

# A Study on the Influences of High School Students' Spirituality and Resilience on their Career Attitude Maturity

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## Abstract

Career within one's life is an important development task that can determine the appearances and direction of one's life. It is also one of the important tasks that need to be undertaken during one's teenage years when one is going through a transitional period. As such, this study was conducted in an attempt to identify the variables of resilience that enables successful adjustment, overcoming of life's challenges and crises, and spirituality that enables internalization of one's values. By identifying these variables, the study seeks to understand the effect they have on career attitude maturity which, in turn, enables the teenager to realize her potential to the fullest. The findings of the study were as follows. The mean for teenagers' spirituality, resilience and career attitude maturity measured on a five point scale were, respectively,  $3.69 \pm 0.46$ ,  $3.59 \pm 0.43$ , and  $3.87 \pm 0.52$ . There was a significant correlation between spirituality and resilience ( $r=0.679, p<0.001$ ), between spirituality and career attitude maturity ( $r=0.538, p<0.001$ ), and between resilience and career attitude maturity ( $r=0.615, p<0.001$ ). Factors that affected career attitude maturity were resilience and spirituality and in that order, with an explanatory power of 39%. In conclusion, spirituality and resilience can be seen as important variables required for teenagers to proactively and creatively develop one's life when one is researching for future careers. Therefore, a mediating program that can help these teenagers to improve their spirituality and resilience needs to be developed.

**Keywords:** Career Attitude Maturity, High School Students, Resilience, Spirituality

## 1. Introduction

One's teenage years is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood where much stress is experienced related to academics, career, family relationships, romantic relationships, friendships, relationships with teachers, health and physical growth. Teenagers are also exposed to confusion of values, helplessness, self-centeredness, insensitivity to morals, bullying and school violence. Therefore, at a time when teenagers are undergoing rapid physical and mental growth, development of spirituality is needed in addition to having the right material conditions<sup>1</sup>. Such spirituality is something that can only be achieved ultimately by self-transcendence and through a

deep desire within oneself. Therefore, spirituality should not be discussed only within the framework of religion. It must be taken into account that spirituality exists within the process of acquiring knowledge as well. That is, there is a need to understand spirituality as having a tendency to own mental values and idealize such mentalities<sup>2</sup>. Spirituality changes the environment of schools in order to satisfy individual's needs and changes oneself as well. By doing so, it promotes the proactive and creative interaction between the school environment and the individual that seeks to achieve balance and harmony<sup>3</sup>.

Meanwhile resilience is producing results in a stressful situation, resisting psychologically risky situations, successfully adjusting to very dangerous situations and

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overcoming important obstacles<sup>4</sup>. In other words, it can be defined as 'a socio-psychological capability that can be developed and can bring about positive adjustment by overcoming one's obstacles.'<sup>5</sup>. Reference 6 noted that self-resilience is the process, potential or successful adjustment results that occur within a challenging situation in life and that by gradually improving the external environment into a protective process, small challenges can be made into opportunities for growth and one's ability to overcome such challenges improves. Moreover, resilience was noted as something that can be developed by friendly interaction with family, a supportive academic environment and various experiences for adventure<sup>7</sup>. In other words, more resilient teenagers are able to view things and people more positively and find beneficial aspects within them.

Career within the growth process of a human being is an important development task that can determine one's life and its direction. Students prepare for the career development tasks that need to be achieved at each age through career maturity. Career maturity is significant as a starting point for preparing for a happy future life and realizing one's potential to the full. By encouraging the student to proactively and creatively developing one's life, she can better develop her career and her approach towards it<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, career maturity discussed within the context of development theory throughout one's life, is closely related to one's life history, is affected by the interaction with the surrounding environment, which makes it all the more important for high school students<sup>9</sup>. One's high school years are an important period that allows one to search for the future career and establish one's career plans. This study was conducted in an attempt to identify the variables of resilience that enables successful adjustment, overcoming of life's challenges and crises and spirituality that enables internalization of one's values. By identifying these variables, the study seeks to understand the effect they have on career attitude maturity which, in turn, enables the teenager to realize her potential to the fullest.

## 2. Research Objects and Research Method

### 2.1 Research Objects

The subjects of this study were 228 high school students

who participated in the career experience program held by a university in region C, and who agreed to participate in this study. Before the survey, consent was acquired from their lead instructor and the survey was conducted by the researcher himself. A total of 230 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and collected, of which two copies were excluded due to insufficient responses and the remaining 228 copies (99.1%) were analyzed.

### 2.2 Research Tool

For the tools to measure the spirituality of high school students, the questionnaire developed by reference 10 was used. This questionnaire has five sub-categories of transcendence (5 questions), meaning and purpose of life (5 questions), mercy (5 questions), internal resources (5 questions), perception (5 questions) and connectivity (5 questions), making it a total of 30 questions. Responses to the questions on the spirituality of high school students were given on a 5 point Likert scale from Not at all (1 point), Not really (2 points), Average (3 points), more or less so (4 points) and Very much so (5 points). A higher total score indicates a higher spirituality in the student. The overall confidence of the scale in this study was Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.82$ .

The scale for self-resilience used in this study was the questionnaire that was revised by reference 11 from the original self-resilience scales developed by reference 12–14,16. Each question for the scale had a 5 point rating scale, with the higher score indicating higher resilience. The confidence level of this study was Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.85$ .

In order to measure career attitude maturity (level of maturity in their career consciousness), the questionnaire originally developed by reference 17 was used. The sub-variables for career consciousness maturity were determination (3,4,10,16), confirmation (5,8,15,18), goal-orientation (1,6,12,14), preparedness (9,11,13,20) and independence (2,7,17,19). In the study by reference 18 which was conducted on high school students majoring in humanities, Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.86$  for confidence level, while in this study Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.90$ .

### 2.3 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using SPSSWIN (ver. 18.0) program's technological statistics, T-test, ANOVA and the Pearson Correlation Coefficient.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of the subjects

(N=228)

Characteristics	Category	N	%
Sex	Male	76	33.3
	Female	152	66.7
Grade	1	119	52.2
	2	109	47.8
Score	High	49	21.5
	Middle	146	64.0
	Low	33	14.5
Religion	Protestant	76	33.3
	Catholic	17	7.5
	Buddhism	15	6.6
	Others	120	52.6
Father's job	Professional job	29	12.7
	Office work	94	41.2
	Sales/Service job	44	19.3
	Production	32	14.0
	Others	29	12.8
Mother's job	Professional	23	10.1
	office work	69	30.3
	Sales/Service job	70	30.7
	Production	19	8.3
	Housewife	32	14.0
	Others	15	6.6

### 3. Research Findings

The general characteristics of the subjects are as shown in Table 1. Female students took up 66.7% and in terms of grades, middle level students accounted for 64%. First year and second year students accounted for 52.2% and 47.8%, respectively. Those without a religion or who answered as 'other' accounted for 52.6%. In terms of the

father's occupation, 41.2% were administrative or office workers while in terms of the mother's occupation, sales or services accounted for 30.7%, each category taking up the largest share.

The spirituality, resilience and career attitude maturity are as shown in Table 2. The mean for spirituality was  $3.69 \pm 0.46$ , the mean for resilience was  $3.59 \pm 0.43$  and the mean for career attitude maturity was  $3.87 \pm 0.52$ .

**Table 2.** Homogeneity Comparison on Parenting efficacy and Resilience

Variables	Min	Max	Total item	Item
			M $\pm$ SD	M $\pm$ SD
Spirituality	74	147	110.79 $\pm$ 13.93	3.69 $\pm$ 0.46
Resilience	54	125	89.90 $\pm$ 10.85	3.59 $\pm$ 0.43
Career maturity	32	100	77.53 $\pm$ 10.56	3.87 $\pm$ 0.52

**Table 3.** Differences of spirituality, resilience and career attitude maturity by General Characteristics of the Participants

Characteristics	Category	spirituality	t/F	resilience	t/F	career attitude maturity	t/F
Sex	Male	3.93(0.46)	5.608**	3.77(0.50)	3.983**	4.08(0.43)	4.402**
	Female	3.57(0.42)		3.50(0.36)		3.77(0.53)	
Grade	1	3.82(0.47)	6.624**	3.68(0.42)	3.167*	4.01(0.45)	4.144**
	2	3.54(0.40)		3.50(0.42)		3.72(0.56)	
Score	High	3.69(0.49)	10.657**	3.73(0.43)	5.656*	4.05(0.39)	5.285*
	Middle	3.61(0.38)		3.59(0.40)		3.87(0.50)	
	Low	3.62(0.60)		3.40(0.48)		3.67(0.70)	
Religion	Protestant	3.88(0.45)	4.148*	3.70(0.45)	1.908	3.98(0.49)	3.553*
	Catholic	3.83(0.69)		3.56(0.45)		3.95(0.51)	
	Buddhism	3.65(0.69)		3.56(0.45)		3.84(0.82)	
	Others	3.58(0.38)		3.53(0.37)		3.73(0.49)	
Father's job	Professional job	4.01(0.36)	8.490**	3.73(0.36)	3.966*	4.07(0.41)	5.759**
	Office work	3.66(0.52)		3.56(0.46)		3.91(0.48)	
	Sales/Service job	3.77(0.41)		3.62(0.35)		3.81(0.44)	
	Production	3.52(0.31)		3.65(0.42)		3.93(0.59)	
	Others	3.31(0.47)		3.23(0.45)		3.35(0.73)	

Mother's job	Professional	3.69(0.24)	2.144	3.52(0.21)	3.195*	3.82(0.52)	2.976*
	office work	3.72(0.48)		3.65(0.40)		3.88(0.40)	
	Sales/Service job	3.71(0.46)		3.51(0.33)		3.87(0.57)	
	Production	3.74(0.23)		3.77(0.29)		3.95(0.47)	
	Housewife	3.66(0.57)		3.66(0.69)		3.95(0.54)	
	Others	3.14(0.60)		3.16(0.60)		3.15(0.78)	

**Table 4.** Correlation Matrix of Variables

Variables	spirituality	resilience	career attitude maturity
Spirituality	1		
Resilience	0.679**	1	
Career attitude maturity	0.538**	0.615**	1

\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.001$

Table 3 shows the spirituality, resilience and career attitude maturity in accordance with the general characteristics of the subjects. Spirituality differed across gender, grade year, grade, religion and father's occupation. Resilience showed difference across gender, grade year, grade and parents' occupation. Career attitude maturity showed difference across gender, grade year, grade, religion and parents' occupation.

The correlation between spirituality, resilience and career attitude maturity is as shown in Table 4. The correlation coefficient between spirituality and resilience was 0.679, while between spirituality and career attitude maturity it was 0.538 and between resilience and career attitude maturity it was 0.615, indicating significant correlation.

In order to identify the factors that affect the subject's career attitude maturity, an enter-type multiple regression was conducted. The tolerance was higher than 0.1 at 213~.821, and VIF was smaller than the reference value of 10 at 1.181~4.322, indicating that there were no issues of

multi-collinearity and therefore the basic assumptions for a multiple regression analysis were met. When spirituality and resilience were set as forecast variables, the linear regression model was statistically significant ( $F=68.63$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The R-squared or explanatory power was .395, explaining for 39% of the changes in career attitude maturity in the regression model 5.

## 4. Evaluation and Conclusion

Demographic factors that affect career attitude maturity included gender, grade year, grades, religion and parents' occupation. This is in line with the study by reference 19 where a positive correlation was found in male students. However, this is a different result from that of reference 20 where a positive correlation was found with grade year. In this study there was a negative correlation. In terms of grades, higher grades showed higher career attitude maturity, which is in line with the results of reference 21 that showed that grades were a significant effect variable.

**Table 5.** Factors influencing satisfaction in Major

Independent Variables	B	S.E	$\beta$	t	p	Adj R <sup>2</sup>	F	p
Constant	.826	.261		3.164	<.001	.395	68.63	<.001
Spirituality	.277	.084	0.241	3.290	<.001			
Resilience	.560	.092	0.445	6.073	<.001			

By taking into consideration these variables that had a significant positive correlation, students must be guided to build on their capability to select appropriate careers.

The correlation between spirituality and resilience, between spirituality and career attitude maturity, and between resilience and career attitude maturity all showed significant positive correlations. The fact that spirituality and resilience showed a positive correlation seems to indicate that existential spirituality which means the pursuit of a positive life by overcoming challenges is also closely related. In the study by reference 22, it was noted that in the relation between risk factors of the family and adjustment, self-resilience and existential spirituality had the most definite mediating effects as protective factors. This supports this study in that it emphasizes the important role of spirituality for teenagers exposed to risk factors.

In terms of resilience and career attitude maturity, the results were in line with those of reference 23 which studied the effects of self-resilience on career attitude maturity in industrial high school students. It seems that resilience allows one to resist internal and external stress and enable oneself to better adjust to the situation while improving one's capabilities to proactively develop a career.

Therefore, spirituality and resilience are important variables called for in developing career development capabilities and attitudes when teenagers who are going through a transitional period start to take initiative in their life. This leads to the need for developing programs that can help improve spirituality and resilience.

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