

# Perceived Parental Expectation: The Effect of Emotional Intelligence toward Career Decision Self-efficacy

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**Abstract:** This study examined the effect of emotional intelligence on career decision self-efficacy with parental expectation as a moderating variable. In this study, 785 high-school students in several provinces, such as West Java, Jakarta, and Banten, Indonesia were recruited by using the convenience sampling method. Moderation analysis was used as the data analysis technique through PROCESS. Results confirmed the moderating role of parental expectation on emotional intelligence and career decision self-efficacy. The study provided several implications for schools and school psychologists by clarifying the crucial role that parents play in influencing the career decision self-efficacy of high-school students.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

According to adolescent career development, high-school students rely on the exploration stage to decide their future career in selecting a profession or course of study at a university (Papalia, Olds, & Feldman, 2010; Super, 1972). Before conducting this research, the authors conducted a pre-study on 100 high-school students in January 2019. We demonstrated that 30% of students had insufficient confidence in their career decision because they had not acknowledged that their ability and competency were suitable for the intended major. Moreover, according to 27.7% of students, their parents played a significant role in their future courses. Thus, the result indicates that students may be unaware of their level of competency, which is crucial and may lead to difficulties in career decision-making.

### 1.1 Self-efficacy and Career Decisions Self-efficacy

Students who still doubt their abilities and competencies showed that they had not recognized or assessed their strengths and weaknesses, so they have difficulty making career decisions. Based on the preliminary study results, it can be concluded that there are still students who felt doubt about the suitability of their abilities and competencies with their future career decisions. When someone made a

career decision, it takes various abilities, one of which is self-assess (Crites & Savickas, 1978). These competencies will support individuals in choosing their careers, thereby raising confidence in their abilities to complete their tasks.

Students with difficulties in career decision-making display uncertainty in their decisions, indicating a lack of self-efficacy. By definition, self-efficacy pertains to an individual's confidence in her ability to produce optimum performance such that it affects her life (Bandura, 1995). In general, an individual with high self-efficacy desires to become successful and survives by completing tasks. By contrast, an individual with inadequate self-efficacy avoids challenging activities and anticipates failure (Kear, 2004). Self-efficacy is required in career decision-making because individuals are encouraged to optimize performance and obtain success through personal awareness of their ability. Career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) is defined as an individual's confidence in her ability to conduct assignments related to career decisions (Betz, Klein, & Taylor, 1996). Students are required to undergo self-assessment mainly of their mastered skills and have confidence in managing challenges. Scholars have proposed that if students learn with uncertainty, they continue to doubt and experience difficulties in their career path.

Restubog, Florentino, and Gracia (2010) elaborated on the importance of CDSE because it influences the attitude toward completing tasks in the

selected career. Therefore, adolescents with high levels of self-efficacy regarding career decision-making learn to focus more on this aspect than students with low self-efficacy do (Wright, Jenkins-Guarnieri, & Murdock, 2013). Several factors, such as individual experience, can influence the measurement level of self-efficacy in career decision-making.

## 1.2 Career Decisions Self-efficacy and Emotional Intelligence

Various factors influence the high and low levels of career decisions self-efficacy. Talking about the factors that influence self-efficacy in one's career decisions cannot be separated from internal and external factors (Lent & Brown, 2006, 2008; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 2000). Internal factors related to the individual are emotional intelligence, gender, and age (Emmerling & Cherniss, 2003; Ganske & Ashby, 2007; Hackett & Betz, 1981). On the other hand, external factors that also affect career decisions self-efficacy include parental expectations, social support, and perceptions of career barriers (DiBartolo & Rendón, 2012; Wright et al., 2014; Gushue & Whitson, 2006; Metheny & McWhirter, 2013; Zhang & Huang, 2018).

In terms of influencing factors, emotional intelligence is an internal factor in career decisions because individuals with high emotional intelligence generally tend to be sensitive to their emotional states and can integrate their emotions with their performance and actions (Di Fabio & Palazzi, 2009). Emotional intelligence becomes important in career decisions because individuals need to balance themselves with emotional preferences to have no difficulty making the right choice (Brown, George-Curran, & Smith, 2003; Goleman, 1995). Judging from the factors that influence career decisions self-efficacy, the researcher believes that emotional intelligence is one of the essential components in the career decision process because emotional conditions play an essential role in shaping one's career picture (Young, Valach, & Collin, 1996; Emmerling & Cherniss, 2003). Career decision-making is not a single decision but involves a series of decisions influenced by emotional bias (Emmerling & Cherniss, 2003).

When individuals are in a positive mood, the decisions taken will be wise and full of careful consideration and vice versa (Salovey & Bimbaum, 1989; Jiang, 2016). Thus, emotional intelligence becomes an internal factor that will be examined in this study. Previous research found that emotional

intelligence has a positive and significant relationship with career decisions self-efficacy, so the higher a person's emotional intelligence, the higher the self-efficacy in career decisions (Brown, George-Curran, Smith, 2003; Jiang, 2014). Another research is also expressed by Jiang (2016) that in the context of career decisions, the process of determining a profession or study program at the university is a sensitive issue for students who need to involve emotional intelligence. With emotional intelligence, individuals can control and manage their expectations and reduce worries about obstacles that arise during career selection to increase career confidence (Emmerling & Cherniss, 2003; Jiang, 2014). Emotional intelligence is an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and manage the emotions he feels so that it can be used to support individual performance (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Individuals with high emotional intelligence will understand emotions and regulate emotions reflectively to increase their capacity both emotionally and intellectually (Salovey & Mayer, 1997).

However, the results of research on emotional intelligence in career decisions have not been established with certainty in the literature (Di Fabio, 2012). It is considering that most studies that examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and career decisions self-efficacy have only been conducted in Western countries such as Europe and the United States. Meanwhile, it is unclear whether the relationship between emotional intelligence and career decisions self-efficacy in Asian countries is culturally different from Western culture (Di Fabio et al., 2003) because the results are still inconsistent (Mau, 2000; Jiang, 2014). Therefore, researchers consider it necessary to examine the effect of emotional intelligence on career decisions self-efficacy in this study.

## 1.3 Career Decisions Self-efficacy and Perceived Parental Expectation

As an adolescent, although there have been demands and efforts to be independent both academically and non-academically, the role of parents is still quite significant in them. Family process variables, such as parental expectations and encouragement, have been shown to affect children's career development over and above that of family structural variables, such as socio-economic level and the number of children in the family (Whiston & Keller, 2008). First, parents influence their children's values, interests, and skills and foster motivation and effort towards their career goals (Duffy & Dik, 2009). For example, Ashby and Schoon (2010) found that parents' background and

education expectations influence their children's career expectations and academic performance. Second, parents significantly contribute to adolescent career preparation (Perry, Liu, & Pabian, 2009). Specific examples of process variables include the family's emotional climate related to career planning, vocational identity, and career decision-making self-efficacy (Hargrove, Creagh, & Burgess, 2002; Hargrove, Inman, & Crane, 2005; Sawitri et al., 2014). Moreover, family support also associated with career search self-efficacy and decision-making (Nota, Ferrari, Solberg & Soresi, 2007; Sawitri et al., 2014).

Parents generally have their values and goals about what they want for their children, including career choices for their children (Dix & Branca, 2003). At the same time, children view their parents as the primary source of reference regarding their career choices (Alika, 2010). In addition, they also have a perception that parents should contribute to their career development, such as facilitating them financially (Phillips, Christopher-Sisk, & Gravino, 2001). This condition also makes children perceive their parents as partners in career development so that when making career decisions, they must involve their parents (Phillips et al., 2001; Tynkkynen et al., 2010; Sawitri et al., 2012).

In Indonesia, parents tend to be involved in decisions made by their children, especially decisions related to their children's future, such as education level and job choices (Firdaus & Kustanti, 2019). The involvement of parents in their children's career decisions is generally reflected in the expectations of parents who want their children to be successful in life (DiBartolo & Rendon, 2012). Other findings also support parents' expectations of their children's future careers (Sawitri, Creed, & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2014). Parents' expectations are generally defined as the beliefs and judgments of parents about their children's future achievements as reflected in the achievement values, how far their children will go to school, expected to reach the highest level of education achieved, or a brilliant career (DiBartolo & Rendon, 2012; Neuenschwander, Vida, Garrett, & Eccles, 2007; Glick & White, 2004; Goldenberg, et al., 2001).

According to Burke (2013), parents' expectations are reviewed from the parent's side and on the child's side. Therefore, the researcher uses the definition of parental expectations proposed by Burke (2013), namely the child's perception of parents' beliefs and assessments of themselves in their academic achievement. Wigfield and Eccles (2002) found that adolescents' expectations and values are influenced by their parents, so that adolescents tend to internalize parental expectations and incorporate them into their

expectations for success to contribute to their academic achievement (Zhang, Haddad, Torres & Chen, 2011).

Many previous studies have shown that parental expectations are positively related to their children's high academic performance (Danişman, 2017; Yamamoto & Holloway, 2010; Zhan, 2006), and parental expectations can have a significant long-term effect on children's academic achievement (Froiland, Peterson, & Davison, 2013). Parents with higher expectations are more likely to set higher standards for their children's performance, such as their children's studies. Moreover, provide more supportive resources than parents with lower expectations (Yeung et al., 2010; Zhan, 2006). Meanwhile, parents with low expectations tend to be less involved in activities that support their children's achievement. They generally pay less attention to academic progress or provide less educational resources for their children (Englund, Luckner, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004; Long & Pang, 2016). This condition can allegedly affect self-efficacy in their children (Simpkins, Fredricks, & Eccles, 2012). Other research shows that parents can increase career decisions self-efficacy due to the similarity between parents' expectations and their children (Garcia, Restubog, Toledano, Tolentino, & Rafferti, 2012). However, this influence can strengthen self-confidence in career decisions if adolescents have the same perception of parental expectations (Garcia, Restubog, Toledano, Tolentino, & Rafferti, 2012, Sawitri et al., 2014). Therefore, researchers consider it is necessary to examine the role of parents' expectations on children's self-confidence levels through their children's perceptions.

#### 1.4 The Current Study

In adolescence, high school students begin to explore themselves by seeking information about various fields of majors or occupations in their future career decisions (Super, 1972). In determining career decisions, students need to have self-efficacy in career decisions so that adolescents are encouraged to produce optimal performance because they are confident in their abilities. However, career decisions are one of the most critical and difficult decisions for students. The transition from high school students to the next level as students becomes a critical turning point in their lives. It can be a source of conflict if passed without careful consideration and preparation. Individuals who have a high level of self-efficacy in career decisions experience less difficulty carrying out tasks related to career decisions. With high self-efficacy, they can assess themselves, especially the

suitability of their competencies with those required by their career goals. On the other hand, individuals with low levels of career decisions self-efficacy tend to doubt their competencies according to their career choices. It indicates, career decisions self-efficacy becomes essential for students to have.

The level of career decisions self-efficacy influence by various factors, mainly internal and external factors. Internal factors that come from within oneself, one of which is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is one of the factors that can influence the level of self-efficacy in career decisions. In career decisions, students involve cognitive processes and affectively contribute to producing mature career decisions. Emotions influence decision-making to direct individuals to act according to their needs, goals, and plans in the future. Individuals who are adept at managing emotions tend to adapt better to career decisions because they can better imagine the emotional consequences of career choices.

Moreover, the career decision process is one of the most sensitive issues for students, so emotional bias can occur if it is not balanced with adequate emotional intelligence. It will also increase self-efficacy in career decisions for students by involving emotional intelligence in the career determination process. Therefore, the first hypothesis of this study is that there is an influence of emotional intelligence on career decisions self-efficacy.

High school students should have started to make career decisions independently based on career development, but parents are generally involved in their children's career decisions. Furthermore, it can be seen in searching for information related to career decisions; students generally involve their parents to picture their future career. By involving parents in their children's career decisions, of course, parents raise expectations for their children's success.

In general, parents with higher expectations tend to set higher standards for their children's performance and provide more supportive resources than parents with lower expectations (Gniewosz et al., 2015; Simpkins, Fredricks, & Eccles, 2012; Philip, Christopher-Sisk, & Grauino, 2001). Besides that, adolescents tend to internalize the expectations of their parents into their expectations as well, so that high parental expectations encourage them to achieve success in the future. In addition, parents with high expectations generally provide feedback for their children to become a direction for their children to achieve success (Gniewosz et al., 2015; Simpkins, Fredricks, & Eccles, 2012).

On the other hand, parents with low expectations will lower their children's academic performance. This condition raises the perception in their children that if their parents do not support their career development, they tend to be unsure of their ability to achieve their career goals. That way, students supported by high parental expectations tend to achieve academic success further to increase their confidence in their competence. Therefore, parental expectations are external factors that can strengthen or weaken self-efficacy in career decisions.

Based on the explanation above, we concludes that adolescents in their career decisions still need help from their parents, especially when they generally reach something or their goals as their parents expect. Therefore, an adolescent who has emotional intelligence is not enough to be sure of their career decisions. This condition needs to be supported by parents' expectations, so they were more confident about their career decisions. Thus, the following hypothesis in this study is that there is a role for parental expectations to moderate the influence of emotional intelligence on self-efficacy in career decisions.

This research is quantitative research that will involve high school students who are in the career exploration stage. The study was conducted on high school students in West Java, Jakarta, and Banten, Indonesia through a survey by giving questionnaires about emotional intelligence, career decisions self-efficacy, and perceived parental expectations of adolescent.

## 2 METHOD

### 2.1 Participant

Participants were 785 grade 11<sup>th</sup> Indonesian students (55.3%, mean age = 15.98 years; SD = .525) from national and private high schools in West Java, Jakarta, and Banten, Indonesia. The majority of the respondents stated that parents, especially mothers (n=250; 32%), mainly influenced their career decision making on a self-report family's role in career decision-making.

### 2.2 Materials

Participants responded to all items using a 6-point Likert Scale (1= strongly disagree to 6= strongly agree), which higher scores reflecting higher levels of each construct.

First, this study used the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Short Form (CDSE-SF) measuring instrument compiled by Taylor, Betz, and Klein (1996). The CDSE-SF used is the result of an adaptation in Indonesian by Sawitri (2008). This scale aims to measure the level of individual confidence in their abilities to complete career decision-making. Each subscale consists of five items for a total of 25 items. Alpha has been reported as .89.

Second, this study uses a measuring instrument, Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS), compiled by Wong and Law (2004). This measuring instrument consisting of 16 items consists of four dimensions measured, namely understanding one's own emotions, understanding other people's emotions, using emotions, and regulating emotions. Based on the results of research conducted by Wong and Law (2004), this measuring instrument has a reliability of 0.94.

Third, in this study we were using a parental expectation measurement tool compiled by Burke (2013). The parental expectation scale aims to measure students' perceptions of parents' expectations and consists of 12 items. Based on the research results conducted by Burke (2013), alpha has been reported as 0.78.

### 2.3 Procedure

Data collection was carried out from August to October 2019 at four public high schools and two private high schools spread across the Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi (Jabodetabek) areas. We targeted 100 student participants in each school so that they were targeted 600 participants in total. After data was collected, we got 819 student participants because the number of students in each school differed. Participants were given 45 minutes to work on a set of questionnaires. Before the participants started working, we explained the research objectives of filling out the questionnaire. In addition, we also asked participants to fill out an informed consent form as proof of their willingness to participate in this study. In addition, the researcher also sorted the data by looking at the data classified as outliers so that the data used were 785 participants from the total participants.

## 3 RESULT

Based on the average score of career decisions self-efficacy (mean=113.15; SD=12.20), high-school students in Jabodetabek have a high level of self-

efficacy in career decisions. Thus, the study results indicate that students have self-efficacy in career decisions to choose a major or a future job. When viewed from the average score of emotional intelligence (mean=71.37; SD=9.56), high-school students in Jabodetabek have a high level of emotional intelligence. Thus, the results demonstrate that students have adequate emotional intelligence in their daily lives.

Based on the average score of parents' expectations (mean= 44.73; SD=8.77), high-school students in Jabodetabek have a high level of parental expectations. To support the first hypothesis, we used a linear regression test to determine the effect of emotional intelligence on CDSE.

Based on the linear regression statistical test between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy in career decisions ( $N = 785$ ), emotional intelligence has a contribution value of  $R^2 = 0.256$  with a significance level of 0.000 ( $<0.05$ ); thus, there is an effect of emotional intelligence on self-efficacy in significant career decisions. This finding means that the variants of emotional intelligence can predict 25.6% of the self-efficacy scores in career decisions, and other variables predict 74.4% of the variants in the self-efficacy scores in career decisions.

The study aimed to elucidate the role of parental expectation as a moderating influence on emotional intelligence for the CDSE of high-school students. In this manner, the influence of the predictor on the criterion can be determined. Table 2 displays the results of the interaction between parental expectation as a moderating variable and emotional intelligence. The results of the moderated regression analysis indicate that parental expectation moderated the influence of emotional intelligence on CDSE ( $p<0.05$ ).

## 4 DISCUSSION

This study examines internal and external factors that influence career decisions self-efficacy. The importance of including internal and external factors is because the career decision-making process is not a single process for individuals but involves an interaction between internal and external factors (Lent et al., 2005). Based on this view, it is necessary to examine internal factors (emotional intelligence) and external factors (parents' expectations) on self-efficacy in career decisions reviewed from the point of view of high school students.

The main findings in this study are emotional intelligence and career decisions self-efficacy which

show a significant influence, meaning that individuals who have high emotional intelligence are likely to increase their confidence in career decisions. Having high emotional intelligence is certainly related to sensitivity to their emotional state to integrate it with performance to achieve goals (Di Fabio & Palazzi, 2009). These findings are certainly related to career decisions because the decision-making process requires emotional preferences to produce the right career decisions for individuals in the future (Goleman, 1995). That way, individuals who can integrate emotions with performance and actions will increase career decisions self-efficacy (Brown, George-Curran, & Smith, 2003).

In career decisions, students need a sufficient level of confidence to make mature decisions for their future. This decision-making process certainly requires various supporting factors that can help adolescents to make the right decisions. In general, adolescents need adequate emotional intelligence to direct themselves in constructing a career picture so that they can determine their career choices. This explanation is illustrating in one of the emotional intelligence items regarding understanding emotions in oneself. That is, when individuals have an understanding of the emotions they feel, they will more easily identify the values and interests they have. It indicates, they will be helped to develop a career picture that suits them (Emmerling & Cherniss, 2003). After getting a clear career picture for them through adequate self-assessment, it will increase the individual's career confidence (Emmerling & Cherniss, 2003; Brown, George-Curran, & Smith, 2003).

Subsequent findings in this study indicate a significant role of parental expectations in moderating the effect of emotional intelligence on career decisions self-efficacy. High parental expectations will also strengthen the influence of emotional intelligence on career decisions self-efficacy so that students will be more confident in their career decisions and vice versa. The role of parental expectations is inseparable from the involvement of parents as the main source, which considering to be able to provide an overview of future careers, such as job information or competencies needed in certain work fields. This parental involvement then develops into parents' expectations of their children (Zhang, Haddad, Torres, & Chen, 2011). The expectations of these parents are internalized by their children into their own expectations so that when their parents' expectations are high, they will be motivated to

achieve these expectations successfully (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002).

Parents' expectations of their children can also highlight as a source of self-efficacy, namely vicarious learning. Children observe their parents' experiences related to careers, such as the parents' persistence at work or the job prospects that their parents have experienced. So, the children get a career picture of what their parents have achieved. Previous research also supports the above findings; namely, the support provided by parents through their expectations tends to have a greater direct influence on career decisions self-efficacy (Wright, Perrone-McGovern, Boo, & White, 2014). Other research also shows that parents affect individual career development, especially in exploring careers, career aspirations, and determining their children's career decisions (Keller & Whiston, 2008; Lindstrom, Doren, Metheny, Johnson, & Zane, 2007; Metheny & McWhirter, 2007; 2013; Rogers & Creed, 2011).

Further findings that support the influence of emotional intelligence on self-efficacy in career decisions can be seen from the emotional intelligence of high school students in the high category. In other words, students can think carefully and are not affected by emotional conditions that can cause bias when making career decisions. In addition, students can also use their emotions to direct themselves in achieving certain goals. It can be explained in one of the items on the use of emotions that reviews that individuals can set goals and try to achieve them as best they can. The ability to use adequate emotions will help individual performance (in this case, high school students) in everyday life to achieve their goals. This study is in line with Jiang (2014), who argues that this ability is very helpful in motivating, planning, and achieving career goals to increase self-efficacy in career decisions (Brown, George-Curran, & Smith, 2003; Jiang, 2014). High emotional intelligence can also help students control their actions and consider the consequences to not act rashly in making their choices (Santos, Wang, & Lewis, 2018; Moore, 2016). That way, individuals can use their emotions to do their best to achieve their goals.

Regarding career decisions self-efficacy, we found that high school students, especially grade 11<sup>th</sup> students, mostly had high career decisions self-efficacy, meaning that they believed in their ability to adequately make decisions related to the major or field of work they would pursue the future. This study also shows that most of them consider their career decisions based on job information, self-assessment, and career determination compared to other

competencies that can also be considered in career decisions, such as goal selection and problem-solving. This result is in line with the age of the respondents who are dominated by students aged 16 years who, according to Super (1972), are in the crystallizing stage, meaning they are looking for information about potential, interests, and various available career opportunities before making the right career decisions for them in the future. In addition, the school's policy regarding the choice of majors in grade 10 is an initial experience for students in their career decisions. Students will begin to plan their careers at this stage according to an assessment of the existing reality. When students can pass the career exploration stage well, the information obtained will be sufficient so that it can be the basis for developing a career that is following their abilities (Seligman, 1994). That is why a grade 11 student already has confidence in his career decisions because he has passed grade 10, where he has already determined the choice of major or field of study to be pursued during school.

In this study, we also found that students' perceptions of parents' expectations of themselves were in the moderate category. According to this statement, they view that their parents have adequate expectations regarding their current academic achievements when deciding their future career choices. This result is in line with Dibartolo and Rendon (2012), who stated that parents' expectations for their children often reflect in their children's success in getting the highest education and decent jobs. Moreover, other studies have shown that having high parental expectations will impact their children's academic achievement in the future (Danisman, 2017; Froiland, Peterseon, & Davison, 2013). In addition, this result is supported by other findings in this study. Although shows that parents, both father and mother, have a more significant role than themselves in determining career decisions. In line with these findings, previous researchers also stated that high parental expectations are generally offset by parental involvement in activities related to their children's achievement so that parents provide more support to their children (Englund, Luckner, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004; Long & Pang, 2016; Simpkins et al., 2012). This influence is more prominent during adolescence because adolescents begin to form and clarify their identity through a picture of a future career that is supported by their parents' expectations (Rodríguez, Inda, & Fernández, 2015). Parents plays an important role in preparing their children to succeed in their careers.

We realized that in this study, there was a limitation. When collecting data on participants, the authors were not to remind students to imagine one of the parents considered to play a role when students were asked to fill out a questionnaire on parental expectations. Therefore, it is possible that when filling out the questionnaire on parental expectations, students do not consistently imagine the intended parent when answering several statements on the questionnaire that measures parental expectations.

Based on the findings in this study, the further researcher needs to instruct students to imagine one of the parents when filling out a questionnaire regarding their parents' expectations of themselves to analyze the role of parents who tend to contribute more to their parents' children's career decisions.

We recommend the school and school psychologists form a career guidance program for students based on the five competencies of career decisions self-efficacy. The five competencies include job information, self-assessment, goal selection, career determination, and problem-solving related to career decisions. With adequate career guidance, it is possible to minimize future career barriers to students to direct their actions to career success. We also recommend that school psychologists understand parents' expectations have a vital role for their children, especially when they make career decisions. Parents and children need to convey their hopes to each other and then harmonize the expectations of parents and children. In addition, if there is a difference in expectations between parents and children, parents need to give freedom to children to make decisions according to the interests and competencies of children to support their future career tasks and align such expectations with those of their children. Therefore, children will be encouraged to achieve their goals without the pressure of parental expectations.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The study aimed to determine and confirm the moderating role of parental expectation on the influence of emotional intelligence on the CDSE of high-school students in Jawa Barat, Jakarta, and Banten. We found that parental expectation was one of the factors that could increase the influence of emotional intelligence and career decisions self-efficacy. However, we controlled several supporting factors—socioeconomic status, parental education level, and parents' occupations—that could support further research.

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