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Career Adaptability: Analysis of Non-Cognitive Factors in University Students

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Original Article

Career Adaptability: Analysis of Non-Cognitive Factors in University Students

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Abstract: This study examines the significance of the paths: (1) from social support to career adaptability, (2) from work value to career adaptability, (3) from self-esteem to career adaptability, (4) from social support to career adaptability via self-esteem, and (5) from work value to career adaptability via self-esteem. A total of 265 students from the Faculty of Education Universitas Negeri Malang who participated in the Asistensi Mengajar (AM) Program were selected using a simple random sampling technique. Four instruments were used to collect data: the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS), the Work Value Inventory (WVI), the Self-Esteem Scale, and the Social Support Scale. The data were analysed using path analysis. The findings revealed that all paths have significance values below 0.05, indicating that all proposed paths are acceptable. The analysis also shows that work value has a direct effect on self-esteem, with a coefficient of 0.160, while social support exhibits a more substantial direct effect on self-esteem, with a coefficient of 0.412. Self-esteem directly influences career adaptability with a coefficient of 0.435. Indirectly, work value impacts career adaptability via self-esteem with a coefficient of 0.070, and social support influences career adaptability via self-esteem with a coefficient of 0.179. The total effects of work value and social support on career adaptability via self-esteem were calculated to be 0.230 and 0.591, respectively. These results suggest that social support has a more pronounced total effect on career adaptability compared to work value, primarily due to its stronger direct effect on self-esteem. The study underscores the critical role of self-esteem as a mediator in enhancing career adaptability through social support and work values.

Key Words: Career adaptability; Social support; Work value; Self-esteem; Asistensi Mengajar

INTRODUCTION

Career adaptability constitutes a crucial dimension of individual career development, characterized by effectively meeting environmental challenges and demands. Individuals with high career adaptability demonstrate a remarkable degree of flexibility in adjusting to their current work environment or anticipating future professional settings they aspire to engage with (Chong & Leong, 2017; Seibert et al., 2016). Conversely, those who exhibit low career adaptability could encounter depressive states when positioned in work environments that fall short of their anticipations, leading to failure in performing their jobs effectively (Muslihati, 2017). This delineation underscores the pivotal role of career adaptability in fostering a harmonious interaction between an individual's capabilities and their career environment, thus influencing their job performance and overall career satisfaction.

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The notion of career adaptability is not only relevant to individuals already employed within specific work organizations but also encompasses prospective workers who plan to pursue particular career fields or aspire to work in specific institutions (Hui et al., 2018). In this context, university students represent prospective workers who have specialized skills in specific areas. These individuals, through their academic and extracurricular pursuits, are in the process of refining and honing these skills to integrate into their chosen professional fields seamlessly (Comesaña-Comesaña et al., 2022; Virtanen & Tynjälä, 2019). However, changing times and evolving civilizations exert a profound influence on the dynamics of job markets and the nature of professional practices across various sectors (Cascio & Montealegre, 2016). To bridge the disparity between education and practical employment demands, universities offer internship programs or fieldwork opportunities. These initiatives are meticulously crafted to furnish students with tangible work experiences that are directly pertinent to their academic pursuits, thereby enhancing their employability and preparation for their future careers.

Unfortunately, research findings indicate that some university students exhibit low to average levels of career adaptability. According to Ismalia and Suhariadi (2021), 15% of final-year students demonstrate low career adaptability, while 66.5% have moderate levels and 18.5% exhibit high levels. Similarly, a study by Panggabean et al. (2023) at Universitas Negeri Manado elucidated similar proportions, identifying that 10% of final-year students had low career adaptability, 70% had moderate levels, and 20% had exceptionally high levels. In contrast, Yolanda et al. (2022) found slightly different distributions, finding that a majority of 53% of students showed moderate career adaptability while a notable 47% evidenced high levels of adaptability, and without any representation of low adaptability among the participants. Furthermore, an investigation by Zakila and Purwantini (2022) reported that 67% of final-year students in their study demonstrated high career adaptability, with the remaining 33% displaying moderate levels. These findings underscore the necessity for universities to address the issue of career adaptability among students, as a considerable portion still demonstrates low to moderate levels. This highlights the need for additional interventions and support to better prepare students for the challenges of the workforce.

In the recent trend of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum implemented in Indonesian higher education institutions, various programs are employed to prepare students for adaptability in their future work environments. Among these is the Asistensi Mengajar (AM), which is specifically designed for students from teacher education programs (Baharuddin, 2021; Saehana et al., 2021; Stefanus et al., 2022). AM facilitates a collaborative learning environment where students are paired with teaching professionals in various educational settings. The objective is to provide students with a practical milieu to apply their academic expertise in teaching, enabling the application of their learned theories into practice within diverse educational contexts. This program seeks to fortify the students' comprehension and mastery of their subjects by allowing them to assume teaching roles in academic institutions. In contrast to other brief field practices, the AM program spans an entire semester, providing a more immersive and sustained engagement with the teaching profession. Such an extended period not only equips the students with a profound understanding of the educational field but also prepares them for their future professional endeavors by exposing them to the real-life dynamics and challenges of the teaching landscape. However, despite the AM programs being meticulously designed to enhance students' career adaptability, the findings of Probowati et al. (2022) suggest otherwise. Her research conducted on AM participants at Universitas Negeri Malang indicates that 4% of them have very low career adaptability, while a notable 38% evidenced low level, 30% have moderate level, and the remainder fall into high levels. The presence of a significant number of AM participants with career adaptability below the moderate level suggests the need to examine the factors contributing to these issues of career adaptability.

Career adaptability is influenced by a wide range of factors that span both cognitive and non-cognitive domains. Cognitive factors, such as career decision self-efficacy, cognitive information processing, and career outcome expectations, are crucial in shaping an individual's career adaptability (Wang & Liu, 2022). Career decision self-efficacy, which refers to the confidence one has in making career-related decisions, significantly influences an individual's adaptability to various career trajectories. For instance, career outcome expectations, which encompass the beliefs about the outcomes of career-related actions, have been significantly correlated with career adaptability, indicating that individuals who have positive expectations about their career outcomes are more likely to exhibit higher

adaptability. Furthermore, cognitive emotion regulation, the capability to manage and respond to emotional experiences, influences career decision-making self-efficacy, with career adaptability serving as a mediator in this relationship (Lee & Jung, 2022). This highlights the critical role of cognitive processes in fostering an adaptable mindset in career development.

The examination of non-cognitive factors contributing to career adaptability is equally crucial. Affective factors such as personality traits, optimism, self-esteem, resilience, and social support play significant roles in enhancing career adaptability (Delle & Searle, 2020; Putri & Salim, 2021; Kvasková et al., 2023). Positive psychological attributes like hope, optimism, and resilience consistently associated with higher levels of career adaptability, underscoring the importance of a positive mindset in navigating career challenges (Delle & Searle, 2020). Social support, particularly from parents and peers, further enhances career adaptability by providing emotional and practical assistance, which helps individuals manage career transitions more effectively (Lu & Qiu-hong, 2022). Additionally, environmental factors such as leader-member exchange, job satisfaction, and work value play a critical role, as they correlate with the control dimension of career adaptability, emphasizing the significance of a supportive work environment in promoting adaptability (Primana & Permadi, 2018). By examining these non-cognitive factors, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the complex nature of career adaptability and develop targeted interventions to support students in their career development journeys.

Among the affective variables, social support and work value stand out as particularly significant variables impacting career adaptability. Perceived social support, which encompasses emotional, informational, and practical assistance from one's network, has been found to positively influence career adaptability, enabling individuals to better manage career transitions and overcome challenges (Rençber & Baş, 2023). The presence of a robust support system provides not only emotional reassurance but also practical guidance, which is crucial for navigating the complexities of career development (Dluha et al., 2020). This underscores the importance of fostering strong support networks to enhance career adaptability among students and professionals alike. Work value also plays a critical role in determining career adaptability. Intrinsic work values, which relate to the personal significance and satisfaction derived from one's work, significantly contribute to subjective well-being during career transitions (Primana & Permadi, 2018; Hlaďo et al., 2021). Individuals who align their career choices with their intrinsic values are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction and, consequently, greater career adaptability. This alignment ensures that their work is not only a source of income but also a meaningful endeavor, which bolsters their ability to adapt to new career environments and demands.

Moreover, self-esteem serves as a crucial moderating variable in the relationship between social support, work value, and career adaptability (Haris & Suryani, 2021; Safitri & Indianti, 2021). High self-esteem has been strongly associated with enhanced career adaptability and has a longitudinal positive effect on it (Hui et al., 2018). This suggests that individuals with higher self-esteem are better positioned to utilize social support and intrinsic work values effectively. Additionally, peer support has been identified as a moderator in the relationship between self-esteem and career adaptability, indicating that those with higher self-esteem and strong peer support are more adept at adapting to career changes (Kvasková et al., 2023). Thus, self-esteem not only directly influences career adaptability but also enhances the positive effects of social support and work value on career adaptability.

Despite the extensive research on career adaptability and the recognition of its significance for both employed individuals and prospective workers, several gaps remain. Existing studies predominantly focus on cognitive factors influencing career adaptability, such as career decision self-efficacy and career outcome expectations. However, the role of non-cognitive factors, especially within specific cultural contexts like Indonesia, remains underexplored. While some research highlights the importance of social support, personality traits, and self-esteem in career adaptability, there is a lack of comprehensive analysis on how these non-cognitive factors interact and influence career adaptability among university students in Indonesia. Moreover, the findings from the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum programs, like Asistensi Mengajar (AM), indicate that a significant proportion of participants still exhibit low career adaptability. This suggests that current interventions may not fully address the non-cognitive dimensions critical to enhancing career adaptability. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by systematically analyzing non-cognitive factors affecting career adaptability in Indonesian university students, providing a more holistic understanding and informing more effective interventions.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the influence of social support and work value on career adaptability among university students in Indonesia, with self-esteem functioning as a moderator variable as depicted in Figure 1. Specifically, this research aims to elucidate how social support and intrinsic work values, as independent variables, contribute to the development of career adaptability, which is considered the dependent variable. Additionally, the study seeks to examine the moderating role of self-esteem in this relationship, exploring how varying levels of self-esteem impact the effectiveness of social support and work values in enhancing career adaptability. By focusing on these non-cognitive factors, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between these elements and offer insights into developing targeted interventions to better prepare students for their future careers.
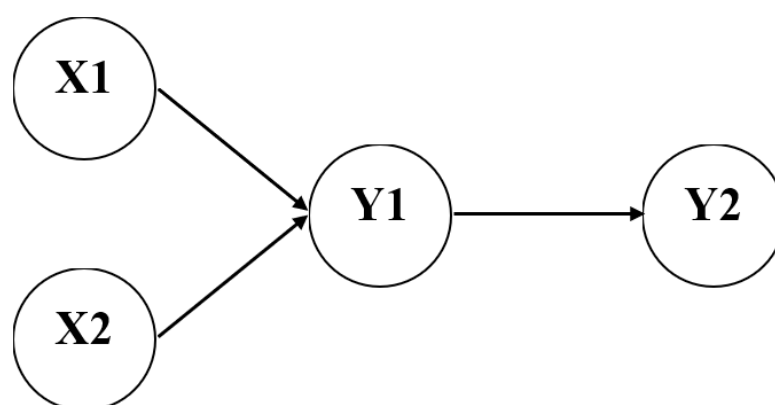
X1: Work Value; X2: Social Support; Y1: Self-Esteem; Y2: Career Adaptability

Figure 1. Hypothesized Model of Factors Contributing to Career Adaptability

METHOD

This study adopts a causal relationship design to examine the influence of non-cognitive factors contributing to career adaptability. The key features of the design in this study are: (1) it includes two independent variables (social support and work value), one moderator variable (self-esteem), and a single dependent variable (career adaptability), with the model structure derived from a comprehensive theoretical review; (2) the independent, moderator, and dependent variables are measured in a natural setting, without any intervention or manipulation; and (3) the variables are assessed on an interval scale.

Participants

This study involved 265 students from the Faculty of Education (FIP) Universitas Negeri Malang who had participated in the Asistensi Mengajar Program (AM). This sample size represents 33.6% of the total population of 787 students. The method employed to derive this sample was simple random sampling, a technique chosen to ensure the representation of the population under study. The population data were obtained from the Academic Staff of FIP Universitas Negeri Malang. The process of selecting participants for this study was facilitated through the use of online randomization software, ensuring that the selection process was truly random.

Materials

Four distinct measurement instruments were utilized to gather data in this study: Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS), Work Value Inventory (WFI), Self Esteem Scale, and Social Support Scale. The first instrument, the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS), assesses career adaptability. This scale was translated into Bahasa Indonesia by Nurfitriana et al. (2021). The CAAS comprises 24 items that are derived from four indicators: Concern, Control, Curiosity, and Confidence. Participants respond to

each item on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". The second is the Work Value Inventory (WFI). the WFI measures the values that individuals place on different aspects of their work. This inventory was adapted into Bahasa Indonesia by Sulistiobudi and Hutabarat (2022). This inventory includes 19 items developed from five indicators: leisure, extrinsic rewards, intrinsic rewards, altruistic rewards, and social rewards. Each item on the WFI is rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Very Unimportant" to "Very Important." The third is the Self Esteem Scale developed by Putri (2021). This scale is used to measure self-esteem. The scale consists of 22 items, each rated on a 4-point Likert scale that ranges from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The last is the Social Support Scale developed by Zimet et al. (1988) and subsequently translated into Bahasa Indonesia. This scale assesses the perceived social support that individuals receive in their career endeavors. The scale includes 12 items, each rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "Very Strongly Disagree" to "Very Strongly Agree".

Procedures

The four measurement instruments were administered to all participants in a Google Form format. The randomly selected participants were contacted via personal WhatsApp messages to be asked for their willingness to participate in the study. To encourage honest responses, participants were assured of the confidentiality of their data and informed that the survey results would not affect their academic grades.

Data Analysis

Prior to conducting the primary analyses, preliminary data screening procedures were undertaken to ensure compliance with essential statistical assumptions, including normality, linearity, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was employed to evaluate the normality of the data distribution. The assessment of linearity involved scrutinizing the significance value of deviation from linearity. To address heteroscedasticity, the Glejser test was used. Multicollinearity was assessed by calculating Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) and Tolerance. After confirming that all statistical assumptions were met, the data obtained through the four instruments were analyzed using path analysis. Examination of the influence of independent variables on the dependent variables was conducted by observing the significance values of regression. If the significance value of regression is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that the independent variable has an influence on the dependent variable. In general, this path analysis is conducted through the following procedures: (1) validation of the proposed paths and (2) calculation of path coefficients comprising direct effects, indirect effects, and total effects. The entire analysis process was facilitated with the utilization of SPSS 16 software.

RESULTS

The study employed path analyses with the assistance of SPSS version 16 to assess the contribution of work value and social support to career adaptability, with self-esteem as the moderator variable. Preliminary data screening was conducted to confirm adherence to key statistical assumptions (e.g. normality, linearity, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity) before conducting the main analyses. As shown in Table 1, The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test confirmed the normal distribution of variables, as indicated by significance values above 0.05 for all variables, meeting a fundamental criterion for regression analysis. Linearity was affirmed through the "Deviation from Linearity" test, with all significance values surpassing 0.05. The absence of heteroscedasticity was verified by the Glejser test as indicated by significance values above 0.05. Furthermore, For all variables, the Tolerance values are greater than 0.10, and the VIF values are less than 10.00, indicating no multicollinearity between independent variables.

Table 1. Results of normality, linearity, heteroscedasticity and multicollinearity test

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Asymp.Sig.(2-tailed)	Deviation from Linearity Sig.	Glejser Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Work Value (X1)	0.083	0.163*	0.243	0.999	1.001
Social Support (X2)	0.200	0.052*	0.136	0.999	1.001
Self-Esteem (Y1)	0.061	0.379**	0.201	-	-
Career Adaptability (Y2)	0.071	-	0.906	-	-

*Self-Esteem as Dependent Variable
**Career Adaptability as dependent variable

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of the key variables in the study, which include work value, social support, self-esteem, and career adaptability among 265 university students. The work value scores range from a minimum of 7 to a maximum of 35, with a mean of 31.05 and a standard deviation of 3.29, indicating relatively high and consistent perceptions of work value among participants. Social support scores vary widely from 23 to 84, with a mean of 61.56 and a standard deviation of 10.47, reflecting substantial variability in perceived social support levels. Self-esteem scores span from 44 to 83, averaging 64.34 with a standard deviation of 5.90, suggesting generally high self-esteem with moderate variability. Finally, career adaptability scores range from 69 to 120, with a mean of 101.67 and a standard deviation of 11.15, indicating high levels of career adaptability among the students, though with considerable individual differences. These descriptive statistics provide a foundational understanding of the distribution and central tendencies of the variables under investigation in this study on non-cognitive factors influencing career adaptability.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics (n=265) of work value, social support, self-esteem, and career adaptability

Variables	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Work Value (X1)	7	35	31.05	3.29
Social Support (X2)	23	84	61.56	10.47
Self-Esteem (Y1)	44	83	64.34	5.90
Career Adaptability (Y2)	69	120	101.67	11.15

The results of the path analysis conducted to examine the relationships between variables are depicted in Table 3. The path coefficient from work value to self-esteem is 0.150 with a standard error of 0.089, yielding a significance level of 0.004. This indicates a statistically significant positive effect of work value on self-esteem, suggesting that higher work value perceptions are associated with increased self-esteem among the participants. Similarly, the path coefficient from social support to self-esteem is 0.186, which is statistically significant at the 0.000 level. This result suggests a strong positive influence of social support on self-esteem, indicating that greater perceived social support significantly enhances self-esteem. The absence of an error value in the path analysis emphasizes the robustness of this finding, further underscoring the critical role of social support in bolstering self-esteem. Collectively, work value and social support yield an R-squared of 0.199, meaning that approximately 19.9% of the variance in self-esteem can be explained by work value and social support together. Furthermore, the path from self-esteem to career adaptability shows a coefficient of 0.115 with an error of 0.090 and an R-squared value of 0.190, significant at the 0.000 level. This highlights the crucial role of self-esteem in enhancing career adaptability, as self-esteem contributes significantly to career adaptability. The R-squared value of 0.190 denotes that self-esteem accounts for 19% of the variability in career adaptability, illustrating the substantial impact self-esteem has on an individual's ability to adapt to their career environment. All the aforementioned analysis results are also summarized in Figure 2, which represents the final model of the proposed pathways among variables. This comprehensive model illustrates the direct and indirect effects of work value and social support on career adaptability via self-esteem, providing a clear visualization of how these factors interrelate to influence career adaptability outcomes.

Table 3. Results of path analysis

Path Directions	Path Coefficient	Error	R Square	Significance
Work value to Self-Esteem	0.150	0.89	0.199	0.004
Social Support to Self-Esteem	0.186			0.000
Self-Esteem to Career Adaptability	0.115	0.90	0.190	0.000

The path analysis conducted in this study provides a comprehensive understanding of how various factors interrelate to influence career adaptability. Table 4 presents the direct, indirect, and total effects observed among the key variables. Firstly, the direct effects highlight the immediate impact of work value and social support on self-esteem.

Work value demonstrates a direct effect coefficient of 0.160, indicating that individuals who place higher importance on their work experience have greater boosts in self-esteem. On the other hand, social support exerts a more substantial direct effect with a coefficient of 0.412, underscoring the significant role of supportive relationships in enhancing self-esteem levels among individuals. Secondly, the path analysis illuminates how self-esteem, as a mediator, influences career adaptability. The direct effect of self-esteem on career adaptability is measured at 0.435, suggesting that individuals with higher self-esteem tend to exhibit greater career adaptability. This direct pathway underscores the psychological foundation self-esteem provides for individuals to navigate and adjust to career challenges effectively.

Moreover, the study delves into the indirect effects wherein both work value and social support impact career adaptability through their influence on self-esteem. The indirect effect of work value on career adaptability via self-esteem is calculated at 0.070, indicating that part of work value's impact on career adaptability operates through its positive effect on self-esteem. Similarly, social support demonstrates a stronger indirect effect of 0.179 on career adaptability through self-esteem, emphasizing that supportive social networks play a crucial role in fostering self-esteem, which in turn enhances career adaptability.

Finally, when combining the direct and indirect effects, the total effects provide a holistic view of the overall impact of work value and social support on career adaptability. The total effect of work value on career adaptability via self-esteem is computed as 0.230, while for social support, it amounts to 0.591. These numbers underscore that social support has a more pronounced total effect on career adaptability compared to work value, primarily due to its stronger direct effect on self-esteem and, consequently, on career adaptability.

Table 4. Effects of independent variables on dependent variables

Path Directions	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
Work Value to Self-Esteem	0.160	-	0.160
Social Support to Self-Esteem	0.412	-	0.412
Self-Esteem to Career Adaptability	0.435	-	0.435
Work Value to Career Adaptability via Self-Esteem	-	0.070	0.070
Social Support to Career Adaptability via Self-Esteem	-	0.179	0.179
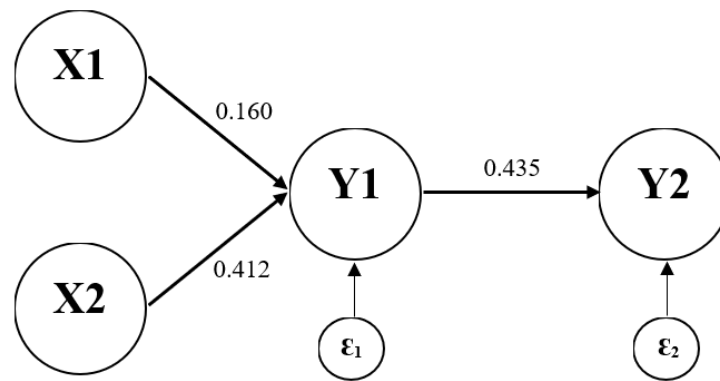
X1: Work Value; X2: Social Support; Y1: Self-Esteem; Y2: Career Adaptability

Figure 2. Final Model of Factors Contributing to Career Adaptability

DISCUSSION

The results of this study, it is evident that non-cognitive factors require considerable attention alongside cognitive factors. While cognitive elements such as career decision self-efficacy and career outcome expectations are crucial in shaping an individual's career adaptability, the significant impact of non-cognitive factors cannot be overlooked. Variables such as social support and work value have demonstrated a profound influence on career adaptability through the mediation of self-esteem. This underscores the necessity of adopting a holistic approach in career development programs that not only focus on enhancing cognitive skills but also foster a supportive environment and value system to boost self-esteem and, ultimately, career adaptability. The findings reveal that social support, with its various dimensions of emotional, informational, and practical assistance, is pivotal in enhancing an individual's ability to adapt to career changes. Similarly, work values, especially intrinsic ones that provide personal satisfaction and meaning, significantly contribute to an individual's adaptability in their career path. These non-cognitive factors create a foundation that bolsters self-esteem, which is a critical mediator in this dynamic. High self-esteem, in turn, enhances one's confidence and ability to navigate career transitions effectively. Therefore, interventions to improve career adaptability should incorporate strategies to enhance social support systems and align work values with personal satisfaction. By doing so, educational institutions and career counselors can better prepare students and professionals to face the evolving demands of the workforce, ensuring a more resilient and adaptable future workforce.

Based on the path coefficient value used to determine which path has the strongest influence on career adaptability, the social support variable emerges as the most significant. Previous research underscores the critical role of social support in enhancing individual career adaptability (Dluha et al., 2020). As one of the primary predictors of career adaptability, social support fortifies individuals against stress, transitional periods, and life's challenges (Ataç et al., 2018; Öztemel & Yıldız-Akyol, 2021). Various aspects of social support contribute to career adaptability, including emotional support through expressions of empathy and concern, instrumental support through material or service assistance, informational support through advice, guidance, and feedback, and companionship support through social activities and togetherness (Durrah, 2022; Simmons et al., 2023). Social support significantly enhances social adaptability and helps individuals overcome frustration, increase resilience, and reduce the negative effects of career-related stress. The more an individual perceives emotional support, the stronger their belief that social support can alleviate career anxiety and improve self-regulation abilities (Aslan & Koçak, 2023; Zhao, 2023). This indicates that students who have completed teaching assistance programs are better equipped to adapt to various challenges in the field due to support from their environment, including peers, the school environment, and supervisors. This robust support network provides a foundation for increased confidence and effective career adaptability, as it mitigates stress and fosters a sense of security and belonging, which are essential for navigating career transitions successfully.

The findings of this study that social support contributes to career adaptability through self-esteem are in line with a substantial body of previous research. Wang and Fu (2015) demonstrated that social support significantly enhances career adaptability by providing individuals with the emotional and practical resources necessary to manage career transitions effectively. Similarly, Ghosh and Fouad (2017) found that social support acts as a critical buffer against career-related stress, thereby promoting greater adaptability in the face of career challenges. Rençber and Baş (2023) further confirmed the direct positive effects of social support on career adaptability, emphasizing its role in career development. Additionally, Creed et al. (2009) highlighted the dual role of social support, showing that it not only has a direct impact on career adaptability but also mitigates the adverse effects of career stress. This buffering effect underscores the importance of a robust social support network in enhancing career resilience. Moreover, Kvasková et al. (2023) and Hui et al. (2018) provided evidence that self-esteem plays a mediating role in this relationship. Their studies revealed that individuals with higher levels of perceived social support tend to have higher self-esteem, which in turn positively influences their career adaptability. This mediating effect of self-esteem highlights its pivotal role in translating the benefits of social support into improved career outcomes. These findings collectively support the notion that self-esteem is a crucial intermediary factor in the relationship between social support and career adaptability. By fostering self-esteem, social support enhances individuals' confidence in their ability to navigate career changes and challenges.

In addition to social support, work values also significantly contribute to career adaptability. According to the path analysis results, work value influences career adaptability with an effect value of 0.070. Work values represent the primary goals and desires that individuals aim to achieve through diligent work, directly influencing their career choices and development (Kamaruddin & Rasdi, 2021; Yadav & Chaudhari, 2020). These values are integral to shaping an individual's career trajectory by aligning their professional aspirations with their personal beliefs and motivations. Positive and consistent work values that resonate with an individual's goals and identity tend to enhance self-esteem, which in turn facilitates the process of adapting to changes in one's career. Research supports this, showing that work values influence work performance and job choices, impacting how individuals navigate their professional lives (P. J. Chen & Choi, 2008; Jung et al., 2021). The implementation of work values is evident as individuals prioritize job characteristics that align with their personal values, which not only guides their career decisions but also impacts their job satisfaction and performance. This alignment between work values and career goals creates a sense of purpose and direction, making it easier for individuals to adapt to new career challenges and opportunities. The relationship between work values and career adaptability is thus multifaceted. By fostering a strong sense of self and providing a clear framework for career decision-making, work values enhance an individual's ability to manage career transitions and adapt to new professional environments. This integration of work values and self-esteem underscores the importance of a holistic approach in career development, one that considers both internal factors, such as personal values and beliefs, and external factors, like social support.

The findings that work value contributes significantly to career adaptability through self-esteem support previous research. Specifically, intrinsic work values, such as the emphasis on creativity and challenge, alongside extrinsic work values, like the importance of high income and good working conditions, have been shown to positively predict career adaptability among individuals, aligning with Ye (2015). This suggests that individuals who place a high value on both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of their work are better equipped to adapt to career changes and challenges. Furthermore, the study highlights that work values are significant mediators between career adaptability and life satisfaction, as noted by Hlaďo et al. (2021), thereby emphasizing the interconnectedness of these constructs in shaping individuals' overall well-being. This interconnectedness suggests that fostering strong work values can enhance an individual's adaptability and overall satisfaction with their career trajectory. Additionally, the critical role of self-esteem as a mediating factor is underscored in this study. Higher perceptions of work value are associated with increased self-esteem, which in turn leads to greater career adaptability. This finding corroborates with the path analysis results, indicating that self-esteem not only directly influences career adaptability but also enhances the positive effects of work values on career adaptability. The study's results show that work value impacts self-esteem with a coefficient of 0.160, and self-esteem directly influences career adaptability with a coefficient of 0.435. Moreover, work value

impacts career adaptability indirectly through self-esteem, with a coefficient of 0.070, highlighting the significant indirect role self-esteem plays in this relationship. These findings align with existing literature and provide robust evidence for the model proposing that self-esteem mediates the relationship between work values and career adaptability, thereby supporting the notion that enhancing self-esteem could be a vital strategy in improving career adaptability among university students.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, although a simple random sample was used, the sample size represents only 33.6% of the total population of students in the Faculty of Education at Universitas Negeri Malang who participated in the Teaching Assistance Program. This may not fully represent the broader population. Second, the study utilized measurement tools that were translated and adapted into Indonesian. Despite their validated reliability, these tools may still harbor undetected cultural biases or lack the ability to fully capture specific local nuances. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported data from respondents through Likert scales, which are susceptible to social desirability bias and the tendency of participants to provide socially acceptable responses. Furthermore, the study was conducted solely within one educational institution, limiting the generalizability of the findings to students at other universities or different educational contexts in Indonesia. Lastly, the study did not account for other external variables that might influence career adaptability, such as economic conditions or changes in the labor market, which could significantly impact the study's findings.

The findings of this study have significant implications for the field of career guidance and counseling. Firstly, the demonstrated importance of self-esteem as a mediator in the relationship between work values and career adaptability highlights the need for counselors to focus on boosting students' self-esteem. By integrating strategies that enhance self-esteem, such as positive feedback and self-reflection exercises, counselors can help students better adapt to career challenges. Additionally, the significant impact of work values on career adaptability underscores the necessity for counselors to assist students in identifying and aligning their career choices with their intrinsic and extrinsic work values. This alignment can lead to greater career satisfaction and adaptability. Moreover, given the role of social support in enhancing career adaptability, counselors should also work on building robust support networks for students involving peers, family, and mentors. These interventions can create a comprehensive support system that aids students in navigating their career paths effectively. Lastly, the findings suggest that career counseling programs should incorporate holistic approaches that address both cognitive and non-cognitive factors influencing career adaptability, ensuring a more well-rounded preparation for students as they transition into the workforce.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that the proposed theoretical model has received adequate empirical support, which means that social support and work value contribute significantly to career adaptability, with self-esteem acting as a crucial mediator. Path analysis shows that social support has a more substantial direct effect on self-esteem than work value. Self-esteem, in turn, directly influences career adaptability. Indirectly, social support impacts career adaptability via self-esteem with a coefficient of 0.179, while work value's indirect effect through self-esteem is 0.070. The total effects calculated are 0.591 for social support and 0.230 for work value, indicating that social support has the most pronounced total effect on career adaptability. These findings underscore the importance of fostering robust support networks and aligning career choices with intrinsic work values to enhance students' career adaptability effectively.

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