

Preparing for An Unwritten Future: Development and Validation of the Future Readiness Framework

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ABSTRACT

Preparing young people for rapidly evolving educational and labour market environments requires a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing their readiness for future academic and career transitions. Although previous research has examined career readiness, employability, and future skills separately, limited attention has been given to integrating these constructs within a unified framework. This study introduces the Future Readiness Framework (FRF), comprising three dimensions—Career Decision Clarity, Future Skills Orientation, and Self-Perceived Competencies—and develops the Future Readiness Questionnaire (FRQ) as a corresponding assessment instrument. A quantitative cross-sectional design was employed using survey data from 768 Lebanese secondary school students who participated in the educational initiative Your Future Is Not a Guess. The instrument was evaluated using reliability analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), descriptive statistics, and Pearson correlation analysis. Findings supported a refined 14-item, three-factor structure with satisfactory reliability and construct validity. Significant positive relationships among the three dimensions confirmed that future readiness is a multidimensional construct. Students reported the highest levels of Future Skills Orientation, whereas Career Decision Clarity recorded the lowest scores, highlighting the need for stronger career guidance during secondary education. The study contributes a novel conceptual framework and a practical assessment instrument to support educators, career counsellors, and policymakers in enhancing students' preparedness for higher education and the future workforce.

Keywords: Career guidance; Education; Future readiness; Future skills; School; Students; University; Workforce preparedness

1. Introduction

The twenty-first century has witnessed unprecedented technological, economic, and societal transformations that continue to reshape education and employment worldwide. Rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI), automation, digital technologies, and globalisation are altering the nature of work, creating new occupations while transforming or eliminating existing ones. Consequently, success in future labour markets increasingly depends not only on academic knowledge but also on individuals' ability to adapt, make informed career decisions, continuously develop relevant competencies, and respond effectively to changing professional environments^{[1][2]}.

Educational institutions therefore face growing expectations to prepare students for careers characterised by uncertainty rather than predictability. Beyond transmitting disciplinary knowledge, schools are expected to cultivate transferable skills, career awareness, adaptability, critical thinking, collaboration, digital literacy, and lifelong learning capabilities that enable students to navigate complex educational and occupational pathways. These expectations have shifted the focus of education from preparing students for specific jobs to preparing them for continuous career development throughout their lives^{[3][4]}.

Secondary education represents a particularly important stage in this process. During these formative years, students begin exploring personal interests, evaluating educational opportunities, selecting academic specialisations, and forming initial career aspirations that may influence their future educational and professional trajectories. However, these decisions are frequently made despite limited knowledge of labour market trends, emerging occupations, or the competencies required for future success. As a result, many students experience uncertainty regarding their educational choices and long-term career planning, reinforcing the importance of effective career guidance and future-oriented educational interventions^{[5][6]}.

Existing research has extensively examined constructs related to students' preparedness for future transitions, including career readiness, career adaptability, employability, career decision-making, self-efficacy, and twenty-first-century skills. Collectively, these studies have significantly advanced understanding of the factors influencing educational and career development. Nevertheless, the literature remains largely fragmented, with most studies investigating these constructs independently rather than examining how they interact to shape students' overall preparedness for future academic and professional challenges^{[7][8]}.

This fragmentation limits the ability of educators and researchers to obtain a comprehensive understanding of students' readiness for an increasingly dynamic future. A student may possess strong technical or transferable skills yet remain uncertain about future educational or career

choices. Conversely, students with clear career aspirations may lack confidence in their own competencies or awareness of the skills demanded by rapidly evolving labour markets. Assessing these dimensions separately therefore provides only a partial representation of students' preparedness, highlighting the need for an integrated framework capable of capturing multiple aspects of future readiness simultaneously^{[9][10][11]}.

To address this gap, this study proposes the Future Readiness Framework (FRF), a multidimensional conceptual framework that defines future readiness through three complementary dimensions: Career Decision Clarity, Future Skills Orientation, and Self-Perceived Competencies. Building upon this framework, the study also develops the Future Readiness Questionnaire (FRQ) as a practical instrument designed to assess future readiness among secondary school students.

The proposed framework was empirically evaluated using survey data collected from Lebanese secondary school students participating in the educational initiative *Your Future Is Not a Guess*. The psychometric properties of the instrument were assessed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, and correlation analysis to examine both its validity and the relationships among the proposed dimensions.

This study contributes to the literature in three important ways. First, it introduces a multidimensional conceptualisation of future readiness that integrates educational decision-making, future-oriented skills awareness, and self-perceived competencies within a single framework. Second, it provides the first preliminary empirical validation of the Future Readiness Framework (FRF) and the Future Readiness Questionnaire (FRQ), offering researchers and practitioners a reliable instrument for assessing students' preparedness for future educational and career transitions. Third, the findings provide practical evidence that can support educators, career counsellors, school leaders, and policymakers in designing career education programmes and interventions that better prepare young people for higher education and the future workforce.

2. Literature Review and Conceptual Background

2.1 Future Readiness as an Emerging Educational Construct

The accelerating pace of technological advancement, digital transformation, and labour market disruption has intensified the need to prepare individuals for careers characterised by continuous change rather than long-term stability. Emerging occupations, evolving competency requirements, and the increasing integration of artificial intelligence into professional environments have shifted educational priorities from knowledge acquisition alone towards developing learners who can adapt, innovate, and make informed career decisions throughout their lives^{[9][10]}.

Within this context, the concept of **future readiness** has gained increasing attention among educators, policymakers, and researchers. Although the term has been widely adopted in educational discourse, no universally accepted definition currently exists. Instead, future readiness has been described through related concepts such as career readiness, employability, lifelong learning, adaptability, resilience, digital competence, and twenty-first-century skills. These perspectives collectively suggest that preparing students for the future requires more than academic achievement; it involves equipping them with the confidence, competencies, and decision-making abilities necessary to navigate uncertain educational and professional environments^[11].

Educational systems increasingly recognise that future readiness extends beyond preparing students for their first job. Rather, it encompasses the ability to evaluate opportunities, respond to changing labour market demands, acquire new competencies throughout one's career, and maintain confidence in making educational and professional decisions. Consequently, future readiness should be viewed as a multidimensional construct reflecting both present capabilities and preparedness for future transitions^{[12][13]}.

Despite growing recognition of its importance, empirical research remains fragmented, with most studies examining isolated dimensions of student preparedness rather than adopting an integrated perspective. This fragmentation limits both theoretical development and practical assessment, highlighting the need for a comprehensive framework capable of capturing the multiple dimensions that collectively shape students' readiness for future academic and career pathways^[14].

2.2 Existing Perspectives on Student Preparedness

Research examining students' preparedness for future educational and career transitions has generally evolved around several complementary theoretical perspectives.

Career readiness focuses on an individual's preparedness to make informed educational and occupational decisions while successfully transitioning into higher education or employment. It emphasises career exploration, decision-making confidence, and goal setting as essential components of successful career development^{[10][27]}.

Closely related is **career adaptability**, which refers to individuals' capacity to anticipate, prepare for, and respond effectively to changing educational and occupational circumstances. Adaptability has become increasingly important as career paths become less linear and more dynamic, requiring continuous learning and flexibility throughout professional life^{[12][15]}.

A third perspective concerns **employability**, defined as the combination of knowledge, skills, personal attributes, and attitudes that enhance an individual's ability to obtain, maintain, and progress within employment. Contemporary employability frameworks increasingly emphasise transferable competencies such as communication, teamwork, critical thinking, creativity, leadership, and digital literacy alongside technical expertise^{[13][16]}.

Researchers have also highlighted the importance of **future skills**, referring to competencies expected to remain valuable despite technological and organisational change. Frequently identified future skills include problem solving, collaboration, communication, adaptability, innovation, digital competence, and lifelong learning. These competencies enable individuals to remain productive and resilient within rapidly evolving labour markets^{[17][18][26]}.

Another influential perspective is **self-efficacy**, which emphasises individuals' beliefs regarding their capability to successfully perform tasks and overcome challenges. Students with higher levels of self-efficacy generally demonstrate greater persistence, stronger career decision-making confidence, and increased willingness to pursue challenging educational and professional opportunities^{[19][20][28]}.

Although each of these perspectives contributes valuable insights into student development, they primarily examine isolated components of preparedness. Collectively, the literature suggests that no single construct fully captures the complexity of preparing young people for uncertain futures. This observation provides the theoretical foundation for integrating these complementary perspectives into a broader conceptualisation of future readiness^[21].

2.3 Development of the Future Readiness Framework

Building upon the existing literature, this study conceptualises **Future Readiness** as a multidimensional construct comprising three complementary dimensions that collectively reflect students' preparedness for future educational and career transitions^{[22][23]}.

The first dimension, **Career Decision Clarity**, represents the extent to which students possess a clear understanding of their educational goals, career aspirations, and confidence in making future academic and occupational decisions. Students with greater decision clarity are expected to make more informed educational choices and experience lower levels of uncertainty regarding future pathways^{[20][23]}.

The second dimension, **Future Skills Orientation**, reflects students' awareness of the competencies increasingly demanded by higher education and contemporary labour markets. Rather than measuring actual competence, this dimension captures students' recognition of the

importance of communication, problem solving, adaptability, digital literacy, and other transferable skills required for future success^{[17][18]}.

The third dimension, **Self-Perceived Competencies**, assesses students' confidence in their own abilities to demonstrate the personal and professional competencies necessary for future learning and employment. These competencies include communication, teamwork, creativity, leadership, confidence, problem solving, and digital capability. Self-perceptions of competence influence motivation, career exploration, and willingness to engage in continuous personal development^{[21][24][25]}.

Figure 1. Proposed Future Readiness Framework (FRF)

(A conceptual framework illustrating Career Decision Clarity, Future Skills Orientation, and Self-Perceived Competencies as three interconnected dimensions of Future Readiness.)

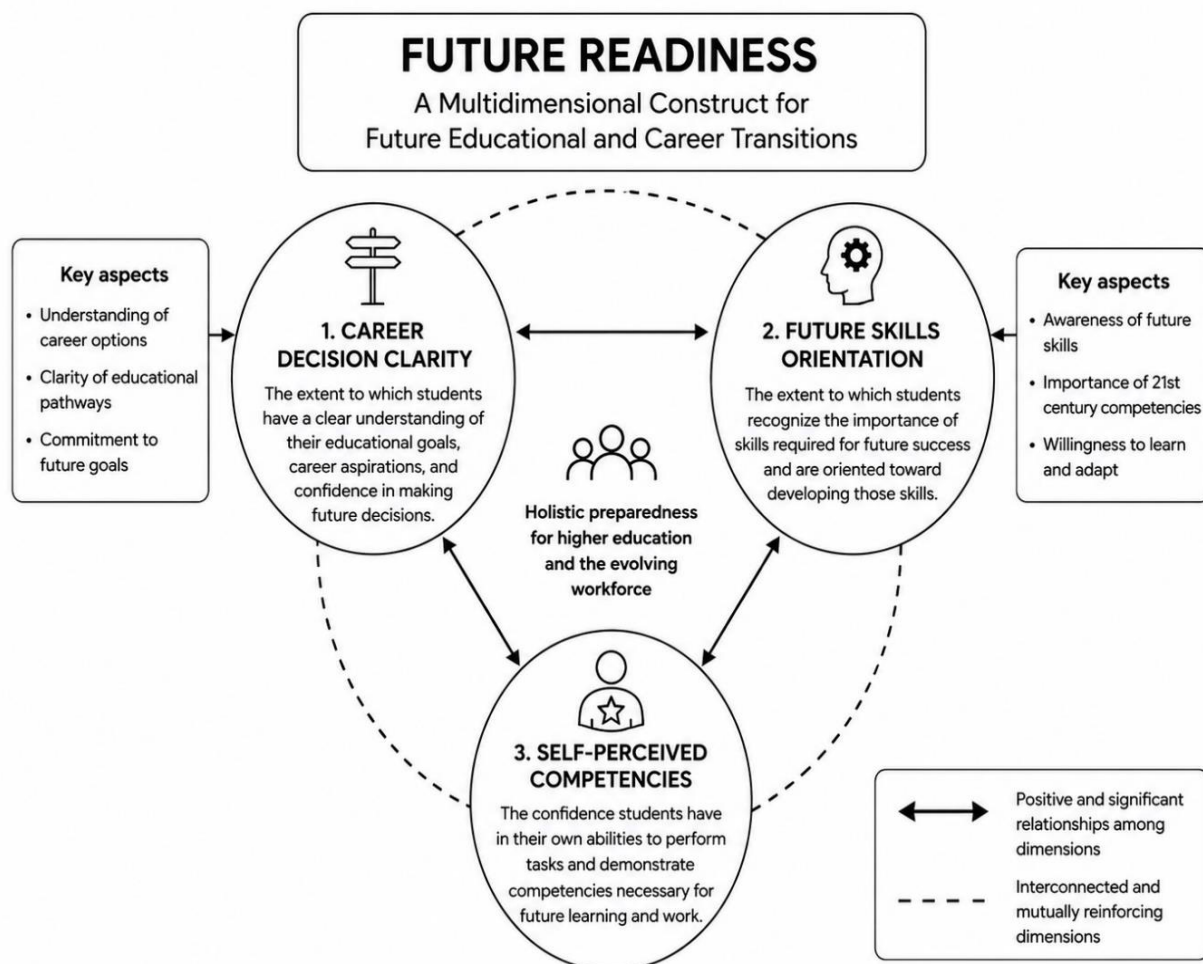


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Future Readiness

Together, these three dimensions provide a holistic representation of students' future readiness by integrating educational decision-making, future-oriented awareness, and perceived personal capabilities within a single conceptual framework. Unlike previous approaches that examine these constructs independently, the proposed Future Readiness Framework (FRF) recognises that students' preparedness emerges from the interaction of multiple complementary dimensions rather than any single characteristic.

2.4 Research Hypotheses

The conceptual framework proposes that the three dimensions of future readiness are positively related while representing distinct yet complementary aspects of students' preparedness for future educational and career transitions. Students demonstrating greater clarity regarding future educational and occupational choices are expected to exhibit stronger awareness of future skills and higher confidence in their own competencies. Similarly, students who recognise the importance of future-oriented skills are anticipated to report stronger perceptions of their personal capabilities.

Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Career Decision Clarity is positively associated with Future Skills Orientation.

H2: Career Decision Clarity is positively associated with Self-Perceived Competencies.

H3: Future Skills Orientation is positively associated with Self-Perceived Competencies.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional research design to develop and validate the Future Readiness Framework (FRF) and its associated measurement instrument, the Future Readiness Questionnaire (FRQ). A survey-based approach was adopted to assess secondary school students' perceptions of their preparedness for future educational and career transitions. The research focused on evaluating the instrument's psychometric properties and examining the relationships among the proposed dimensions of future readiness.

3.2 Participants and Data Collection

Data were collected during *Your Future Is Not a Guess*, an educational and career guidance initiative designed by Centre MINE (Careers, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center) to increase secondary school students' awareness of higher education opportunities, career planning, and future workforce requirements.

A total of 768 valid questionnaires were obtained from students enrolled in Grades 10, 11, and 12 across twelve secondary schools in Lebanon. Participants represented different educational backgrounds, providing a diverse sample for the preliminary validation of the proposed framework.

Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed that the survey was anonymous and would be used exclusively for research purposes. No personally identifiable information was collected, and all responses were treated confidentially in accordance with accepted research ethics.

3.3 Instrument Development

The Future Readiness Questionnaire (FRQ) was specifically developed for this study based on an extensive review of the literature on career readiness, employability, career decision-making, future skills, self-efficacy, and twenty-first-century competencies. The initial instrument comprised 18 items representing the three conceptual dimensions proposed by the Future Readiness Framework (FRF).

All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with higher scores indicating higher levels of perceived future readiness.

Following psychometric evaluation, four items were removed because of inadequate factor loadings and cross-loading issues identified during Exploratory Factor Analysis. The final validated instrument consisted of 14 items distributed across three dimensions:

- Career Decision Clarity (3 items)
- Future Skills Orientation (4 items)
- Self-Perceived Competencies (7 items)

3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using a sequential psychometric validation approach.

Descriptive statistics were first computed to summarise students' responses across all questionnaire items and dimensions. Internal consistency reliability was then evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, with values exceeding 0.70 considered indicative of acceptable reliability.

The suitability of the dataset for factor analysis was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was subsequently performed using Principal Axis Factoring with Varimax

rotation to identify the underlying factor structure of the instrument. Items demonstrating low communalities, weak factor loadings, or substantial cross-loadings were excluded to obtain a clear and interpretable factor solution.

Finally, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among the three dimensions of the Future Readiness Framework and to evaluate the proposed research hypotheses.

4. Results

4.1 Reliability Analysis

The internal consistency of the Future Readiness Questionnaire (FRQ) was first examined using Cronbach's alpha. The initial 18-item instrument demonstrated satisfactory reliability ($\alpha = 0.821$), indicating good internal consistency for the preliminary scale.

Following Exploratory Factor Analysis, four items with inadequate psychometric performance were removed. The refined 14-item instrument maintained strong reliability, with an overall Cronbach's alpha of 0.802, confirming that the remaining items consistently measured the proposed construct of future readiness.

Reliability coefficients were also calculated for each dimension of the Future Readiness Framework. Career Decision Clarity achieved a Cronbach's alpha of 0.765, Future Skills Orientation recorded 0.773, and Self-Perceived Competencies demonstrated the highest reliability (0.791). All values exceeded the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

Table 1. Reliability Analysis of the Future Readiness Questionnaire

Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Career Decision Clarity	3	0.765
Future Skills Orientation	4	0.773
Self-Perceived Competencies	7	0.791
Overall FRQ	14	0.802

The reliability findings indicate that the refined questionnaire provides a stable and internally consistent measure of the three proposed dimensions of future readiness.

4.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis

The suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity.

The KMO value of 0.773 indicated that the sample was appropriate for factor analysis, while Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 839.61$, $p < 0.001$), confirming sufficient correlations among the questionnaire items.

Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted using Principal Axis Factoring with Varimax rotation. The analysis produced a clear three-factor solution corresponding to the conceptual dimensions proposed in the Future Readiness Framework. Four items were removed because of weak factor loadings or cross-loadings, resulting in a refined instrument comprising 14 items.

The final factor structure explained 44.62% of the total variance. Career Decision Clarity included three items describing students' certainty regarding educational and career choices. Future Skills Orientation consisted of four items reflecting awareness of competencies required for future success, whereas Self-Perceived Competencies contained seven items assessing students' confidence in their own abilities.

Table 2. Exploratory Factor Analysis Results

Dimension	Representative Factor Loadings
Career Decision Clarity	0.588–0.809
Future Skills Orientation	0.527–0.748
Self-Perceived Competencies	0.419–0.677

KMO = 0.773

Bartlett's Test: $\chi^2 = 839.61$, $p < 0.001$

Total Variance Explained = 44.62%

The EFA findings support the multidimensional structure of the Future Readiness Framework and provide preliminary evidence of its construct validity.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated to evaluate students' perceived levels of future readiness across the three validated dimensions.

Among the three dimensions, Future Skills Orientation recorded the highest mean score ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.80$), suggesting that students generally recognised the importance of competencies required for future educational and professional success.

Self-Perceived Competencies obtained a mean score of 3.68 (SD = 0.67), indicating moderately positive perceptions of students' own capabilities.

By contrast, Career Decision Clarity produced the lowest mean score (M = 3.37, SD = 0.99), reflecting comparatively greater uncertainty regarding educational and career choices.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of the Future Readiness Dimensions

Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation
Career Decision Clarity	3.37	0.99
Future Skills Orientation	4.05	0.80
Self-Perceived Competencies	3.68	0.67

Overall, the findings suggest that although students recognise the competencies required for future success, they demonstrate comparatively lower confidence regarding educational and career decision-making.

4.4 Correlation Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships among the three dimensions of the Future Readiness Framework.

The results revealed statistically significant positive correlations among all dimensions. Career Decision Clarity demonstrated a positive relationship with Future Skills Orientation ($r = 0.194$, $p = 0.007$) and Self-Perceived Competencies ($r = 0.237$, $p = 0.001$). A stronger positive relationship was observed between Future Skills Orientation and Self-Perceived Competencies ($r = 0.342$, $p < 0.001$).

These findings indicate that students with greater clarity regarding future educational and career choices also tend to report stronger awareness of future-oriented skills and higher confidence in their own competencies. Likewise, students who recognise the importance of future skills generally perceive themselves as possessing stronger personal capabilities.

Table 4. Correlation Matrix

Variables	1	2	3
1. Career Decision Clarity	—		
2. Future Skills Orientation	0.194**	—	
3. Self-Perceived Competencies	0.237**	0.342***	—

Note: $p < 0.01$, $p < 0.001$

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Result
H1	Career Decision Clarity → Future Skills Orientation	Supported
H2	Career Decision Clarity → Self-Perceived Competencies	Supported
H3	Future Skills Orientation → Self-Perceived Competencies	Supported

The positive and statistically significant relationships among the three dimensions provide empirical support for the proposed Future Readiness Framework, confirming that future readiness is best conceptualised as a multidimensional construct comprising interconnected yet distinct dimensions.

5. Discussion

This study introduced and preliminarily validated the **Future Readiness Framework (FRF)** as a multidimensional model for assessing secondary school students' preparedness for future educational and career transitions. The findings provide empirical support for the proposed framework, demonstrating that future readiness is not a single characteristic but rather a combination of complementary dimensions encompassing career decision-making, awareness of future-oriented skills, and confidence in personal competencies.

The Exploratory Factor Analysis confirmed the proposed three-dimensional structure of the framework following refinement of the measurement instrument. The resulting **Future Readiness Questionnaire (FRQ)** demonstrated satisfactory reliability and construct validity, suggesting that it provides a stable and coherent measure of students' future readiness. These findings support the argument that integrating multiple dimensions into a single framework offers a more comprehensive understanding of students' preparedness than assessing career-related constructs independently.

One of the most notable findings concerns the variation observed across the three dimensions. Students reported the highest scores for **Future Skills Orientation**, indicating a strong awareness of the competencies required for future educational and professional success. This suggests that contemporary students increasingly recognise the importance of transferable skills such as communication, problem solving, adaptability, and digital competence. Growing public attention to technological innovation, artificial intelligence, and rapidly changing labour market demands may have contributed to this heightened awareness.

In contrast, **Career Decision Clarity** recorded the lowest mean score among the three dimensions, indicating that many students remain uncertain about their future educational and occupational pathways despite recognising the skills required for future success. This finding

highlights an important distinction between understanding labour market expectations and making confident personal career decisions. Awareness alone does not necessarily translate into informed educational choices, reinforcing the importance of structured career guidance during secondary education.

The findings also revealed moderate levels of **Self-Perceived Competencies**, suggesting that students generally express confidence in their personal abilities while recognising opportunities for further development. Confidence in communication, teamwork, creativity, leadership, and problem-solving represents an important foundation for future career development. However, the relatively lower ratings for digital competence compared with other competencies indicate that schools may need to strengthen practical opportunities for students to develop technology-related capabilities alongside broader transferable skills.

Correlation analysis further demonstrated significant positive relationships among the three dimensions of the framework. Students who reported greater clarity regarding future educational and career decisions also tended to demonstrate stronger awareness of future-oriented skills and higher confidence in their own competencies. Likewise, stronger Future Skills Orientation was associated with higher levels of Self-Perceived Competencies. These findings support the conceptual assumption that future readiness emerges through the interaction of multiple complementary dimensions rather than through any single attribute in isolation.

From a theoretical perspective, this study extends existing literature by integrating concepts traditionally examined separately, including career readiness, employability, future skills, and self-perceived competence. Previous research has provided valuable insights into each of these areas; however, relatively few studies have combined them within a unified conceptual framework specifically designed for secondary education. The proposed Future Readiness Framework (FRF) addresses this gap by offering a holistic perspective that captures cognitive, behavioural, and self-perceptual aspects of students' preparedness for future educational and career transitions.

Beyond its theoretical contribution, the framework also offers practical value. The Future Readiness Questionnaire (FRQ) provides educators, career counsellors, and school leaders with a structured instrument that can be used to identify strengths and developmental needs among students. Rather than relying solely on academic achievement or traditional career guidance activities, schools can use the framework to monitor students' readiness across multiple dimensions and design targeted interventions that strengthen career planning, competency development, and future-oriented learning.

Overall, the findings suggest that preparing students for an increasingly uncertain future requires a balanced educational approach that combines career exploration, awareness of emerging labour market requirements, and the systematic development of transferable competencies. The Future Readiness Framework provides an evidence-based foundation for advancing this objective while contributing a practical and theoretically grounded model that can support future educational research and practice.

6. Practical Implications

The findings of this study have important implications for educational practice, career guidance, and policy development. The proposed Future Readiness Framework (FRF) provides educators and school leaders with a structured approach for assessing students' preparedness for future educational and career transitions beyond traditional measures of academic achievement.

The validated Future Readiness Questionnaire (FRQ) offers a practical assessment tool that can support schools in identifying students' strengths and developmental needs across three complementary dimensions: Career Decision Clarity, Future Skills Orientation, and Self-Perceived Competencies. Such assessments can inform the design of targeted interventions aimed at strengthening career exploration, improving decision-making confidence, and enhancing transferable competencies required for higher education and the evolving labour market.

For career counsellors, the framework provides an evidence-based instrument to facilitate more personalised career guidance by identifying areas where students require additional support. At the policy level, the findings reinforce the importance of integrating career education, future-oriented competencies, and structured guidance programmes within secondary education to better align educational outcomes with future workforce requirements.

7. Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings of this study. First, the empirical validation of the Future Readiness Framework was conducted using a sample of 12 Lebanese secondary schools. Although the findings provide valuable preliminary evidence, the generalisability of the results should be examined through studies involving larger and more diverse educational systems and cultural contexts.

Second, the study employed a cross-sectional research design based on self-reported perceptions. Consequently, the findings represent students' perceived levels of future readiness at a single point in time and do not capture how these perceptions may evolve throughout their educational

journey. Longitudinal studies would provide valuable insights into the development of future readiness over time.

Future research should further validate the Future Readiness Questionnaire (FRQ) using larger samples and advanced psychometric techniques, including Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). Additional studies could also examine the influence of demographic, educational, and socioeconomic factors on future readiness and investigate the framework's predictive value for educational achievement, career decision-making, employability, and successful transitions into higher education and employment.

8. Conclusion

Preparing young people for an increasingly complex and uncertain future requires educational approaches that extend beyond academic knowledge to encompass informed career decision-making, awareness of future workforce requirements, and confidence in personal competencies. Responding to this need, this study introduced the Future Readiness Framework (FRF) as a multidimensional conceptual model and developed the Future Readiness Questionnaire (FRQ) as a practical instrument for its assessment.

The empirical findings support the proposed three-dimensional structure of the framework, demonstrating satisfactory reliability and preliminary construct validity while confirming significant positive relationships among Career Decision Clarity, Future Skills Orientation, and Self-Perceived Competencies. These results suggest that future readiness is best understood as a multidimensional construct reflecting the interaction of educational, cognitive, and personal factors rather than a single attribute.

By integrating concepts traditionally examined in isolation, this study contributes a coherent theoretical framework and a validated assessment instrument that advance current understanding of students' preparedness for future educational and career transitions. Beyond its theoretical contribution, the framework offers practical value for educators, career counsellors, school leaders, and policymakers seeking to strengthen career education and monitor students' readiness for higher education and the future workforce.

As educational systems continue to respond to rapid technological, economic, and societal change, the Future Readiness Framework provides a foundation for future research and evidence-informed practice aimed at equipping young people with the knowledge, confidence, and competencies required to thrive in an unpredictable world.

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