focused on specific educational groups, broadens the understanding of work readiness to Generation Z as a general workforce population. The findings also have practical implications for higher education institutions and for policy makers. Universities should enhance students' self-efficacy through experiential learning, internships, project-based learning, mentoring, and competency

development programs. In addition, it is necessary to improve the activities of structured career guidance and career planning to strengthen career motivation before the graduates enter the labor market.

However, this study has several limitations despite these contributions. The respondents were limited to Generation Z in Bekasi City. This might limit the generalization of the findings to other geographic contexts. In addition, this study only looked at two psychological variables and did not include other potential determinants of work readiness such as online literacy, employability skills, internship experience, social support, personality traits, and career adaptability. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies should have larger and more diverse samples, include additional explanatory variables, and use longitudinal or mixed method approaches to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors of Generation Z's work readiness.

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