
ELEVATING JOB SEARCH EFFECTIVENESS: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING AND SELF- CONTROL

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Abstract

Purpose. Securing employment in the current dynamic job market necessitates the proactive prioritization of one's employability. The purpose of this study was to determine how self-directed learning (SDL) and self-control practices (SCPs) influence job-seeking

behavior (JSB).

Design/methodology/approach. A comprehensive survey was conducted to collect data from 323 students graduating from esteemed educational institutions in Nepal. The survey included various components, such as SDL, SCPs, JSB, and participant details. The assessment was conducted with JSB, which was divided into behavioral factors, personal factors, and skills and competencies. SDL, comprising goal setting and planning, cognitive control and focus, and skills and competence, and SCPs, comprising impulse management and self-discipline, cognitive control and focus, and emotional regulation and resilience, were evaluated. These factors were assessed using a Likert-type scale comprised of 5-point ratings. The credibility of the data was validated through confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM).

Findings. The research hypothesized, on the basis of self-efficacy theory, that both SDL and SCPs have significant effects on JSB. A positive correlation between SCPs and JSB ($\beta = 0.628$; $p < 0.01$) and SDL and JSB ($\beta = 0.356$; $p < 0.01$) was confirmed through path analysis. The research emphasized that SCPs and SDL attitudes constituted 89.0% of the variance in JSB in Nepal, demonstrating their significant influence. The fitness indices of the model were deemed satisfactory, providing policymakers and educators with vital insights.

Research implications. The findings emphasize the significance of cultivating emotional regulation skills, self-efficacy consciousness, and guided counseling to enable graduates to embark on their professional trajectories with resilience and a sense of purpose in their education. Academic institutions and instructors significantly influence students toward successful career progression through their emphasis on the interplay between self-regulation and self-directed learning.

Keywords: *career aspirations enhancement, empowerment, employment readiness, individual characteristics, job search success*

JEL Classification: D83, I23, I28, J24, J64, M54

1. Introduction

Human capital is the most precious resource in the digital economy. Human capital development is mostly influenced by education and skills development. Public education in Nepal is poor, and the development of marketable skills is rare and expensive. Quality private schools are concentrated in city areas, mostly for wealthy children. Ironically, these children leave Nepal after finishing school and training to work abroad (Sharma, 2019). Young people from Nepal have been leaving for economic possibilities overseas in recent years, especially in the past decade. The Nepal Labor Force Survey 2017/18 reports an 11.4% national unemployment rate, with 70.5% of the unemployed living in cities (Central

Bureau of Statistics, 2019). The unemployment rate is high among young people: 38.1% for those aged 15–24 and 31.1% for 25–34. Several push and pull factors cause many Nepalese to go abroad for temporary work. Despite travel problems, young people often idealize their experiences and inspire others. The inflated importance of personal experiences inspires some who believe that the only way to succeed is to pursue opportunities abroad, even though this may be untrue (Paudel & Pyakurel, 2018).

Individuals interested in securing and maintaining meaningful employment in today's fast-changing job market must consider their employability to succeed. Because of developments in technology (Ashford, 2011; Hayat et al., 2022; Dahal et al., 2023), globalization (Sorensen et al., 2021; Thaller et al., 2023; Vaiman et al., 2021), and shifting economic landscapes (Hunter et al., 2023; Lou et al., 2023), there has been a significant shift in the dynamics of the employment market. Unsurprisingly, the conventional concept of job stability has given way to a demand for flexible, talented, and self-driven workers who can negotiate these changes with resilience and efficiency (Ghimire et al., 2023). In this context, employability involves possessing the essential skills and qualifications and a more extensive range of characteristic behaviors contributing to an individual's success in locating and retaining suitable employment. For example, an employable individual can communicate, utilize creativity, and work well with others. Job-seeking behavior (JSB) is a term widely used to describe an individual's proactive attempts to seek out and seize work possibilities, and can be viewed as one of the most critical aspects of an individual's employability.

Self-directed learning (SDL) has received much attention as an essential element of employability in the modern job market (Pratibha, 2017). The SDL hypothesis, put forth by Boyce et al. (2010), contended that people naturally desire to learn and develop their skills independently outside formal educational settings. This idea fits with lifelong learning, encouraging people to learn new things (Dahal, 2022) and adapt to changing job requirements. Previous studies have shown that individuals participating in SDL activities have a broader range of talents, better problem-solving capabilities, and more adaptability to changing work environments (Dahal, 2021; Joshi et al., 2023). It is well known that improving one's employability will increase the likelihood of landing desired job opportunities.

Conversely, self-control pertains to an individual's capacity to regulate their urges, feelings, and actions to accomplish their goals (Baumeister, 2002; De Ridder & Gillebaart, 2017; Shahi et al., 2022). Self-control is related to complex levels of happiness and life pleasure. Practices that foster self-control might encourage persistent and intentional involvement in JSBs, increasing the likelihood of positive employment outcomes. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to be conscious of the elements that contribute to or inhibit JSB from facilitating effective transitions into the workforce. According to Wanberg et al. (2020), JSB comprises various actions, including actively searching for job vacancies, networking, preparing applications, interviewing, and negotiating job offers. According to Chen and Lim (2012) and Werbel (2000), the degree to which individuals engage in productive JSB can significantly impact the likelihood that they will successfully acquire desirable work opportunities.

SDL and self-control practices (SCPs) are two critical psychological variables that are believed to substantially impact job-searching individuals' behavior. Therefore, the following question arises: How do SDL, SCPs, and JSB interact? In employability, self-control can influence an individual's ability to persist in job-seeking activities even when faced with setbacks or uncertainties. How can SDL and SCPs affect people's ability to empower themselves and become more employable?

There is a need for more comprehensive empirical investigations that delve into the complicated linkages that exist between SDL, SCPs, and JSB. This is the case even though the worth of SDL and SCPs directed in the context of employability has been established. While some of the individual aspects of these constructs and their effects on employability have been investigated in previous studies, comprehensive knowledge regarding how these factors interact and collectively affect JSB is still lacking.

This research outlines the following specific goals:

- 1) to examine the interplay between SDL, SCPs, and JSB;
- 2) to explore SDL and SCPs that affect the empowerment of employability.

The study seeks to provide insights that can inform educational institutions, career development programs, and policy initiatives. Ultimately, the findings of this research could contribute to the design of more effective involvement programs aimed at enriching individuals' capacity to navigate the job market successfully and secure employment that aligns with their skills, aspirations, and long-term career goals.

2. Literature Review

Bandura's (2001) social cognitive theory highlights the bidirectional interplay between an individual's cognitive processes, behavior, and environment (Kim & Baylor, 2006). The central idea of this theory is self-efficacy, which refers to a person's belief in their capacity to carry out activities successfully and produce desired results. In employability, self-efficacy plays a vital role in shaping JSB (Chow et al., 2019). SDL and SCPs can contribute to the development of self-efficacy by enhancing individuals' mastery over their learning and behavioral outcomes (Saeid & Eslaminejad, 2017).

According to the literature, there are three major viewpoints on SDL: (1) SDL as a method that emphasizes student autonomy during the learning process; (2) SDL from a psychological perspective, emphasizing a learner's capacity for process control; and (3) contextual SDL that emphasizes the surrounding circumstances (Ellinger, 2004; Merriam, 2001; Park, 2008). The first point of view is the SDL procedure. According to Ellinger (2004), SDL is frequently employed as a teaching or learning approach. This is in line with Knowles' definition from 1975, which lists six steps in which the learner assumes leadership: (1) setting up the ideal learning environment; (2) identifying the learner's needs; (3) formulating learning goals; (4) locating the necessary people and resources; (5) choosing

and putting effective learning strategies into practice; and (6) evaluating the outcomes of the learning process. From this perspective, individuals who independently choose what they want to learn and how they want to learn it by completing the six stages described above exemplify good SDL conduct.

Ryan and Deci (2017) focused on individuals' intrinsic motivation and the factors that promote autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Concerning SDL, this theory proposes that individuals are more inclined to participate in self-directed activities when they perceive them as aligned with their interests and goals (Aljafari, 2019; Confessore & Kops, 1998). Additionally, self-determination theory underscores the significance of autonomy (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Ntoumanis & Standage, 2009; Tam et al., 2022) in fostering greater motivation and persistence. SDL and SCPs can be viewed through this goal-setting theory (Kolb & Boyatzis, 1970), as both involve establishing goals. Self-directed learners set goals related to acquiring new skills and knowledge (Bonk et al., 2015), while individuals practicing self-direction (Frieze & Hofmann, 2009) set goals to regulate their behaviors and impulses (Baumeister, 2002). Operative goal setting within these constructs can influence the intensity and persistence of JSB by providing individuals with clear targets and a sense of purpose. These constructs influence individuals' motivation, self-efficacy, goal-setting, and self-regulation capacities, all critical components of employability. This research seeks to stipulate a deeper intuition regarding the psychological mechanisms that empower individuals to navigate the job market effectively and secure meaningful employment opportunities.

It was pointed out by Silva et al. (2023) that the process of looking for a job is affected by the external setting as well as the fear of financial hardship; this reveals the multifaceted nature of employability. Bozgeyikli et al. (2023) explored how gender, socioeconomic status, and academic motivation are interconnected with apparent employability. Their findings highlighted the complex nature of the elements influencing job seekers' perceptions of their employability. Tuononen and Hyytinen (2022) highlighted the significance of employability variables for early career success. This emphasis echoes the importance of JSB in transitioning from school to the workforce. Kanar and Bouckennooghe (2021) investigated regulatory attention and SDL during the job hunt. Their research reflects the self-regulation tactics that job seekers may use. Furthermore, Lo Presti et al. (2023) observed that the development of interns' employability requires organizational assistance and social networking opportunities beyond pro-activity.

Similarly, Song et al. (2020) highlighted the moderating influence of metacognitive processes on the connection between the duration of job search efforts and their outcomes. The study on self-regulation and unfolding processes that Veiga et al. (2018) conducted refers to the adaptive methods that job searchers choose to implement. Peeters et al. (2022) demonstrated that professional resilience can respond to changes in a career, which is congruent with the resilience that job seekers require while looking for work. According to Kreemers et al. (2018), one potential method of coping with distressing job-seeking experiences is to practice self-compassion. The discussion of self-regulation tactics by van Hoof

(2018) resonated with the SCPs investigated in the research. Like the importance of SDL and self-control in the research, Georgiou et al. (2012) highlighted the impact of individual traits on job seeking. According to Bae and Kim (2016), those who have lower levels of self-esteem, as well as those who exhibit higher levels of pessimism, depression, external locus of control, and type A behavior patterns, are more likely to practice higher levels of stress when searching for work. The findings of Baay et al. (2014) underscored the significance of self-control in anticipating job-seeking actions aligned with exploring SCPs. Gao and Eccles (2020) presented the developmental trajectories of career goals, which mirror the fluid character of JSB. The current investigation builds upon the theoretical and empirical insights on this topic. As a result, the study proposes the following study framework:

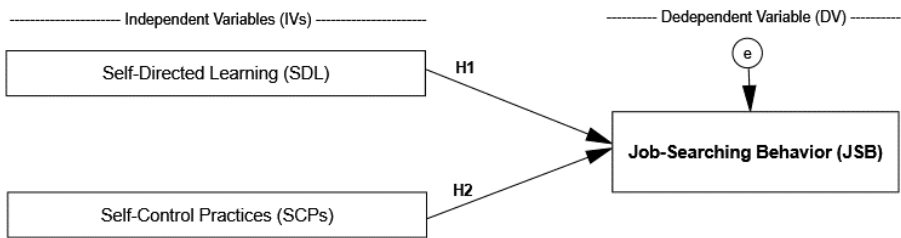


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Study Hypothesis

H1: An individual’s SDL positively and significantly affects their JSB.

H2: An individual’s SCPs positively and significantly affect their JSB.

3. Materials and Methods

The study worked with primary data from students graduating from popular universities and colleges in Nepal. Although the impressions of employability generated by Rothwell et al.’s (2009) multi-cultural post-graduate sample were positive, they gave considerable weight to the university’s reputation and brand. Hence, this study centered on individuals actively involved in various job preparation activities and courses to enhance their employment prospects between 2022 and 2023. The required information on the participants’ demographic characteristics, SDL tendencies, self-control strategies, and job-searching actions were collected using a structured survey instrument. Throughout the whole process, the participants’ identities and confidentiality were ensured by the study.

An intensive field study was conducted in Nepal’s capital city of Kathmandu between September 2022 and April 2023. The survey aimed to gather information from a convenience sample of 700 participants. For a full examination, 323 survey responses were gathered and recorded, as Hair et al. (2018) stated that at least 200 answers are deemed appropriate for efficient route analysis-based hypothesis testing in social science research. Table

1 provides specifics on these participants’ demographic traits.

Table 1. The participants’ demographic characteristics

	<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%	
<i>Education level:</i>			<i>Age group:</i>			
	Undergraduates	164	50.8	25 yrs. and below	186	57.6
	Graduates	159	49.2	26–30 yrs.	101	31.3
<i>Sex:</i>				31–35 yrs.	34	10.5
	Male	107	33.1	36 yrs. and above	2	0.06
	Female	216	66.9			
Total	323	100.0	Total	323	100.0	

The literature review reveals that the two crucial psychological factors that are thought to have a significant influence on the behavior of job seekers are SDL and SCPs. The survey instrument consisted of a total of 35 questions, which encompassed 3 inquiries of general participant information, 10 questions regarding SDL, 11 questions regarding SCPs, and 11 questions concerning an individual’s JSB. The researchers utilized a 5-point Likert-type scale to formulate the inquiries on SDL, SCPs, and JSB. Table 2 presents the details of the questionnaire

Table 2. Survey instrument questionnaire

Constructs, sub-constructs, and observed variables	
SDL	<i>A. Goal Setting and Planning [GSP]</i>
	1. I am able to establish specific objectives for my job search.
	2. I have good organizational and planning skills when it comes to my job search.
	3. I am able to divide the job search process into more manageable chunks of work.
	<i>B. Self-Monitoring and Adaptability [SMA]</i>
	4. I keep watching closely my development and modify my job-seeking tactics as necessary.
	5. I employ a variety of techniques to improve my comprehension of the labor market and business trends.
	6. I consider my experiences in the job search and apply what I’ve learned to better my next attempts.
	<i>C. Motivation and Emotional Regulation [MER]</i>
	7. I am really motivated and committed to locating a job that suits me.
	8. I am able to control my emotions and have an optimistic outlook when looking for a job.
9. In the event that my job search encounters obstacles, I look for more resources and help.	
10. I believe I can gain new skills and adapt to job market changes.	

SCPs	<p><i>D. Cognitive Control and Focus [CCF]</i></p>
	<p>11. I control distractions well and maintain my attention on the duties at hand in my job search.</p>
	<p>12. I am able to constantly work on my job search activities and withstand the need to put things off.</p>
	<p>13. When it comes to my job search, I make thoughtful decisions and prioritize long-term gains over short-term satisfaction.</p>
	<p><i>E. Emotional Regulation and Resilience [ERR]</i></p>
	<p>14. I possess the ability to control my emotions and maintain control when looking for a job.</p>
	<p>15. I take a balanced approach to the job search process and am able to properly manage pressure and stress.</p>
	<p>16. I constantly exercise great self-control when it comes to setting priorities and handling conflicting demands on my time.</p>
	<p><i>F. Impulse Management and Self-Discipline [IMSD]</i></p>
	<p>17. I take the initiative to refrain from making snap judgments that could impede my job search.</p>
	<p>18. Throughout the job search, I exercise self-control by not engaging in self-defeating thoughts or actions.</p>
	<p>19. I possess the self-control to stick to my job search schedule and complete the tasks I have scheduled.</p>
<p>20. I am flexible and open to job search opportunities.</p>	
<p>21. I persevere through job search disappointments and seek other opportunities.</p>	

JSB	<p><i>G. Skills and Competences [SCs]</i></p>
	<p>22. A perceived deficiency in expertise or understanding regarding the efficient pursuit of employment prospects.</p>
	<p>23. Difficulty communicating and establishing rapport with others, which may have an impact on the results of job searches.</p>
	<p>24. Perceived incompetence and a failure to stay abreast of professional developments can impede the success of a job search.</p>
	<p>25. Failure to utilize one's personal strengths and distinctive abilities to distinguish oneself in the labor market.</p>
	<p><i>H. Personal Factors [PFs]</i></p>
	<p>26. The idea that one's look has a detrimental effect on one's ability to find employment.</p>
	<p>27. An obstacle to employment could be a lack of self-confidence.</p>
	<p>28. Unmotivated to look for a job that balances work and life.</p>
	<p><i>I. Behavioral Factors [BFs]</i></p>
	<p>29. The necessity to increase tenacity and avoid becoming disheartened during the job seeking process.</p>
	<p>30. Proactive behaviors are exhibited by me, including reaching out to potential employers and networking.</p>
	<p>31. I am prepared to modify my job search approaches in response to evolving market dynamics.</p>
<p>32. I proactively solicit and process feedback obtained during my job searches in order to enhance my methodology.</p>	

The study used Cronbach's alpha to evaluate the internal consistency and reliability of variables. Table 3 summarizes the results of this assessment conducted as part of the data screening process. Furthermore, Table 3 depicts the Harman one-factor test result for assessing the common methodological bias of the dataset.

Table 3. Data screening insights

		Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Harman-one factor test variance
IVs	<i>Self-Directed Learning [SDL]</i>			0.4746
	Goal Setting & Planning [GSP]	3	0.821	
	Self-Monitoring & Adaptability [SMA]	3	0.841	
	Motivation & Emotional Regulation [MER]	4	0.752	
	Self-Control Practices [SCPs]:			
	Cognitive Control & Focus [CCF]	3	0.758	
	Emotional Regulation & Resilience [ERR]	3	0.797	
Impulse Management & Self-Discipline [IMSD]	5	0.873		
DV	<i>Job-Searching Behavior [JSB]:</i>			
	Skills and Competences [SCs]	4	0.792	
	Personal Factors [PFs]	3	0.757	
	Behavioral Factors [BFs)	4	0.702	
Total number of observed variables		32		
Cut-off values and suggested by:			≥0.70 Taber (2018)	≤0.50 Cho & Lee (2012)

As per the recommendation proposed by Taber (2018), the study revealed that all Cronbach's alpha values exceeded the cut-off value of 0.70, indicating satisfactory reliability and internal consistency for the observed variables. Furthermore, the study conducted the Harman one-factor test on the 32 observed variables. The variance was 47.462%, which supports the lack of any substantial problems due to common technique bias and is less than Cho and Lee's (2012) proposed cut-off value of 50%.

Concerning legitimacy issues, Table 4 evaluates the convergent validity of the constructs by utilizing measures such as construct reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE).

Table 4. Convergent legitimacy insights

	SDL			SCPs			JSB			Major constructs		
	GSP	SMA	MER	CCF	ERR	IMSD	SC	PFs	BFs	SDL	SCPs	JSB
CR	0.857	0.852	0.794	0.771	0.804	0.879	0.763	0.803	0.805	0.827	0.959	0.836
AVE	0.677	0.663	0.504	0.529	0.580	0.593	0.512	0.579	0.508	0.630	0.886	0.632

The obtained results for convergent legitimacy met the suggested threshold values ($CR \geq 0.70$ and $AVE \geq 0.50$) as proposed by Hair et al. (2018), indicating that the data can be confidently utilized for subsequent analysis. Furthermore, the study noted the absence of multi-collinearity, as the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.818$) between the two independent primary constructs (SDL and SCPs) falls within the recommended range of 0.30 to 0.90, as suggested by Hair et al. (2018). This phenomenon facilitates the assessment of study hypotheses among the reflective constructs.

4. Analysis and Outcomes

After conducting data screening tests and subsequent validation procedures, the re-search employed structural equation modeling and path analysis, using analysis of moment structure (AMOS) version 24 software to assess the significance of the study’s hypotheses and the model’s predictive capability for outcomes. The calculation of diverse correlation coefficients aided in accomplishing this task for each latent variable. Figure 2 provides a graphical depiction of both the process of standardizing estimates and the model fit indices of the underlying model.

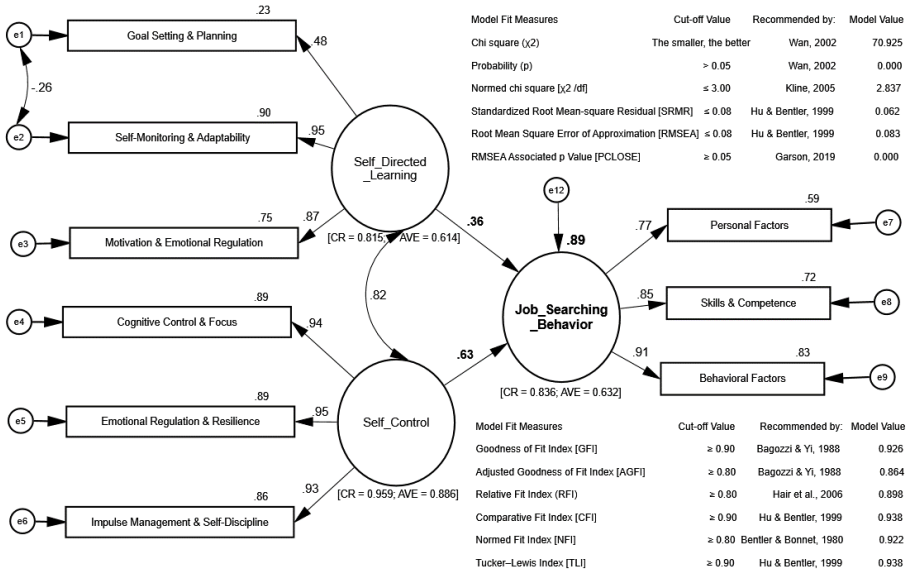


Figure 2. The study model

Path analysis shows a statistically positive and significant association between SDL on JSB ($\beta = 0.356; p < 0.01$) and SCPs on JSB ($\beta = 0.628; p < 0.01$). The SDL attitude and SCPs

of young graduates explain approximately 89.0% of JSB in Nepal. Furthermore, the model utilized in the study exhibited sufficient and satisfactory fitness indices, as all metrics met the recommended threshold level. The estimated values for the parameters representing the hypothesized paths were derived using path analysis and are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Outcomes – regression paths

Hypotheses	Unstandardized reg. estimates	Standardized reg. estimates	Standard error	Critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value	Remarks
H1: Self-Directed Learning ---> JSB	0.307	0.356	0.051	5.984	***	Accepted
H2: Self-Control Practices ---> JSB	0.358	0.628	0.037	9.802	***	Accepted

The process of job searching using the SDL involves identifying and cultivating the skills required to fulfil employers’ expectations. This platform enables individuals seeking employment to enhance their learning journey and competitiveness as candidates by personalizing their educational experience through goal-setting and action plan development. Individuals who engage in SDL during job searching understand the significance of delineating both short-term and long-term objectives. Moreover, they can deconstruct these objectives into tangible and achievable steps. Hence, the significance of SDL in the JSB of young graduates is recognized and confirmed through H1.

Many recent college graduates frequently encounter the difficulty of effectively managing the demands of job-seeking endeavors alongside their other obligations. Self-control strategies in job seeking involve the effective management of emotions and the cultivation of a positive mindset, which empower recent graduates to handle these emotions constructively, thereby fostering motivation and resilience. Therefore, it can be argued that utilizing SCPs is highly important for recent college graduates to maintain concentration, dedication, and drive while seeking employment. Consequently, the aforementioned study recognized and validated H2.

5. Discussion

As all measurements met the suggested threshold level, the model used in the study also showed sufficient and satisfactory fitness indices. Young graduates’ SDL attitudes and SCPs account for approximately 89.0% of JSB in Nepal. This supports the claim that SDL and self-control techniques can aid in the growth of self-efficacy by improving people’s control over their behavioral and educational results (Saeid & Eslaminejad, 2017). In a different study, people who practiced self-control (Frieze & Hofmann, 2009) set objectives to control their behaviors and urges (Baumeister, 2002), whereas self-directed learners set

goals connected to learning new skills and knowledge (Bonk et al., 2015). The study's findings offer practical proof in favor of the link between SDL on JSB ($\beta = 0.356$; $p < 0.01$) and SCPs on JSB ($\beta = 0.628$; $p < 0.01$) in young Nepalese people, which is both positive and significant. The most crucial elements of SDL are self-monitoring and adaptability, then motivation and emotional control, followed by goal setting and planning. The combined effect of these elements promotes a sustainable and efficient process of SDL. The most significant factors affecting self-control are emotional regulation and resilience, then cognitive control and focus, and finally impulse management and self-discipline. The combination of these elements promotes the development of a robust sense of self-regulation and facilitates the efficient handling of actions, thoughts, and feelings.

Resonating with van Hooff's (2018) framework of self-control strategies, the self-control techniques meticulously examined in this research draw parallels to the crucial roles that self-control and SDL play in JSB. This consistency highlights the universal applicability of certain fundamental principles, which transcend disciplinary boundaries. The consistency between research on SCPs and the findings of Baay et al. (2014) reaffirms the inherent relationship between self-control and predicting job-seeking outcomes. In order to acquire a comprehensive understanding of job search patterns, it is necessary to evaluate a multitude of factors, encompassing personal attributes, capabilities and proficiencies, and behavioral tendencies. These factors significantly influence the efficacy and achievements of an individual during their job search.

The SDL hypothesis, as advanced by Boyce et al. (2010), asserted a fundamental concept: individuals have an innate propensity to engage in learning and skill development independently, a tendency that extends beyond the structured confines of traditional educational environments. This idea is consistent with the concept of perpetual learning, which is based on the belief that individuals demonstrate an ongoing commitment to acquiring new information and adapting to the changing demands of the employment landscape. This inclination aligns with the broader philosophy of lifelong learning, where education is perceived as an ongoing journey rather than a distinct phase.

6. Conclusions

This study demonstrates that young graduates' SDL attitudes and SCPs significantly impact their JSB in Nepal. This linkage, where SDL attitudes and SCPs jointly contribute to a substantial portion of JSB, highlights their pivotal role in shaping individuals' career pursuits. The positive correlation between these factors underscores the notion that cultivating SDL and practicing self-control can positively influence an individual's self-efficacy. Moreover, it suggests that enhancing SDL and self-control can boost self-efficacy by allowing individuals to better control their educational and behavioral outcomes. By honing these skills, individuals gain greater control over their educational pursuits and behavioral decisions, ultimately contributing to more favorable outcomes. This adaptation underscores

the graceful nature of career development, where the ability to learn autonomously and manage impulses becomes an indispensable trait for navigating dynamic professional environments successfully.

The correlation between SDL and self-control underscores the intrinsic interdependence that characterizes growth and development at an individual level. Resilience and emotional regulation are essential for fostering effective self-control because they support the ability for self-monitoring and adaptation, which is the foundation of SDL. In contrast, SDL requires motivation and emotional regulation, whereas self-control emphasizes concentration and cognitive control. This illustrates the significance of cognitive and emotional factors in both processes.

In general, the similarities between SDL and self-control emphasize the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach to individual growth in which adaptive and efficient self-management strategies are fostered through the interaction of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. Developing a thorough comprehension of these interconnected components may result in enhanced and enduring individual progress and maturation. This highlights the inherent human desire to evolve, learn, and enhance one's abilities to stay relevant and competent, whether in pursuing scientific advancements or meaningful employment. People are motivated to acquire new skills and knowledge outside of the traditional academic setting, which denotes an individual's priorities for personal growth and self-improvement. The study underscores the universality of these concepts across domains, be it scientific inquiry or job-seeking activities, emphasizing the enduring quest for self-improvement and knowledge enhancement. This inclination corresponds with lifelong learning, where individuals consistently adapt and acquire new skills and knowledge to match the demands of the employment landscape.

The study's findings can help educators, psychoanalysts, and institutions use self-control and SDL to guide young graduates' careers. The study suggests including emotional regulation training to promote self-control. Educators can help job seekers overcome obstacles by teaching them how to control their emotions. This helps to develop self-discipline, helping graduates overcome obstacles and make informed rather than impulsive decisions. Self-control and SDL can reform careers. SDL encourages people to try new things and develop their skills and experiences. It encourages graduates to diagnose how self-efficacy beliefs affect decision-making to promote self-control. Understanding how beliefs affect behaviors helps people avoid impulsive decisions and make long-term, goal-aligned choices. The study shows that self-control and SDL work together for professional growth. Using emotional regulation training, tailoring learning experiences, promoting self-efficacy awareness, and providing guided psychoanalysis, educators and institutions can help graduates navigate their careers with resilience, purpose, and proactive learning and decision-making.

The study used convenience sampling and self-reported data in a cross-sectional design. However, more research is needed to reveal the psychometric qualities of the assessment instrument. Future research could focus on user demographics, including cultural

background, educational attainment, talents, and learning attitudes. Comparative analyses across industries and nations can illuminate contextual differences and broaden the field. In addition, including mediating factors, employers' perspectives, and psychological features may help academics comprehend the psychological underpinnings of job search behavior. Intervention studies and longitudinal analyses could help researchers understand the causal linkages and temporal dynamics of JSB. By studying causation across time, researchers can better understand how psychological variables affect job search actions. Categorizing this study's shortcomings and suggesting further research can advance job search behavior research.

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