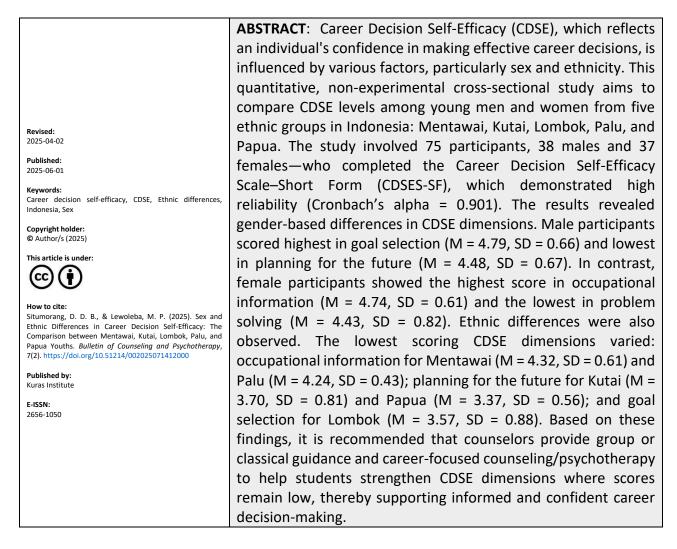
# Sex and Ethnic Differences in Career Decision Self-Efficacy: The Comparison between Mentawai, Kutai, Lombok, Palu, and Papua Youths

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#### INTRODUCTION

Young people towards the end of their school career/years are typically confronted with a number of individual decisions which have a lasting effect on the future. And in most cases, these decisions are connected to their future work (going to college, taking a job, keeping up the family business, etc.). In making these career decisions, quite a lot of students experience confusion in determining their future careers, although among them there are also quite a few who make relatively easy decisions (Situmorang & Salim, 2021). This indicates that not all high school students can easily make career decisions, and many of them experience a phase of doubt and confusion before deciding on a suitable career path. This phase is known as career indecision (Guay et al., 2003; Creed, Patton, & Prideaux, 2006).

The above phenomenon is in line with research conducted by Sawitri (2009) and Sawitri, Creed, and Zimmer-Gembeck (2015), that most young men and women students in Indonesia tend not to know where to continue their studies after graduating from school. High school students in Indonesia experience career indecision in determining their future careers, are not used to exploring a lot of information about future careers that match their interests and talents, and career decisions so far have been made based on instructions from their parents (Rusandi, Liza, & Situmorang, 2023). Career indecision experienced by young men and women in determining their future career decisions will cause stress (Salim et al., 2024), having sex outside of marriage (Situmorang, 2024), drugs, delaying or avoiding career decision-making tasks, and handing over responsibility to others in making career decisions (Gati & Saka, 2001). On the other hand, success in determining a career will lead to happiness, increased self-esteem, well-being, and career satisfaction (Kunnen et al., 2008).

Related to career indecision in making career decisions that occur in these young people, one of the impacts is that it will result in unemployment in the future. Based on data from the Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) reported by Situmorang (2019), it shows that *"tingkat pengangguran terbuka"* in Indonesia in February 2017 was 5.33%. Of the 131.55 million people who entered the workforce, there were 124.54 million people who worked, and the remaining 7.01 million people were confirmed unemployed. Furthermore, in this case, the highest unemployment rate was 16.3% at the high school and vocational high school levels. Based on these data, the phenomenon of the highest unemployment percentage that occurred in high school and vocational high school students was caused by career indecision in making career decisions.

Until now, various variables have been found related to career indecision in making an individual's career decision, for example perfectionism, self-consciousness, fear of commitment, anxiety, rational decision-making style, career decision self-efficacy, level of ego identity, positive interaction with family and peers, experience with peers and parenting patterns (Guay et al., 2003). From the various antecedents that exist, basically career indecision in young people is determined by the main factor related to individual capabilities in making career decisions.

According to Gati & Saka (2001) the capabilities possessed by the individual greatly determine an individual in making career decisions, if the capability is low then the career indecision possessed by the individual will be high, conversely if the capability is high then the individual tends to have low career indecision, and can make optimal career decisions. This capability is called career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) by Betz, Klein, and Taylor (1996). CDSE is defined as a person's belief about his or her ability to make career decisions based on knowledge of self, goals, and career choices (Betz et al., 1996). CDSE includes the following categories: (a) self-appraisal, (b) occupational information, (c) goal selection, (d) planning for the future, and (e) problem solving (Betz et al., 1996; Taylor & Betz, 1983).

Based on previous research guided by the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), it has been shown that CDSE has a key role in one's career planning and development (Gushue & Whitson, 2006; Lent et al., 2001; Lent et al., 2003; Lent et al., 2005). With high CDSE in an individual, the individual can determine his/her future career decisions well, avoid stress, not delay or avoid career decision-making tasks, and will not hand over responsibility to others in making career decisions (Gati & Saka, 2001). In addition, with high CDSE, individuals can succeed in determining their future careers, which will result in the individual feeling happier, increasing self-esteem, more prosperous in life, and feeling satisfaction in their careers (Kunnen et al., 2008).

Situmorang (2024) emphasized that sex is a representation of an individual's role in the social context of cultural life that is in accordance with biological sex. Based on research conducted by Trusty (1998), Vignoli et al. (2005), Koumoundourou et al. (2011), and Sovet and Metz (2014), sex plays a role in providing a moderating effect between parenting styles that bring ethnic differences in them and CDSE. In line with the results of research conducted by Situmorang (2019) which

showed that there was a moderating effect of sex between parenting styles that brought ethnic differences on the CDSE of male and female students. In different cultural backgrounds, parenting styles given to individuals are based on sex differences. Parents will tend to provide different parenting styles to boys and girls. This results in different moderating effects in each study conducted in different cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, in a study conducted by Salim (2018), it was shown that the CDSE of male and female students was simultaneously influenced by the parenting styles of authoritative fathers, authoritative mothers, and permissive mothers. However, this study has not been able to show partial differences regarding which type of parenting style has the strongest influence on CDSE between male and female students.

When compared to what happens in Indonesia, the influence of significant others, especially parents, in helping an individual determine their career choices based on sex is very strong. This is supported by the results of research conducted by Chao (1994), and Iyengar and Lepper (1999), that Asian cultures that strongly adhere to collectivism tend to highly respect parental control, so that in determining a career, Asians usually highly respect the decisions made by their parents. The encouragement and expectations given by parents to him greatly determine the CDSE chosen.

In Indonesia, parents also tend to provide different parenting styles to boys and girls. This is due to the assumption that girls do not need to get higher education than boys (Situmorang & Salim, 2021). This indirectly influences parents in Indonesia to provide different encouragement to girls and boys in determining their future careers (Sawitri & Creed, 2015). Usually, girls tend to get a liberating parenting style but do not demand that they have to get higher education, so indirectly, girls respect the family's choice in determining their career choices. On the other hand, boys tend to get a parenting style that demands them to be able to continue higher education and have a good career, so boys have greater demands as future heads of households compared to girls (Sawitri & Creed, 2015).

However, in reality, in Indonesia, there are quite a lot of women who can continue to higher education and have careers at the same level as men (Babbitt, Brown, & Mazaheri, 2015). Based on the results of research conducted by Situmorang (2019), it was proven simultaneously that the CDSE of male and female students in Jakarta is greatly influenced by the parenting styles of authoritative fathers, authoritative mothers, and permissive mothers. This gap phenomenon is an urgency for further research related to the issue of sex and ethnic differences that underlie individual CDSE in other regions in Indonesia. In particular, further research is needed to determine the comparison of the CDSE levels of young men and women in Mentawai, Kutai, Lombok, Palu, and Papua in terms of sex and ethnic differences.

## **Study Aim and Hypothesis**

This study aims to examine the differences in CDSE of young men and women of Mentawai, Kutai, Lombok, Palu, and Papua in terms of sex and ethnic differences. The hypothesis is that there are differences in CDSE of young men and women of Mentawai, Kutai, Lombok, Palu, and Papua in terms of sex and ethnic differences.

## METHODS

#### Design

The research design used to answer the problems in this study is quantitative, nonexperimental, and cross-sectional. This approach is used to study a specific population or sample, data collection using research instruments, quantitative/statistical data analysis, with the aim of testing the established hypothesis (Creswell, 2015). This approach was chosen with the aim of conducting a test on the comparison of the CDSE levels of young men and women of Mentawai, Kutai, Lombok, Palu, and Papua in terms of sex and ethnic differences.

## Participants

This study has a target of young respondents who are specifically limited to 4 (four) regions in Indonesia, namely Mentawai, Kutai, Lombok, and Papua, with a total of 75 people (38 males and 37 females). The sampling technique used in this study is the convenience sampling technique. The use of samples using the non-random sampling method with convenience sampling, namely, based on existing availability (Swerdlik & Cohen, 2005).

## Instruments

This study uses a self-report data collection technique. Data collection is done by asking respondents to fill in 1 measuring instrument provided via G-Form. The Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale – Short Form (CDSE-SF). This instrument was revised by Betz, Klein, and Taylor (1996) from the original Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale (Taylor & Betz, 1983). Initially, this instrument consisted of 25 items, with five alternative answer choices. In its development, the measuring instrument has been adapted in Indonesia by Sawitri (2009). Based on the results of the validity test, four items were removed; therefore, in this study, only 21 items were used to measure individual CDSE. The CDSE Scale instrument used in this study showed very good internal consistency reliability, where Cronbach's alpha was 0.901 for 21 valid items. In this study, the instrument was adapted into a 6-point Likert scale from very unsure (1) to very sure (6), this was done to prevent participants from choosing a neutral answer (midpoint). The higher the score obtained from this instrument, the higher the indication that an individual has a high score in CSDE.

## **Data Analysis**

Technical data analysis is a part of the research process that tries to systematically organize or classify the data that has been obtained through the CDSE-SF. The main data analysis is oriented towards the hypothesis and purpose of this study, namely to determine the comparison of the CDSE levels of young men and women of Mentawai, Kutai, Lombok, and Papua in terms of sex and ethnic differences. Data processed with IBM SPSS Statistics 25 for Windows software.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

## Results

## Respondents' Overview based on Sex and Ethnicity

In this study, the respondents were young men and women from Mentawai, Kutai, Lombok, Palu, and Papua. Based on descriptive sex data, it is known that the number of male respondents is 38 people, more than the number of female respondents, which is 37 people. Based on ethnicity, the number of respondents from Mentawai and Kutai are the same, which is 21 people, more than the respondents from Lombok, Palu, and Papua. Furthermore, a complete description of the respondents based on sex and ethnicity can be seen in Table 1.

	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Males	38	50.7%
Females	37	49.3%
Total	75	100%
Ethnic		
Mentawai	21	28%
Kutai	21	28%
Lombok	5	6.7%
Palu	8	10.7%
Рариа	20	26.7%
Total	75	100%

## Table 1. Respondents' Overview Based on Sex and Ethnicity

## Overview of CDSE based on Sex

Based on descriptive statistics that have been conducted on the CDSE scores of 38 male respondents, the average result shows that respondents have high CDSE (M = 4.62, SD = 0.66). Furthermore, among the five dimensions indicated in the CDSES-SF instrument used to measure the CDSE of male respondents, it was found that the highest mean score was the goal selection dimension (M = 4.79, SD = 0.66), while the lowest mean score was the planning for the future dimension (M = 4.48, SD = 0.67). This can be interpreted that, on average, male respondents have high confidence in their own abilities that goals in a particular career field can certainly be realized, but they have the lowest confidence in the future plans that will be made to choose a particular career field. Descriptive statistics regarding the description of the respondents' CDSE are further described in Table 2.

	Mean	SD	
Self-appraisal	4.64	0.59	
Occupational information	4.70	0.63	
Goal selection	4.79	0.66	
Planning for the future	4.48	0.67	
Problem solving	4.49	0.79	
Total	4.62	0.66	

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of CDSE in Male Youths

Furthermore, based on descriptive statistics that have been conducted on the CDSE scores of 37 female respondents, the average result shows that respondents have high CDSE (M = 4.59, SD = 0.64). Furthermore, among the five dimensions indicated in the CDSES-SF instrument used to measure the CDSE of female respondents, it was found that the highest mean score was the occupational information dimension (M = 4.74, SD = 0.61), while the lowest mean score was the problem solving dimension (M = 4.43, SD = 0.82). This can be interpreted that, on average, female respondents have high confidence in their own abilities in gathering the information needed related to a particular career field, but they have the lowest confidence in problem solving. Descriptive statistics regarding the description of the respondents' CDSE are further described in Table 3.

	Mean	SD
Self-appraisal	4.59	0.62
Occupational information	4.74	0.61
Goal selection	4.73	0.73
Planning for the future	4.47	0.43
Problem solving	4.43	0.82
Total	4.59	0.64

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of CDSE in Female Youths

#### **Overview of CDSE based on Ethnic**

Based on descriptive statistics that have been conducted on the CDSE scores of 21 Mentawai respondents, the average result shows that respondents have high CDSE (M = 4.47, SD = 0.63). Furthermore, among the five dimensions indicated in the CDSES-SF instrument used to measure the CDSE of Mentawai respondents, it was found that the highest mean score was the goal selection dimension (M = 4.65, SD = 0.65), while the lowest mean score was the occupational information dimension (M = 4.32, SD = 0.61). This can be interpreted that, on average, male respondents have high confidence in their own abilities that goals in a particular career field can certainly be realized, but they have the lowest confidence in the future plans that will be made to choose a particular career field. Descriptive statistics regarding the description of the respondents' CDSE are further described in Table 4.

	Mean	SD
Self-appraisal	4.34	0.57
Occupational information	4.32	0.61
Goal selection	4.65	0.65
Planning for the future	4.43	0.64
Problem solving	4.64	0.72
Total	4.47	0.63

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of CDSE on Mentawai Youths

Based on descriptive statistics that have been conducted on the CDSE scores of 21 Kutai respondents, the average result shows that respondents have high CDSE (M = 4.16, SD = 0.80). Furthermore, among the five dimensions indicated in the CDSES-SF instrument used to measure the CDSE of Kutai respondents, it was found that the highest mean score was the problem solving dimension (M = 4.74, SD = 0.73), while the lowest mean score was the planning for the future dimension (M = 3.70, SD = 0.81). This can be interpreted that, on average, male respondents have high confidence in their own abilities that goals in a particular career field can certainly be realized, but they have the lowest confidence in the future plans that will be made to choose a particular career field. Descriptive statistics regarding the description of the respondents' CDSE are further described in Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of CDSE on Kutai Youths

	Mean	SD
Self-appraisal	4.39	0.80
Occupational information	4.23	0.81
Goal selection	3.76	0.88
Planning for the future	3.70	0.81
Problem solving	4.74	0.73
Total	4.16	0.80

Based on descriptive statistics that have been conducted on the CDSE scores of 5 Lombok respondents, the average result shows that respondents have high CDSE (M = 4.18, SD = 0.82). Furthermore, among the five dimensions indicated in the CDSES-SF instrument used to measure the CDSE of Lombok respondents, it was found that the highest mean score was the occupational information dimension (M = 4.76, SD = 0.72), while the lowest mean score was the goal selection dimension (M = 3.57, SD = 0.88). This can be interpreted that, on average, male respondents have high confidence in their own abilities that goals in a particular career field can certainly be realized, but they have the lowest confidence in the future plans that will be made to choose a particular career field. Descriptive statistics regarding the description of the respondents' CDSE are further described in Table 6.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of CDSE on Lombok Youths

	Mean	SD
Self-appraisal	4.52	0.88
Occupational information	4.76	0.72
Goal selection	3.57	0.88
Planning for the future	4.31	0.78
Problem solving	3.80	0.87
Total	4.18	0.82

Based on descriptive statistics that have been conducted on the CDSE scores of 8 Palu respondents, the average result shows that respondents have high CDSE (M = 4.37, SD = 0.48). Furthermore, among the five dimensions indicated in the CDSES-SF instrument used to measure the

CDSE of Palu respondents, it was found that the highest mean score was the self-appraisal dimension (M = 4.44, SD = 0.51), while the lowest mean score was the occupational information dimension (M = 4.24, SD = 0.43). This can be interpreted that, on average, male respondents have high confidence in their own abilities that goals in a particular career field can certainly be realized, but they have the lowest confidence in the future plans that will be made to choose a particular career field. Descriptive statistics regarding the description of the respondents' CDSE are further described in Table 7.

	Mean	SD
Self-appraisal	4.44	0.51
Occupational information	4.24	0.43
Goal selection	4.40	0.51
Planning for the future	4.37	0.48
Problem solving	4.42	0.49
Total	4.37	0.48

Table 7. Descriptive Statistic	s of CDSE on Palu Youths
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Based on descriptive statistics that have been conducted on the CDSE scores of 20 Papua respondents, the average result shows that respondents have high CDSE (M = 4.10, SD = 0.56). Furthermore, among the five dimensions indicated in the CDSES-SF instrument used to measure the CDSE of Papua respondents, it was found that the highest mean score was the problem solving dimension (M = 4.47, SD = 0.58), while the lowest mean score was the planning for the future dimension (M = 3.37, SD = 0.56). This can be interpreted that, on average, male respondents have high confidence in their own abilities that goals in a particular career field can certainly be realized, but they have the lowest confidence in the future plans that will be made to choose a particular career field. Descriptive statistics regarding the description of the respondents' CDSE are further described in Table 8.

	Mean	SD
Self-appraisal	4.32	0.61
Occupational information	4.17	0.56
Goal selection	4.19	0.52
Planning for the future	3.37	0.56
Problem solving	4.47	0.58
Total	4.10	0.56

#### Table 8. Descriptive Statistics of CDSE on Papua Youths

#### Discussion

The results of the study show that young men and women from five ethnic regions in Indonesia have high levels of CDSE, although there are variations in specific dimension scores based on gender and ethnic background. Male youth showed the highest scores on the goal selection dimension, indicating their confidence in setting career goals. Meanwhile, women excelled on the occupational information dimension, indicating a tendency to be more active in seeking career information. This finding is in line with previous literature, which states that gender plays a role in the formation of career orientation through social roles and cultural expectations (Situmorang & Salim, 2021; Sawitri & Creed, 2015).

When viewed based on ethnicity, there are interesting and unique findings in each group. Firstly, for the Mentawai ethnicity, the goal and problem dimensions obtained the highest scores from respondents of Mentawai. This suggests that individuals are fairly confident when it comes to setting and meeting career goals and tackling challenges in their careers. However, the occupational information dimension has a lower score, indicating the need to strengthen access to career information in the Mentawai community.

Secondly, Kutai ethnicity shows a fairly high level of CDSE on the problem-solving dimension, but has the lowest score on planning for the future. This means that although they are confident in solving career problems, they have obstacles in designing long-term planning. This could be due to the lack of role models or long-term support in their community.

Thirdly, Lombok ethnicity has the highest score on occupational information, but the lowest on goal selection. This shows that although they are active in seeking career information, they have difficulty setting specific goals. This situation suggests that guidance interventions need to be focused on establishing clarity of career goals.

Fourthly, for Palu ethnicity, respondents from Palu showed stable levels in almost all CDSE dimensions, with self-appraisal as the highest score and occupational information as the lowest. This balance indicates a relatively stable profile, although efforts are still needed to improve career information so that they can make more informed decisions. Fifthly, Papua ethnicity has the highest CDSE level in the problem-solving dimension and the lowest in planning for the future. This may reflect confidence in overcoming current obstacles, but a lack of support or insight to develop long-term plans. Social, geographic, and cultural factors may contribute to limitations in access to information and long-term career expectations.

Overall, the differences in CDSE dimensions across ethnic groups demonstrate the importance of a culturally and contextually based approach in supporting career decision-making among Indonesian youth. The Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (Lent & Brown, 1996) that underlies this research emphasizes that self-efficacy is influenced by the interaction between personal (such as gender) and contextual factors (such as cultural background, family support, and access to information), as well as learning experiences that shape an individual's self-confidence in making career decisions (Gushue & Whitson, 2006; Lent et al., 2001; Lent et al., 2003; Lent et al., 2005; and Situmorang & Salim, 2021).

## Implications

Firstly, for Career Guidance and Counseling/Psychotherapy Practice: There needs to be a group-based or classical career guidance intervention that is adjusted to gender and cultural background to improve the CDSE aspect, which is still low. Secondly, for Education Policy: The results of the study can be input in designing a career development curriculum that is sensitive to culture and gender. And last but not least, for the Development of Training Modules, Career guidance modules for adolescents need to be prepared based on the results of this study, especially to improve dimensions such as planning for the future and goal selection.

#### **Limitations and Further Research**

This study has limitations in that the socio-cultural context is less in-depth, so specific social and cultural factors that influence CDSE are not explored qualitatively. However, although this study has limitations, this study can be the basis for further research, and is very interesting to be followed up by further researchers. Here are some ideas: 1) Longitudinal Research: To explore changes in CDSE over time and its relationship to actual career outcomes; 2) Mixed Methods: A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods can be used to explore cultural factors, family values, and social expectations; 3) Regional and Ethnic Expansion: Adding other ethnic groups to create a national CDSE map; 4) Experimental Intervention: Testing the effectiveness of culturally based training or counseling programs on improving CDSE; 5) Mediation and Moderation Analysis: Examining the role of other variables such as parenting, family values, or social support in the relationship between gender/ethnicity and CDSE.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the research data above related to the CDSE scores of all respondents, it can be concluded that male respondents have the highest dimension in goal selection, while the lowest dimension score is in planning for the future. Different from female respondents, which shows that the highest dimension is in occupational information, while the lowest dimension is in problem solving. Furthermore, the difference in the lowest dimension of each ethnic respondent, Mentawai and Palu in occupational information, Kutai and Papua in planning for the future, and Lombok in goal selection.

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## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Dominikus David Biondi Situmorang: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing–review & editing, Investigation, Data curation, Formal analysis, Validation, Resources, Funding acquisition, Visualization, and Software.

Magdalena Palang Lewoleba: Investigation, Data curation, Formal analysis, Project administration.

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