

## Does Social Support Contribute To Career Adaptability? Study at The Final Year Student

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### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:**  
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Final-year students will experience a transition period from lectures to the world of work. The transition period can be challenging for final students. Unpreparedness in facing the transition period can cause various difficulties for final year students, such as unemployment, turnover, and working in inappropriate fields. In addition, students are in the early adult stage of development and are required to start working and develop their careers. This study aims to determine the relationship between social support and career adaptability by controlling for demographic variables, namely gender, educational background, and socioeconomic status in final-year students. This study used a quantitative approach involving 274 respondents. Data analysis using multiple regression analysis showed that social support (family support, friend support, and significant other support) positively affected career adaptability. Educational background also has a positive influence on career adaptability. Gender and socioeconomic status did not influence career adaptability.



### Introduction

Each student will pass the final year of study. During this period, students will experience a transition process from college to the world of work. The transition to the world of work is a significant process and sometimes a difficult one for students to deal with. This difficulty causes high job turnover in fresh graduates (Maria, Mei, & Stanley, 2020). In addition, students in the transition period have not thought about the work they will occupy and are not prepared for the possibilities that will occur after graduating from college (Burke, Scurry, & Blenkinsopp, 2020). Then, students also experience confusion when facing graduation due to the lack of readiness to work after graduation, feel incompetent, feel that the knowledge gained is not optimal, and are not ready to compete with graduates from other universities (Solichah & Setiaji, 2019). If students' ability to adapt to the transition from college to the world of work is not optimal, it will cause students difficulty in finding jobs (AH & SUHARIADI, 2021).

Final-year students are usually in the early adult stage of development. Early adulthood is a transition from adolescence to adulthood that occurs at the age of about 18 to 25 years (Tanner & Arnett, 2016). Individuals in early adulthood have time to work and commit to a more stable life. At this time, individuals are still exploring which career

path they want to follow, the identity they want, and the lifestyle they want to adopt. Early adulthood is a time when individuals explore work, experience job instability, and begin to take responsibility and commit to their own lives (Tanner & Arnett, 2016). Moreover, individuals in early adulthood have developmental tasks in the form of earning a living, choosing a job, building a career, and developing a career (Tanner & Arnett, 2016). From the mid-twenties until the rest of early adulthood, individuals often seek to build their emerging careers in specific fields (Tanner & Arnett, 2016). Therefore, it can be known that final-year students have career demands based on the stage of development of early adulthood.

With the phenomenon and demands of developmental tasks, students must begin to prepare and improve their adjustment ability in facing the role of students to workers. (Koen, Klehe, & Van Vianen, 2012) stated that there are ways to enter the world of work, one of which is preparation. The preparation that students can do is how to compete and adapt in the workplace. Final-year students should not only rely on their knowledge and competencies, but they also need to be career-adaptable. Career adaptability is an individual's readiness to face a task performed by preparing and participating in predicted work role rules, as well as an individual's readiness to adjust to job changes and unpredictable working conditions (Chen et al., 2020). Career adaptability is one of the important factors that influence a person's success in adapting to the work environment (Haenggli & Hirschi, 2020). Then, (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012) revealed that career adaptability comes from the power and capacity of self-regulation that a person can use to solve unusual, complex, and unclear problems in developmental tasks, job transitions, and work trauma that do not originate from the internal individual but rather influences from the environment. Individuals who have career adaptability are considered as individuals who think about their future, are able to increase self-control for their future, explore plans that may occur, and individuals who have high confidence in their desires for the future (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Individuals who have career adaptability will have a positive impact in the form of individual career readiness and development and can help individuals overcome the stress that occurs when entering the career ladder (Coetzee & Harry, 2015). In addition, individuals who are able to adapt to their careers will be able to find opportunities to work better through the transition period successfully and be able to get quality work (Koen et al., 2012). Individuals who have high career adaptability have a small risk of becoming unemployed for a long time, and individuals are able to make better career decisions or choices (Koen et al., 2012).

Based on the above phenomenon, it can be seen that final-year students who are stepping into early adulthood are going through a transition from college to the world of work, so they experience developmental task demands and problems in adjusting to the world of work. In fact, the inability of students to adapt to their careers can cause various negative impacts, such as unemployment, working in fields that are not in accordance with competence, and confusion in long-term career selection. Therefore, it is necessary to increase the career adaptability of final-year students.

Many factors influence career adaptability. (Koen et al., 2012) state that factors that influence career adaptability are age, gender, socioeconomic status, work experience, and education level. At the same time, (KARACAN–OZDEMIR & Guneri, 2017) explained that factors that affect a person's career adaptability include self-efficacy, optimism, and social support obtained by individuals. Social support is an important factor that can affect career adaptability. Social support is thought to affect an individual's ability to adapt to careers related to information and understanding of future careers, as well as emotional

assistance when individuals have psychological problems (Dhuha, 2022). Sources of social support can come from family support, friend support, and significant others or special people support (Fugui Li et al., 2021). The theory of Ecological Perspective on Child Development developed by Bronfenbrenner states that child development is influenced by microsystems that include family, peers, and schools (Perron, 2017). From this theory, it can be seen that the environment is very influential on individual life, one of which is social support, which is very important for individual development.

Some previous findings have shown that social support can improve career adaptability. Research conducted by (Atqakum, Daud, & Nurdin, 2022) shows that social support affects the career adaptation of final-year students. Similar results were obtained from (GIFFARI & SUHARIADI, 2017) research, which showed that social support is needed to build individual confidence in handling career-related tasks. (Handoyo & Sulistiani, 2018) conducted a study that found social support to be a strong predictor of career adaptability compared to other predictors such as emotional tendencies, future goal setting, and self-confidence.

Another factor that can affect career adaptability is the socioeconomic status of the family. (Chen et al., 2020) stated that economic background has an important role in individual career maturity so that it will affect the adaptability of individual careers. Individuals who have low family socioeconomic status often feel helpless in the field of work and have difficulty making decisions (Yoosefi Lebni et al., 2020).

Research on career adaptability and social support, as well as the level of socioeconomic status, has been widely conducted, but the results are still inconsistent. Research by (Mengting Li, Fan, & Zhang, 2023) which resulted in a relationship between socioeconomic status and career adaptability. However, (Mutik, Firdaus, Shaliha, & Khotimah, 2020) states that family socioeconomic status has no relationship with career adaptability. In addition, these three variables are rarely analyzed in one framework with other demographic variables (Enssle & Kabisch, 2020; Solichah & Setiaji, 2019). Therefore, determining the variables of career adaptability, social support, and socioeconomic status of the family by controlling for demographic variables such as gender and educational background is necessary.

Especially in Indonesia, which has a patriarchal culture that places women in the role of homemakers and men as heads of households who must provide for the family (Nurbayti, Maryani, Kuswarno, & Rachmawati, 2023). In fact, women also have the right to enter the career world just like men. Therefore, sex roles that are influenced by culture are thought to contribute to individual career adaptability. Research on career adaptability by controlling for sex variables has been done, but the results have not been consistent. Research shows that women's career adaptability is higher than men's (Coetzee & Harry, 2014; Han & Rojewski, 2015). Career adaptability is higher than women's. Some studies have stated that there is no significant difference in career adaptability between men and women (Zulfiani & Khaerani, 2021).

In addition to the above reasons, research on career adaptability is often carried out without controlling educational background (Dhuha, 2022; GIFFARI & SUHARIADI, 2017; Solichah & Setiaji, 2019). In fact, educational background is thought to affect a person's career adaptability. For example, individuals who have an educational background in psychology or counseling guidance should get an education about careers. Individuals who major in physics, chemistry, geography, and the like do not get an education about careers. Therefore, it is suspected that individuals who have an educational background in careers have better career adaptability than individuals who

do not get an education in careers. So, individual career adaptability also needs to be reviewed based on educational background variables. Therefore, this study aims to determine the relationship between social support and career adaptability in final-year students by controlling for variables of gender, educational background, and socioeconomic status.

### **Relationship between Social Support, Socioeconomic Status, Gender, Educational Background and Career Adaptability**

Social support is thought to affect the career adaptability of final-year students. Individuals who get social support from family, friends, teachers and closest people will help someone in preparing for their career, being able to know how to transition from college to work properly, and to create jobs (Atqakum et al., 2022; Han & Rojewski, 2015). In addition, the social support obtained will build confidence to handle career-related tasks (GIFFARI & SUHARIADI, 2017). With social support, individuals will get specific information and advice about careers (Knight, Harwood, & Sellars, 2018). Support from parents and friends includes emotional support in the form of providing care, comfort, feeling loved; appreciation support such as giving positive expressions and appreciation; instrumental support in the form of direct assistance when individuals face problems; information support in the form of advice, advice, information about careers; and network support in the form of providing a feeling that individuals are part of their group so that this support can support individuals in career adaptability (Zeng et al., 2023). Similarly, in terms of decision-making, individuals who get high social support will be able to make decisions appropriately, in accordance with their interests, fields, and expertise, be able to make career plans, and realize their ideas (Zulfiani & Khaerani, 2021).

Socioeconomic status is also thought to affect a person's career adaptability. Family socioeconomic status is influential in determining the level of school education that may be pursued, so it also affects future career planning (Mutik et al., 2020). Socioeconomic status also has an impact on individual confidence in deciding their careers (Mutik et al., 2020) and determining children's success in education. Socioeconomic status has a great influence on an individual's career adaptability. Individuals who have a higher socioeconomic status will get a greater opportunity to do career exploration and career planning, get more facilities to find out about the desired career and be able to form a mentality and readiness to face competition (Hasanah, Rahmawati, & Damayanti, 2019). In addition, individuals with high social and economic status are able to have high curiosity, feel confident in facing career obstacles (Brown, 2016), and parental care that is heavily involved with children's career development. Parental relations also contribute to obtaining information about career planning (Mutik et al., 2020).

In addition, gender is also thought to affect an individual's career adaptability. Women can learn more easily than men in terms of careers they are interested in because women are able to interact easily with others. In contrast, men tend to be individualists (Zulfiani & Khaerani, 2021). Male students are more concerned with the value of leadership careers than female students, while female students are more concerned with grades to help careers than male students (Çizel, 2018).

Individuals who have an educational background regarding careers are able to plan career-oriented education, have general skills in work adaptation and work improvement so that they are able to follow changes in the world of work, and have the ability to develop careers (Lent, 2018). Individuals who get an education about careers can also recognize and improve their competencies, be able to make the right career decisions, and

be responsible for the career decisions they make (Schellenberg, Steinebach, & Krauss, 2022). In addition, career education can increase an individual's career maturity so that they are stronger in planning and exploring their careers (Jasmi, Zakaria, & Norwaliza, 2016).

### **Research Methods**

This study uses a cross-sectional study design, which aims to find the relationship between independent variables and variables depending on the way the approach and data collection are carried out at the same time or point time approach.

Participants. The subject criteria are active students, at least in semester seven, or students who are working on a thesis or final project. The sample required in this study is at least 155 respondents, calculated using the G\*Power 3.1 calculator. 9.7 with an effect size value of 0.124 (Solichah & Setiaji, 2019), an  $\alpha$  value of 0.05, and a statistical power value of 0.95. The total number of respondents in this study was 274. The number of male respondents was 61 people (22.3%), and female respondents were 213 (77.7%). Age ranges from 20 to 25 years with Mean (SD) = 21.5 (0.95). Sampling data using non-probability sampling with quota sampling, which is a technique of determining samples from populations that have certain characteristics until the expected quota is met (Prof Dr Sugiyono, 2013).

Research instruments. Social support variables are measured using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MPSS) developed by (Setyorini, Ismarwati, & Mamnuah, 2023) in Indonesian. This scale consists of 12 items with a score range of 4 points using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The higher the score obtained, the higher the social support the individual has. Internal consistency (alpha Cronbach) on each aspect is: family support 0.829, friend support 0.857, significant others support 0.960, and for overall items 0.837. Item discrimination power ranges from 0.295 to 0.63. Then, the career adaptability variable was measured using the Career Adapt-Abilities Scales (CAAS) developed by (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). This scale consists of 24 items, with each item having a score range of 4 points, namely 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The higher the score obtained, the higher a person's career adaptability. Internal consistency in each aspect is concern 0.880, control 0.826, curiosity 0.840, confidence 0.808, and overall items 0.933. The discrimination power of items ranges from 0.475 to 0.701.

Data analysis. This study used regression analysis which was used to predict how changes in variable values were bound when the value of the independent variable was raised or decreased (Dr Sugiyono, 2013). Regression analysis was carried out twice in this study. The first regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of social support on career adaptability. The second regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of social support on career adaptability by controlling for demographic variables, namely gender, educational background, and socioeconomic status.

### Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the results of descriptive statistical analysis and zero-order correlation for all research variables.

**Table 1**  
**Descriptive statistics and intercorrelation between research variables (N = 274)**

	Mean	Sd	Correlations									
			Career Adaptability	Family Support	Friend Support	Support So	Gender	Educational Background	Father's Education	Mother's Education	Father's Income	Mother's Income
Career Adaptability	99,63	12,67	1	,395***	,272***	,290***	-,090	,234**	-,090	,011	,053	,127*
Family Support	22,38	4,36		1	,259***	,185**	,044	,123*	,005	,086	,020	,049
Friend Support	20,56	4,42			1	,177**	-,133*	,168*	,097	,146*	,266**	,113
Support So	20,51	6,87				1	,029	,151*	-,061	,004	,099	,094
Gender	1,22	0,41					1	-,074	,046	-,003	-,065	-,038
Educational Background	1,73	0,44						1	,020	,061	-,010	,113
Father's Education	5,11	2,25							1	,624**	,429**	,233***



Mother's Education	-,059	,424	-,010	,890	-,894	,776
Father's Income	-,047	,908	-,003	,959	-1,835	1,742
Mother's Income	1,742	1,182	,093	,142	-,587	4,070

R = ,518; R Square = ,269

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#### A. Dependent Variable: *Career Adaptability*

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The results showed that social support (family support, friend support, and significant other support) had a positive effect on career adaptability. After controlling for variables of sex, educational background, and socioeconomic status, social support was also shown to affect career adaptability. The results of this study are in line with previous studies (Solichah & Setiaji, 2019) Baihaqi et al., 2022; Dluha et al., 2020; Giffari & Suhariadi, 2017) who said that social support affects career adaptability.

The higher the family support, the higher the career adaptability possessed. The results of this study are in line with previous studies. Research conducted by (Zulfiani & Khaerani, 2021) shows that individuals in early adulthood who receive family support can lead to career success because they can make decisions about their interests and skills. In addition, supportive families provide facilities and opportunities to discuss career choices and make parents model figures in career selection (Zulfiani & Khaerani, 2021). Then, the results of this study are also in accordance with the theory of Ecological Perspective on Child Development developed by Bronfenbrenner states that child development is influenced by microsystems that include family, peers, and schools (Oyarzún Gómez, Casas Aznar, & Alfaro Inzunza, 2019). (Wang, Mei, Xie, Zhao, & Yang, 2021) argue that support from family, teachers, and close friends contributes to the four dimensions of career adaptability. Parents can be a source of information for their children by providing advice, discussion, and guidance about careers. Parents can also provide emotional support to children so that children feel validated for their feelings.

Peer support has a positive influence on career adaptability. The higher the support of friends, the higher the career adaptability they have. The results of this study are in line with previous studies (Han & Rojewski, 2015), which state that social support from friends is proven to affect career adaptability. The results of this study are also in accordance with the theory of Ecological Perspective on Child Development developed by Bronfenbrenner states that child development is influenced by microsystems that include family, peers, and schools (Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015). The contribution of friendship relationships will increase career adaptability in students. This is because individuals strongly seek acceptance and affirmation from their peers so that they can adjust (McCrary, Best, & Maddock, 2022). Individuals need emotional support, such as empathy and attention from friends, as well as social network support in the form of feeling that individuals are members of a particular group. In addition, together with peers, individuals can exchange ideas about knowledge about careers.

The support of significant others has a positive influence on career adaptability. The higher the support of significant others, the higher the career adaptability they have. The results of this study are in line with previous studies. Although the results of previous studies did not specifically address the effect of significant support from others on career adaptability, similar studies can show that support from other parties trusted by individuals will increase confidence and courage to make decisions. The amount of



support from the surrounding environment can also make students confident in choosing a career (Ghosh & Fouad, 2016).

Family support has the greatest influence on career adaptability. This is because the family is the first and closest system to the individual, so the support provided will make the greatest contribution. Family support in the form of advice, affection, and attention can help individuals to continue to grow and be enthusiastic to achieve the desired goals. In addition, family support can provide an overview of the career that will be pursued by individuals (Hastuti & Wijono, 2023). Family support also contributes to the preparation of individuals for the transition from the world of education to the world of work (Fawehinmi & Yahya, 2018).

The only control variable that affects career adaptability is the student's educational background. Students who get an education about careers have higher career adaptability compared to students who do not get an education about careers. (Rudolph, Lavigne, & Zacher, 2017) stated that support in the form of career guidance from educational institutions can indirectly improve career adaptability. Sometimes, students already have an interest in a career. However, they have not been able to learn more about it because of a lack of understanding of career differences and because their educational background is not supportive of learning actively about careers (del Corso, 2017). Education about careers obtained by students will increase awareness in students so that they are encouraged to prepare for their careers from now on. That way, there will be a sense of worry about the future so that students will be prepared for what might happen next (concern). Then, students will exercise self-control to shape themselves to face the future by using self-discipline, effort, and perseverance (control). With career education, students are also encouraged to explore and search for information about the work or career they will pursue. In addition, they will find out the things needed to prepare for careers, such as soft skills and hard skills (curiosity). Then, this experience of exploration and information search generates aspirations and builds confidence in students so that they can actualize their choices to carry out their life designs (confidence).

Meanwhile, other control variables, namely gender and socioeconomic status, were not able to predict career adaptability. The results of this study are in accordance with previous studies, namely research conducted by (Zulfiani & Khaerani, 2021), which stated that there was no significant difference in career adaptability between men and women. In addition, (Soylu, Siyez, & Ozeren, 2021) states that gender does not affect the development of career adaptability. This is allegedly because the patriarchal culture in Indonesia has decreased, not as thick as before, as evidenced by the number of women who not only act as housewives but also play an active role in their work and careers. There are even some women who are the head of the family in a domestic relationship, which means women have a superior role than men. Meanwhile, parental education will not affect the high and low career adaptability of students. This is in line with previous research. (Mutik et al., 2020) states that the level of education of parents does not affect a person's career adaptability. This happens because students as children already have higher education that they pursue; there are even some students who get education about careers so that parental education does not affect their career adaptability.

Furthermore, parental income has no influence on career adaptability. The two variables have no significant relationship. So, the high and low income of parents does not affect the high and low career adaptability in students. The results of the study are in line with previous research. (Mutik et al., 2020) states that the income level of parents does not affect a person's career adaptability. This is because the majority of final year

students are able to facilitate themselves to improve career adaptability, such as accessing information about careers through the internet and attending free hard skills or soft skills training available on various online platforms. In addition, final year students can have the confidence to plan and actualize their careers because of their educational background, not solely because of the facilities and benefits from their parents.

### **Conclusion**

This study concludes that social support (family support, friend support, and support from significant others) positively affects career adaptability. In addition, educational background also has a positive influence on career adaptability. Gender and socioeconomic status had no influence on career adaptability.

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