

## **Relieving Anxiety in Facing the Workplace for Students: The Role of Self-Efficacy, Adversity Quotient, Socioeconomic Status and Perceived Social Support**

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**Abstract:** Preparing students in entering the workforce is a challenge, and understanding the determinant factors affecting students' anxiety will be useful in the understanding phenomenon. This study aims to examine internal and external factors affecting students' anxiety in facing the world of work. In detail, the research involved self-efficacy, adversity quotient, socioeconomic status and perceived social support to explain students' anxiety. Using both online and offline questionnaires, approximately 654 participants were involved with simple random technique sampling. Accordingly, the completed data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling with SmartPLS. The findings indicate that internal factors (self-efficacy and adversity quotient) and external factors (socioeconomic status and perceived social support) significantly influence anxiety facing the world of work among advanced students in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** self-efficacy, adversity quotient, socioeconomic status, perceived social support, relieving anxiety.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The shifting from an educational environment to the workplace is the most challenging for students. Despite the imbalance between labor supply and demand, college graduates take a large portion of unemployment in Indonesia. A prior study by Karyaningsih et al. (2020) documented that approximately 5.28 percent unemployment in Indonesia consists of 7.92 percent diploma graduates, 5.67 percent university graduates, and the rest are other educational grades. Another problem contributing to the increasing number of unemployed in Indonesia is the gap between the quality of graduates from educational institutions and demand by the workforce. This situation raises anxiety in students who will graduate and enter the business world.

Students' anxiety increases due to their lack of confidence in their competence (Aryani et al., 2017). Hurlock (2012) added that a high level of anxiety is related to the opportunity to obtain a job in the future and become unemployed. Some prior studies by Cheung et al. (2014) prove the uncertainty of future careers as a cause of anxiety in late students. Similarly, Beiter et al. (2014) pointed out that final year students' worry, stress, and anxiety were higher than students in the first semester of lecture. Anxiety in facing the world of work can be caused by a lack of confidence in students regarding their outlook and belief in the future (Indrawati & Upadianti,

2018). Additionally, Onyishi and Ogdobo (2012) remarked that high self-efficacy will affect individuals facing challenges at work and vice versa.

In addition to self-efficacy, students' anxiety is involved in the workforce is acquaintance with adverse quotient. Indrawati and Upadianti (2018) defined adversity quotient as the ability to diminish anxiety about various difficulties and change negative attitudes into positive ones. Stoltz (2000) emphasized that the characteristics of individuals with high adversity quotient have no ability to give up easily in fighting for something and not quickly give up. Utami et al. (2014) remarked that adversity quotient related to the importance of an optimistic attitude in living life. Meanwhile, some scholars in believing that socio-economic status (Vameghi et al., 2018) and perceived social support play a crucial role in students' anxiety (Sari & Dewi, 2013).

Since the important issue of students' anxiety in preparing the workforce, the study on this issue is also on the rise. Several prior studies, for example, Ates (2019), focused on the level of Turkey students' anxiety, while Fawzy and Hamed (2017) were concerned about the impact of the students' anxiety. Additionally, Saber et al. (2016) documented how to adapt to the changes by using coping strategies. However, there is little attention from scholars to examining factors affecting students' anxiety in the workplace.

The existing gap between workers' competencies and job requirements can raise anxiety from university graduates. A prior study by Eden et al. (2020) explained that anxiety is the emergence of feelings of fear and unpleasantness accompanied by an increase in physiological tension. The emergence of anxiety can occur because the individual is worried so that cognitively cannot provide a way out of how this event or incident should be dealt with (Britton et al., 2019). According to the social cognitive theory by Bandura (2011), the condition of anxiety can be explained by internal and external factors. The theory emphasizes that cognition (internal factors) and environmental factors (external) contribute to each other and synergize with each other for the achievement of certain goals, including the processes that are passed to achieve these goals (Shkoler et al., 2017; Zhao et al., 2018).

The theory highlights the individual's capacity (internal factors) and the influence of environmental factors (external factors) to establish and achieve choices in life, including settings and obtaining career/job choices after completing higher education (Meoli et al., 2020). Some preliminary scholars mentioned that internal factors are represented by self-efficacy (Saeid & Eslaminejad, 2017) and adversity quotient (Suryadi & Santoso, 2017). Self-efficacy is important for everyone to face the problem at hand. High self-confidence can control someone to be calmer and reduce the tension they face. Although sometimes individuals also feel that the greater their self-confidence, the greater the anxiety and tension. In addition to self-efficacy, Stoltz (2000) states that adversity quotient is a person's ability to withstand and overcome difficulties and perform beyond expectations and potential. Adversity quotient consists of four dimensions, namely control, origin and ownership, reach, and endurance.

Meanwhile, external factors are performed by socioeconomic status (Astrawan et al., 2014; Etindele-Sosso, 2020) and social support that is individual felt (Osborn et al., 2020; Racine et al., 2019). Dharmmesta and Handoko (2014)

grouped the social status in community as four categories based on wealth, power, honor, and education. Social support that is felt has an impact on student anxiety in facing the world of work (Waqiati et al., 2012). From the explanation, the hypotheses proposed as follows.

H1: Self-efficacy positively students' anxiety for workforce

H2: Adverse quotient impacts students' anxiety for workforce

H3: Socio-economic status impacts students' anxiety for workforce

H4: Perceived social support impacts students' anxiety for workforce

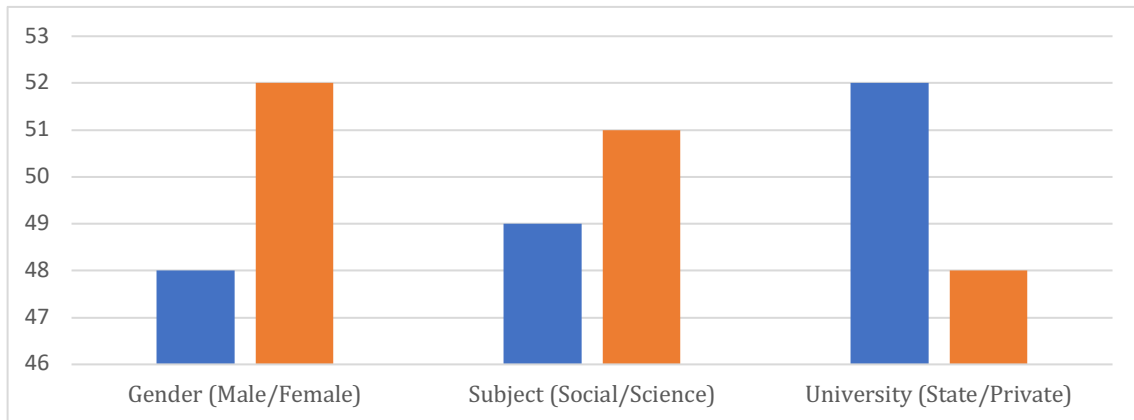
## METHODS

This research adopted a quantitative approach and a type of explanatory research. The population of this research is final year students who will complete higher education and will enter the world of work. With simple random sampling, a sample of 652 students was obtained from 10 public and private universities in Indonesia. The sample was collected using a closed questionnaire using a Likert scale with five answer choices. Strongly agree (score 5) and strongly disagree (score 1). The data were collected both offline (29%) and online approach (71%) from March to July 2020. The measurement of variables in this study was adopted from several prior studies and adjusted with Indonesia's context. To calculate students' anxiety for the workforce, we adopted Fenn and Byrne (2013), consisting of four main indicators: physical symptoms, thought, behavior, and feeling. To calculate self-efficacy, we used the indicators of Phan (2011) that cover three dimensions: self-confidence in one's ability, socialization ability, and tranquility of attitude. We engaged indicators from Stoltz (2000) to understand students' adversity quotient with four indicators: control, origin, and ownership, reach, and endurance. Meanwhile, to estimate perceived social supports, we incorporated with Hartini (2016), which proxied by family, peers, and close relation. Lastly, to understand the socioeconomic status, we adopted indicators from Astrawan et al. (2014); Dharmmesta and Handoko (2012) with the indicator of wealth, position, honor, and education or science. After the data was completed by students, it was analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling with Smart-PLS application.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

### The Demographic Respondents

Figure 1 illustrates the demographic of respondents involved in this study. In general, the participants of this research were dominated by female students with percentage of approximately 52 percent. This study elaborated both state and private universities in Indonesia. As provided in Figure 1, it can be seen that the majority respondent came from state universities with subject studied in sciences.



**Figure 1.** The Demographic of Respondents

### Validity and Reliability Instruments

Prior to data analysis, validity and reliability tests were conducted to see whether or not the research instrument to be used was appropriate. This study adopted convergent validity test which provided in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Convergent Validity Test

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	Decision
Self Efficacy	Self-confidence in one's ability	0.912	Valid
	Socialization ability	0.881	Valid
	Tranquility of attitude	0.885	Valid
Adversity Quotient	Control	0.813	Valid
	Origin and ownership	0.902	Valid
	Reach	0.941	Valid
	Endurance	0.901	Valid
Socioeconomic Status	Wealth	0.912	Valid
	Position	0.881	Valid
	Honor	0.860	Valid
	Education/sciences	0.911	Valid
Perceived Social Support	Family	0.901	Valid
	Peers	0.911	Valid
	Close relations	0.920	Valid
Students Anxiety	Physical symptoms	0.940	Valid
	Thought	0.902	Valid
	Behavior	0.863	Valid
	Feeling	0.910	Valid

From Table 1, it can be informed that all indicators involved in this study satisfied the convergent validity test with the criteria of the loading factors of each indicator were above 0.7 (Hair et al., 2020). These results implicate that all variables can be used for further analysis. In addition to the validity test, this study also incorporated with reliability test (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Reliability Test

Variable	Indicator	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Self-efficacy	Self-confidence in one's ability	0.887	Valid
	Socialization ability	0.860	Valid
	Tranquility of attitude	0.843	Valid
Adversity Quotient	Control	0.921	Valid
	Origin and ownership	0.860	Valid
	Reach	0.858	Valid
	Endurance	0.801	Valid
Socioeconomic Status	Wealth	0,864	Valid
	Position	0.843	Valid
	Honor	0.920	Valid
	Education/sciences	0.860	Valid
Perceived Social Support	Family	0.868	Valid
	Peers	0.821	Valid
	Close relations	0.874	Valid
Students Anxiety	Physical symptoms	0.858	Valid
	Though	0.821	Valid
	Behavior	0.927	Valid
	Feeling	0.915	Valid

Table 2 provides information about the result of the reliability test. From the table, it can be known that all indicators have the Cronbach's Alpha score ranges from 0.821 to 0.915 ( $> 0.7$ ). These results indicate that all variables met the reliability criteria from Hair et al. (2020).

### Model Fit and Quality Indices

Further analysis in this study is determined the model fit of the construct. From Table 3, it can be informed that the model built in this study was declared fit. In more detail, for Sympon's paradox ratio (SPR), R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR), Statistical suppression ratio (SSR), and Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR) indexes produce values equal to 1 and close to 1, which means that there is no causality problem in the model.

**Table 3.** Model Fit and Quality Indices

Model Fit and Quality Indices	Results	Criteria
Average Path Coefficient (APC)	0.035; $P < 0.05$	P value $<$ level of significance 5%
Average R-Squared (ARS)	0.040; $P < 0.05$	P value $<$ level of significance 5%
Average Adjusted R-Squared (AARS)	0.034; $P < 0.05$	P value $<$ level of significance 5%
Average block VIF (AVIF)	1.440	acceptable if $\leq 5$ , ideally $\leq 3.3$
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	1.796	acceptable if $\leq 5$ , ideally $\leq 3.3$
Tenenhous GoF (GoF)	0.569	small $\geq 0.1$ , medium $\geq 0.25$ , large $\geq 0.36$

Sympson's paradox ratio (SPR)	1.000	acceptable if $\geq 0.7$ , ideally = 1
R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)	1.000	acceptable if $\geq 0.9$ , ideally = 1
Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)	0.975	acceptable if $\geq 0.7$
Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	0.989	acceptable if $\geq 0.7$

### Hypothesis Testing

Table 4 informs the summary of statistical results from structural equation modelling with Smart PLS. From the table, it can be known that all variables have SE values  $<$  P-values (0.005), which indicating that the hypothesis proposed were accepted.

**Table 4.** The Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Exogen	Endogen	Path Coefficient	SE	P-value	Decision
Self-efficacy	Students' anxiety	-0.435	0.032	$<0.005$	H1: accepted
Adversity Quotient	Students' anxiety	-0.308	0.041	$<0.005$	H2: accepted
Socioeconomic Status	Students' anxiety	-0.242	0.027	$<0.005$	H3: accepted
Perceived Social Support	Students' anxiety	-0.403	0.030	$<0.005$	H4: accepted

The study examined internal and external factors that have a negative effect on the level of anxiety experienced by students at the end of the study period or before entering the world of work. The research findings prove that internal factors represented self-efficacy and adversity quotient, while external factors represented by socioeconomic status and social support perceived by students play an important role in reducing the anxiety of final grade students in entering the world of work. These findings prove that Bandura's (2011) social cognitive theory, Lent et al. (2003), is still relevant. Internal and external factors collaborate, can strengthen or even weaken both in the process and in achieving the results someone has achieved in life, including the process and results of students finding and getting a job.

### Self-Efficacy and Students Anxiety

The results of the study prove that self-efficacy affects students' anxiety in facing the world of work. The higher the student's self-efficacy, the lower the anxiety they feel in facing the world of work. Self-efficacy focuses on a person's confidence in facing and overcoming problems in life by always having a positive attitude and thinking (Sener et al., 2015). Positive attitudes and thoughts will lead individuals to behave positively and lead to the achievement of positive results as well (Suryadi & Santoso, 2017). High self-efficacy is needed to prepare students mentally and can reduce or eliminate excessive anxiety before entering a competitive world of work. Students who have high self-efficacy have characteristics: have confidence that the plans that have been made will be carried out well, are able to do assignments on time, do not

give up easily when facing difficulties, do not avoid difficulties/problems that arise, and never give up before trying. This study also confirms several previous studies from Rahmawati et al. (2017); Nugroho (2010) proves that self-efficacy has a negative correlation with student anxiety in entering the workforce. The higher the student's self-efficacy, the lower the student's anxiety level in entering the workforce.

### **Adversity Quotient and Students Anxiety**

The results prove that the adversity quotient negatively correlates with student anxiety in facing the world of work. This implies that the higher the level of adversity quotient, the lower the feeling of anxiety in facing the world of work is felt by advanced students. Students who have a high adversity quotient have characteristics: they are not easy to complain in the face of any difficult situation, are patient in facing the worst situations, can find solutions to every problem faced, try to find alternative solutions to problems when one solution fails, remain calm in facing situations even worst, high self-confidence to solve problems, sure that there will always be a solution to every problem and test. Aryono et al. (2017) explained that a high adversity quotient can create smart, positive thinking patterns and is better prepared to face even the most difficult challenges, and is more confident of being able to compete in facing the world of work. Stoltz (2000); Aryono et al. (2017) reinforced this explanation that a high adversity quotient has many characteristics, namely persistence, never giving up, and finding solutions to every problem. Indrawati and Updianti (2018); Aryani et al. (2017) showed that there is a significant negative relationship between adversity quotient and anxiety in facing the world of work; the higher the adversity quotient a student has, the lower the student's anxiety level in entering the world of work.

### **Socioeconomic Status and Students Anxiety**

The results indicated a negative correlation between socio-economic status and student anxiety in facing the world of work. This finding indicated that the lower the social status of the students has an impact on the higher the anxiety felt by students entering the world of work. Socio-economic status classifies individuals' families into certain classes in society based on wealth, position, honor, and education (Dharmmesta & Handoko, 2012). This study also supports the research results of Rodriguez-Hernandez et al. (2020), who show that socio-economic status has an impact on the anxiety felt by students entering the workforce.

### **Perceived Social Support and Students Anxiety**

Social support is needed by anyone who needs it, especially people who experience depression, have weak social ties (Eagle et al., 2019). The results of the study show that social support that students perceive is negatively correlated with student anxiety in dealing with the world of work. The higher the student's perceived social support, the lower the students' anxiety in facing the world of work. The support, attention, empathy that students get from their families, friends, lecturers, community leaders is important in facing the challenges of entering the world of work. High social support makes students feel recognized and valued for their existence and abilities, loved, valued (Bilgin & Tas, 2018). Social support is needed

by everyone: (1) when someone is faced with competitive situations and conditions such as those faced by students when they enter the world of work (Marni & Yuniawati, 2015). (2) can help individuals cope with stressful conditions (Sari & Dewi, 2013). Several previous studies such as Waqiati et al. (2012); Axelsson and Ejlertsson (2002); Sari and Dewi (2013) prove that perceived social support affects students' anxiety in facing the world of work. Kumalasari and Ahyani (2012) added that social support that is perceived by students is obtained after social interaction. Finally, Sari and Dewi (2013) showed that self-concept and perceived social support have an impact on student anxiety entering the world of work.

## CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the research findings show that there are two factors, namely internal and external factors, that play a role in reducing the anxiety of advanced students in facing the world of work. Internal factors include self-efficacy, adversity quotient, while external factors include: socioeconomic status and perceived social support. Therefore, recommendations are given to the Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia to pay attention to these internal and external factors to prepare the younger generation to enter the world of work and determine future careers. To minimize student anxiety, a preparation program for entering the world of work is needed by providing training and assistance to improve their understanding, knowledge, abilities, and skills before entering the world of work so that students have high self-efficacy and adversity questions and the importance of increasing the role of perceived social support and status. socioeconomic students.

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