International Journal of Business and Quality Research

https://e-journal.citakonsultindo.or.id/index.php/IJBQR
E-ISSN: 2985-9468

THE INFLUENCE OF CAREER ADAPTABILITY AND PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ON CAREER ANXIETY WITH SELF-EFFICACY AND PARENTAL SUPPORT AS MEDIATING VARIABLES AMONG FINAL-YEAR STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS, UNIVERSITAS NEGERI MAKASSAR

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Abstract

Career anxiety among final-year university students constitutes a significant psychological concern, particularly as they navigate the transitional phase from academic life into the professional world. This study examines the extent to which Career Adaptability and Perceived Organizational Support contribute to Career Anxiety among final-year students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Makassar, with Self-Efficacy and Parental Support positioned as mediating variables. A quantitative research design was employed, involving 305 final-year students selected through proportionate stratified random sampling. The hypothesized model was tested using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 4.0. The findings confirm that Career Adaptability and Perceived Organizational Support significantly and positively predict Career Anxiety, both directly and indirectly through Self-Efficacy and Parental Support, which are confirmed as significant mediating pathways. Rather than buffering students against career anxiety, higher adaptability, institutional support, self-belief, and parental involvement are each associated with heightened career anxiety, a pattern explained through Social Cognitive Career Theory as reflecting sharpened awareness of the gap between students' readiness and real labor-market demands. These findings extend the application of Social Cognitive Career Theory within academic career development and offer practical recommendations for higher education institutions and parents on designing career mentoring interventions that manage, rather than merely suppress, students' career anxiety amid intensifying global competition.

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Keywords: Career Adaptability; Perceived Organizational Support; Career Anxiety; Self-Efficacy; Parental Support

INTRODUCTION

Career anxiety refers to a psychological condition characterized by emotional and cognitive discomfort arising in relation to an individual's career prospects. Müceldili et al., (2023), describe career anxiety as a form of apprehension closely associated with the process of making career choices, uncertainty regarding future employment, and a perceived lack of readiness to meet the demands of the professional world. Final-year university students are frequently among the most vulnerable to this form of anxiety, as they are situated at a pressure-laden transitional juncture between academic life and a competitive work environment (Nahar & Sekhar, 2024). This condition may give rise to a range of adverse consequences, including diminished academic motivation, procrastination in career decision-making, and a general decline in academic performance (Li et al., 2020).

This phenomenon is particularly observable within the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Makassar (FEB UNM). Pre-research data collected through a questionnaire distributed to 30 final-year students revealed that 66.7% of respondents remained uncertain about their career orientation, 70% reported experiencing anxiety regarding employment competition, and 53.3% expressed pressure arising from familial expectations. These preliminary findings suggest that career anxiety is not merely an individual psychological issue, but one that encompasses social and cultural dimensions that cannot be overlooked.

Amid economic instability and intensifying competition in the labor market, FEB UNM students are expected to possess a robust level of career preparedness. In practice, however, many students continue to face challenges such as low self-confidence regarding their competencies, limited work experience, and suboptimal utilization of career services provided by the faculty. Pre-research results further indicate that the majority of students have not developed structured career plans and tend to adopt a passive stance toward acquiring information about the professional world (Rijal, 2023). This situation suggests that levels of career concern and career confidence among students remain relatively low, both of which constitute foundational pillars of career readiness, and this deficiency in career adaptability is identified as one of the primary drivers of career anxiety among final-year students.

Beyond internal factors, support from external sources specifically the educational institution also plays a crucial role in shaping students' psychological states, while family involvement constitutes an equally important contextual factor. However, existing accounts

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of how adaptability and support relate to career anxiety in the Indonesian higher-education context remain incomplete, particularly regarding whether such resources reliably reduce anxiety or, instead, interact with it in more complex ways. Grounded in the foregoing background, this study aims to analyze how Career Adaptability and Perceived Organizational Support influence Career Anxiety among final-year FEB UNM students, with Self-Efficacy and Parental Support as mediating variables. The study sought to answer the question: do Career Adaptability and Perceived Organizational Support, directly and through Self-Efficacy and Parental Support, significantly predict Career Anxiety among final-year FEB UNM students?

The findings are expected to enrich the scholarly literature on Social Cognitive Career Theory within the context of higher education in Indonesia, while simultaneously providing strategic insights for universities and families in creating conducive career-mentoring ecosystems. The urgency of this research is further underscored by the complex challenges confronting final-year students particularly regarding low career preparedness and the uneven translation of institutional and familial support into psychological readiness which necessitate a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of career anxiety that are contextually relevant to the local setting.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study draws on the theoretical framework of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), developed by Lent et al., (1994) on the foundation of Bandura, (1986) social cognitive theory and subsequently applied to the domain of career development. SCCT positions self-efficacy as a central mediating construct through which contextual factors such as institutional and familial support shape individuals' career behavior and anxiety, understanding career anxiety as the product of complex interactions among personal cognitive dimensions, adaptive behaviors, and contextual supports (Lent et al., 2000). Within this framework, the process of setting career goals and actively exploring career options does not automatically translate into psychological comfort; rather, it can sharpen an individual's awareness of the distance between present competence and the demands of the professional world, a mechanism that offers a coherent explanation for why adaptive resources may coincide with, rather than eliminate, career anxiety.

Perceived Organizational Support is defined as the degree to which individuals perceive that their institution values their contributions and genuinely cares about their overall well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Rhoades dan Eisenberger (2002) demonstrate that positive perceptions of organizational support strengthen individuals' sense of competence and deepen their commitment to established career goals; at the same time, the

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information that accompanies such support, particularly regarding job requirements and market competition, can heighten students' awareness of the standards they are expected to meet.

Self-efficacy, introduced by Bandura (1977), refers to an individual's confidence in their capacity to plan and execute the actions needed to attain desired outcomes. In the context of career planning, self-efficacy represents students' confidence in their ability to make career decisions, seek and secure employment, and adapt to the demands of the professional environment. Within a mediation framework, self-efficacy functions as a connective mechanism explaining how Career Adaptability and Perceived Organizational Support influence Career Anxiety (Feng et al., 2025), while also carrying the consequence of higher personal performance standards that can themselves become a source of vigilance and apprehension.

Parental support encompasses the various forms of assistance provided by parents to their children, including emotional support, instrumental assistance, verbal encouragement, and career-related role modeling (Turner et al., 2003). Chasanah dan Salim, (2019) demonstrate that parental support exerts a positive influence on students' self-efficacy and career readiness; however, within a collectivist cultural context such as Indonesia, such support is also interwoven with familial expectations, such that students who perceive strong parental support may simultaneously experience a heightened sense of moral obligation not to disappoint that support.

On this theoretical basis, the study tested twelve hypotheses. Career Adaptability (X1) and Perceived Organizational Support (X2) were each hypothesized to exert a significant direct effect on Career Anxiety (Y), Self-Efficacy (Z1), and Parental Support (Z2) (H1-H6); Self-Efficacy and Parental Support were each hypothesized to exert a significant direct effect on Career Anxiety (H7-H8); and Self-Efficacy and Parental Support were each hypothesized to mediate the effects of Career Adaptability and Perceived Organizational Support on Career Anxiety (H9-H12).

METHOD

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research design to examine the causal relationships among the study variables. Self-Efficacy and Parental Support were positioned as mediating variables explaining how Career Adaptability and Perceived Organizational Support, as independent variables, influence Career Anxiety among final-year students, both directly and indirectly. This design enabled systematic hypothesis testing and evidence-based conclusions derived from numerical data obtained through structured questionnaires.

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Setting and Study Population

The study was conducted at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Makassar (FEB UNM), one of the largest faculties within the university, encompassing a diverse range of study programs in economics and business. Given its large population of final-year students and varied academic backgrounds, the faculty provides a highly representative setting for examining the dynamics of career anxiety, adaptive capacity, and institutional and family support within a higher-education environment. The study population comprised all final-year students enrolled at FEB UNM.

Sampling Technique Procedure

The sample size for this study was determined through a systematic statistical approach employing Cochran's formula and sampling was carried out using proportionate stratified random sampling, ensuring proportional representation of respondents from each study program within FEB UNM. A total of 305 respondents were recruited across all study programs, a sample size deemed adequate for PLS-SEM analysis.

Instruments

Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire designed to measure respondents' perceptions of each research variable, employing a four-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree) selected for its effectiveness in capturing nuanced perceptions and its suitability for PLS-SEM analysis. Each construct Career Adaptability, Perceived Organizational Support, Career Anxiety, Self-Efficacy, and Parental Support was operationalized through indicators adapted from established measurement instruments used in prior relevant studies and calibrated to reflect the lived realities of final-year FEB UNM students, encompassing psychological readiness, perceptions of institutional support, and the dynamics of parental relationships in career development.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted through the distribution of questionnaires to final-year FEB UNM students via both in-person and online platforms. Prior to completing the questionnaire, each respondent received a clear explanation of the research objectives, confidentiality assurances, and completion guidelines to facilitate honest and objective responses. This blended approach was pursued to maximize respondent reach across diverse study programs and to ensure the representativeness of the collected data, yielding a total of 305 questionnaires used for analysis.

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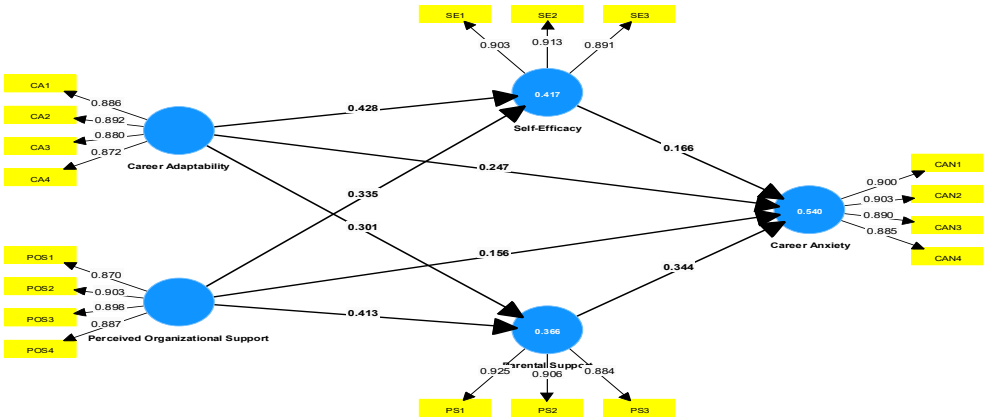
Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS version 4.0 through two primary stages. The first stage involved evaluation of the measurement model (outer model), verifying the validity and reliability of each construct through indicator loading values, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), composite reliability, and discriminant validity. Convergent validity was assessed based on indicator loading values (recommended > 0.70) and AVE (≥ 0.50), while discriminant validity was evaluated through cross-loading comparisons and the Fornell-Larcker Criterion. The second stage comprised evaluation of the structural model (inner model), encompassing hypothesis testing through path coefficients, coefficients of determination (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), and significance testing via bootstrapping. The mediating roles of Self-Efficacy and Parental Support were examined to determine whether mediation was partial or full. Construct reliability was assessed through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, with a recommended threshold above 0.70 (Hair et al., 2020).

RESULTS

The presentation of findings in this study is based on a series of data processing procedures employing the *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling* (PLS-SEM) method. The primary focus of the discussion pertains to the structural model (*inner model*) testing, which is aimed at delineating the direct and indirect effects of *career adaptability* and *perceived organizational support* on *career anxiety*, with *self-efficacy* and *parental support* as mediating variables.

Structural model testing was carried out using SmartPLS version 4.0, with the objective of exploring the direct and indirect relationships among *career adaptability*, *perceived organizational support*, and *career anxiety*, mediated by *self-efficacy* and *parental support*.



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Instrument and Data Validity Testing

Prior to structural model testing, instrument adequacy was assessed using SmartPLS 4.0. Convergent validity was evaluated through outer loading values and *Average Variance Extracted* (AVE). Testing revealed that all indicators yielded loading factor values above 0.70 and AVE values exceeding 0.50, thereby confirming that all variables satisfied the requirements for convergent validity. The complete outer loading results for all indicators are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Outer Loading

Figure 1 *Measurement Model*

Code	X1	X2	Y	Z1	Z2	Remark
CA1	0.886					Valid
CA2	0.892					
CA3	0.880					
CA4	0.872					
POS1		0.870				Valid
POS2		0.903				
POS3		0.898				
POS4		0.887				
CAN1			0.900			Valid
CAN2			0.903			
CAN3			0.890			
CAN4			0.885			
SE1				0.903		Valid
SE2				0.913		
SE3				0.891		
PS1					0.925	Valid
PS2					0.906	
PS3					0.884	

Table 1 demonstrates that all research variables produced loading factor values exceeding the 0.700 threshold, confirming that all indicators are valid. The subsequent stage involved measuring convergent validity through AVE values, as presented in Table 2.

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. **Table 2 AVE (Average Variance Extracted)**

Variable	AVE Value
X1 *Career Adaptability*	0.779
X2 *Perceived Organizational Support*	0.791
Y *Career Anxiety*	0.800
Z1 *Self-Efficacy*	0.815
Z2 *Parental Support*	0.819

Table 2 indicates that all variables exhibit AVE values above 0.50, confirming that each construct satisfies the requirements for convergent validity and is ready to proceed to discriminant validity testing.

Discriminant Validity Testing (*Discriminant Validity*)

Table 3 Cross Loading Test

Code	X1	X2	Y	Z1	Z2
CA1	**0.886**	0.347	0.515	0.466	0.432
CA2	**0.892**	0.371	0.495	0.503	0.411
CA3	**0.880**	0.339	0.498	0.518	0.402
CA4	**0.872**	0.436	0.508	0.525	0.434
POS1	0.357	**0.870**	0.449	0.460	0.472
POS2	0.403	**0.903**	0.46	0.492	0.495
POS3	0.398	**0.898**	0.514	0.462	0.505
POS4	0.346	**0.887**	0.468	0.419	0.448
CAN1	0.520	0.497	**0.900**	0.534	0.579
CAN2	0.518	0.460	**0.903**	0.526	0.592
CAN3	0.507	0.476	**0.890**	0.500	0.566
CAN4	0.498	0.470	**0.885**	0.513	0.546

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SE1	0.519	0.454	0.505	**0.903**	0.515
SE2	0.535	0.487	0.546	**0.913**	0.496
SE3	0.488	0.455	0.517	**0.891**	0.505
PS1	0.453	0.510	0.579	0.532	**0.925**
PS2	0.421	0.486	0.615	0.528	**0.906**
PS3	0.417	0.470	0.537	0.456	**0.884**

Table 3 demonstrates that the cross-loading values for each variable *Career Adaptability* (X1), *Perceived Organizational Support* (X2), *Career Anxiety* (Y), *Self-Efficacy* (Z1), and *Parental Support* (Z2) are consistently higher on their respective constructs than on any other construct, indicating the absence of discriminant validity concerns.

Table 4 Fornell Larcker Criterion

Variable	X1	X2	Y	Z1	Z2
Career Adaptability (X1)	**0.882**				
Perceived Organizational Support (X2)	0.424	**0.889**			
Career Anxiety (Y)	0.571	0.532	**0.894**		
Self-Efficacy (Z1)	0.570	0.516	0.580	**0.903**	
Parental Support (Z2)	0.476	0.540	0.638	0.560	**0.905**

Table 4 demonstrates that the AVE value for each variable against its own construct is consistently greater than its correlation values with other variables. Based on testing via both cross-loadings and the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, it may be concluded that all five variables in this study have satisfied the requirements for discriminant validity.

Reliability Testing

Instrument reliability may be assessed through three primary indicators: Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and rho_a. An instrument is considered reliable when the

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values of all three indicators exceed the established threshold of > 0.70 (Hair et al., 2020). The construct reliability results for all variables are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Construct Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	(rho_a)	Remark
Career Adaptability (X1)	0.905	0.905	0.934	Reliable
Perceived Organizational Support (X2)	0.912	0.913	0.938	
Career Anxiety (Y)	0.917	0.917	0.941	
Self-Efficacy (Z1)	0.886	0.888	0.929	
Parental Support (Z2)	0.889	0.892	0.931	

Table 5 confirms that all variables satisfy reliability standards, with Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and rho_a values uniformly exceeding 0.70. Accordingly, the instruments employed in this study are declared reliable.

R-Square Test

The R-square (R^2) value is used to measure the extent to which independent latent variables influence dependent latent variables. The R-Square test results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 *R-Square Test*

Variable	*R-Square*
Career Anxiety (Y)	0.540
Self-Efficacy (Z1)	0.417
Parental Support (Z2)	0.366

Table 6 indicates that the *Career Anxiety* variable has an R^2 value of 0.540, meaning that 54% of its variance is accounted for by the independent variables in the model. *Self-Efficacy* and *Parental Support* have R^2 values of 0.417 and 0.366, respectively, indicating adequate predictive capacity of the model.

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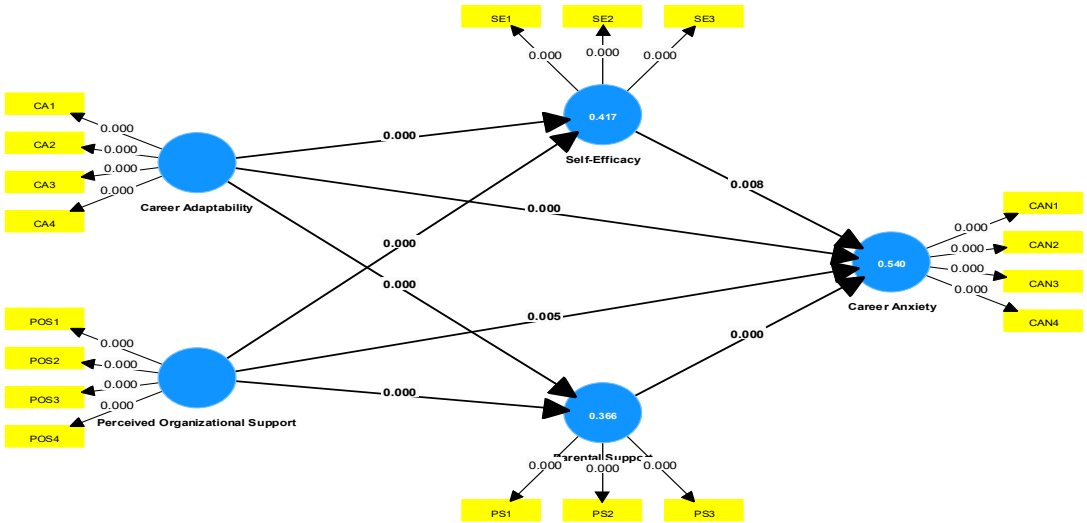
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F-*Square Test*

Table 7 *F-Square Test*

Variable	*F-Square*	Remark
X1 → Y	0.084	Small Effect
X1 → Z1	0.258	Moderate Effect
X1 → Z2	0.117	Small Effect
X2 → Y	0.033	Small Effect
X2 → Z1	0.158	Moderate Effect
X2 → Z2	0.221	Moderate Effect
Z1 → Y	0.032	Small Effect
Z2 → Y	0.149	Moderate Effect

The F-Square test in Table 7 presents the magnitude of each variable's contribution to the endogenous construct. *Career Adaptability* exerts a small effect on *Career Anxiety*, a moderate effect on *Self-Efficacy*, and a small effect on *Parental Support*. *Perceived Organizational Support* demonstrates a small effect on *Career Anxiety* but moderate effects on both *Self-Efficacy* and *Parental Support*. Subsequently, *Self-Efficacy* exerts a small effect and *Parental Support* a moderate effect on *Career Anxiety*. These findings collectively affirm that each variable plays a distinct role within the constructed structural model.



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Direct Effect Analysis

Table 8 *Direct Effect Analysis*

Variable	β	*Std. Dev*	*T Statistics*	*P Value*	Remark
X1→Y	0.421	0.048	8.741	0.000	significant
X2→Y	0.353	0.049	7.246	0.000	
X1→Z1	0.428	0.050	8.553	0.000	
X2→Z1	0.335	0.052	6.397	0.000	
X1→Z2	0.301	0.048	6.329	0.000	
X2→Z2	0.413	0.049	8.451	0.000	
Z1→Y	0.166	0.062	2.674	0.008	
Z2→Y	0.344	0.052	6.668	0.000	

Table 8 demonstrates that all inter-variable pathways yield t-statistic values

Figure 2 Hypothesis Testing

exceeding 1.96 with p-values below 0.05. This indicates that all hypotheses from H1 through H8 are statistically significant. Career Adaptability and Perceived Organizational Support are confirmed to exert direct effects on Career Anxiety, Self-Efficacy, and Parental Support. Furthermore, Self-Efficacy and Parental Support are also demonstrated to significantly influence Career Anxiety.

Indirect Effect Analysis

Table 9 Indirect Effect Analysis

Variable	β	*Std. Dev*	*T Statistic*	*P Value*	Remark
X1→Z1→Y	0.071	0.030	2.386	0.017	Significant
X2→Z1→Y	0.056	0.022	2.536	0.011	
X1→Z2→Y	0.103	0.023	4.422	0.000	
X2→Z2→Y	0.142	0.028	5.082	0.000	

Table 9 indicates that all indirect pathways tested yield significant results ($p < 0.05$). *Self-Efficacy* and *Parental Support* are confirmed as mediators in the relationship between *Career Adaptability* and *Perceived Organizational Support* with *Career Anxiety*. Accordingly,

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all mediation hypotheses (H9–H12) are supported. These findings indicate that the two mediating variables strengthen the pathways of influence between the primary variables in reducing career anxiety among final-year students.

DISCUSSION

Every path coefficient in the structural model is positive and significant, consistently indicating that increases in the predictor variables (Career Adaptability and Perceived Organizational Support) and in the mediating variables (Self-Efficacy and Parental Support) move in the same direction as increases in Career Anxiety, rather than reducing it. Although this pattern may appear counterintuitive, it is coherently explained through the lens of Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent et al., 1994), in which heightened awareness, stronger self-belief, and greater contextual support sharpen individuals' perception of the gap between their actual readiness and the real demands of the labor market.

Career Adaptability and Career Anxiety

Career Adaptability exerts a positive and significant effect on Career Anxiety, with Concern emerging as the most dominant indicator, followed by Control, Curiosity, and Confidence. Consistent with Lent et al., (1994), the process of goal-setting and active career exploration sharpens students' awareness of the gap between their competencies and labor-market demands, a pattern also identified by Boo et al (2021), who found that individuals with high career adaptability display a keener sensitivity to risk and uncertainty. This effect is compounded by a competitive job market, pressure from family expectations, and limited access to relevant internships, so that the anxiety observed is better understood as a manifestation of students' concern for their own readiness rather than a weakness.

Perceived Organizational Support and Career Anxiety

Perceived Organizational Support exerts a positive and significant effect on Career Anxiety, with support from lecturers and academic advisors as the most dominant indicator. As explained by Lent et al (2000), institutional contextual support does provide career information, yet more comprehensive exposure to job requirements and competition simultaneously raises students' awareness of the standards they must meet, consistent with Eisenberger et al (1986) and Rhoades dan Eisenberger (2002). Career guidance services that emphasize the intensity of competition, including against graduates from universities on Java, heighten students' awareness of their perceived competency gaps, suggesting that

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institutional support should not merely open students' eyes to challenges but also equip them with the confidence to face those challenges progressively.

Career Adaptability and Self-Efficacy

Career Adaptability exerts a positive and significant effect on Self-Efficacy, with Curiosity as the most closely related indicator, reinforced by Confidence. Students who actively explore career options tend to build stronger self-belief through the knowledge and skills gained from that exploration, consistent with Yiming et al (2024) and reinforced by Gerçek dan Özveren (2025), who identified career adaptability as a serial mediator of self-efficacy and perceived employability. This finding confirms that active engagement in everyday career exploration, however modest, is sufficient to begin building students' self-confidence without requiring extensive career experience.

Perceived Organizational Support and Self-Efficacy

Perceived Organizational Support exerts a positive and significant effect on Self-Efficacy, with academic facilities and resources as the most influential indicator, followed by institutional support for career preparation such as internship and training programs. This finding is consistent with Ni et al (2024), who linked higher organizational support to stronger self-belief in managing one's own career, and with Kurtessis et al (2017), who explained that perceived organizational support creates a psychologically safe environment for building self-confidence. This underscores the university's role as a safe space in which students can develop self-confidence, particularly given the limited internship access and industry networks outside Java.

Career Adaptability and Parental Support

Career Adaptability exerts a positive and significant effect on Parental Support, with Concern as the most relevant indicator. Students who display a mature career orientation tend to elicit more active support from their parents instrumental, informational, and emotional alike consistent with Zhou et al (2024) and reinforced by Li et al (2024), who demonstrated a reciprocal relationship between parental involvement and their children's career adaptability. This closeness, however, can also raise parental expectations, underscoring students' need for communication skills that allow them to disclose the challenges they face openly, without feeling compelled to always present a flawless outcome.

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Perceived Organizational Support and Parental Support

Perceived Organizational Support exerts a positive and significant effect on Parental Support, with institutional support for career preparation as the most relevant indicator. Structured career programs and mentoring provided by the university are conveyed to parents through students' own communication, consistent with Le et al (2023), who found that strong institutional support indirectly shapes family involvement by increasing parental trust in the institution, and with Turner et al (2003), who noted that institutional and family support mutually reinforce one another. This information transparency is particularly important for students from outside Makassar, as it bridges family trust regarding their child's career readiness.

Self-Efficacy and Career Anxiety

Self-Efficacy exerts a positive and significant effect on Career Anxiety, with motivation and effort as the most dominant indicator, followed by the ability to cope with difficulty and adapt to the environment. Consistent with Boo et al (2021), the higher the standards individuals set for themselves, the greater the pressure to meet them, as affirmed by Otu dan Sefotho (2025), who found that students with high self-efficacy tend to set more ambitious career targets. Strong self-belief drives students toward more competitive positions, while limited internship experience widens the gap between ambition and opportunity, indicating that building self-confidence must be accompanied by the capacity to accept outcomes that do not always match expectations.

Parental Support and Career Anxiety

Parental Support exerts a positive and significant effect on Career Anxiety, with verbal encouragement as the most dominant indicator, reinforced by instrumental assistance and career-related modeling. Consistent with Zhang et al (2025), students who perceive high levels of parental support in fact report higher career anxiety, as explained by Zhou et al (2024), whereby positive parental career expectations correlate with both anxiety symptoms and increased career adaptability. This finding reflects a common dilemma among Indonesian students: substantial family support often coincides with a moral burden not to disappoint that support, particularly in the absence of a shared understanding of current labor-market realities.

Self-Efficacy as a Mediator between Career Adaptability and Career Anxiety

Self-Efficacy is confirmed to mediate the effect of Career Adaptability on Career Anxiety, consistent with Umar et al (2025), who identified self-efficacy as a partial mediator between

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individual adaptive capacity and career anxiety, and reinforced by Alkal (2025). Students with high career adaptability, particularly in the curiosity and confidence dimensions, gradually build strong self-belief, yet this self-belief also carries the consequence of higher personal performance standards, which in turn heightens vigilance toward the risk of failure. This mediating pathway indicates that strengthening career adaptability should be balanced with realistic expectation management, given limited internship experience and intense labor-market competition.

Self-Efficacy as a Mediator between Perceived Organizational Support and Career Anxiety

Self-Efficacy is confirmed to mediate the effect of Perceived Organizational Support on Career Anxiety, consistent with Yang et al (2025), who found that perceived organizational support builds self-efficacy, which is in turn accompanied by heightened vigilance toward competency standards arising from more intensive institutional information exposure, and reinforced by Pham et al (2024). This finding highlights the importance of universities not only providing informational support and facilities but also guiding students in managing expectations about the outcomes of that support, given the limited internship quotas and industry networks in Makassar relative to larger cities.

Parental Support as a Mediator between Career Adaptability and Career Anxiety

Parental Support is confirmed to mediate the effect of Career Adaptability on Career Anxiety, consistent with Zeng et al (2023) and reinforced by Boo et al (2021). Students with high career adaptability, especially in the concern and control dimensions, tend to communicate their career plans to their parents more effectively, eliciting active support in the form of verbal encouragement, instrumental assistance, and career modeling, though this intensive communication is often accompanied by parents' direct questions about job certainty. This mediating pathway underscores the importance of two-way communication so that the support families provide remains aligned with actual labor-market conditions rather than being based on optimism alone.

Parental Support as a Mediator between Perceived Organizational Support and Career Anxiety

Parental Support is confirmed to mediate the effect of Perceived Organizational Support on Career Anxiety, consistent with Cheung (2024), who found that institutional support has an indirect effect on career anxiety through increased family involvement, and reinforced by Le et al (2023). This mediating pathway underscores the importance of institutions

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International Journal of Business and Quality Research
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maintaining transparent communication with parents as well as students regarding the realistic process and duration of post-graduation job searching, since without balancing institutional optimism against the realities of the labor market in Eastern Indonesia, the synergy between institutional and family support that is meant to reassure students risks instead amplifying their psychological pressure.

CONCLUSION

The analytical results based on SmartPLS 4.0 confirm that Career Adaptability and Perceived Organizational Support exert a positive and significant influence, both directly and indirectly, on Career Anxiety among final-year FEB UNM students, with Self-Efficacy and Parental Support functioning as significant mediating pathways rather than protective buffers. Partially, Career Adaptability is demonstrated to sharpen students' awareness of the gap between their competencies and the demands of an increasingly competitive labor market as they identify opportunities and formulate career decisions. Perceived Organizational Support, while intended to build student confidence through academic guidance and services, simultaneously heightens students' awareness of the competency standards they are expected to meet. Self-Efficacy, in turn, raises the personal performance standards students set for themselves, and Parental Support though experienced as encouragement carries an accompanying sense of moral obligation not to disappoint family expectations. Taken together, these findings indicate that adaptive capacity and the layers of support surrounding final-year students do not straightforwardly soothe career anxiety; rather, they sharpen students' awareness of real challenges, underscoring the need for realistic expectation management alongside the continued cultivation of adaptability, institutional support, self-belief, and family involvement.

Theoretically, this study enriches the Social Cognitive Career Theory literature by presenting a mediation model that integrates the dimensions of career adaptability, organizational support, self-efficacy, and family involvement within a comprehensive framework, and by showing that these dimensions can heighten rather than uniformly reduce career anxiety. Practically, these findings highlight the importance of strengthening students' career adaptive capabilities, enhancing the quality of institutional services and support, and actively engaging parents within the career-preparation ecosystem of students in an era of increasingly intense global competition, while ensuring that such efforts are paired with realistic expectation-setting.

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Recommendations

The study puts forth the following recommendations. First, FEB UNM and similar institutions should pair career-adaptability programs, academic advising, and career-preparation services with structured expectation-management components, so that the awareness these programs raise is accompanied by concrete guidance on how to close the gap between student readiness and labor-market demands. Second, career counseling and mentoring services should routinely address the psychological dimension of career preparation, helping students interpret heightened self-belief and awareness of competition as a normal and manageable part of the transition to work, rather than as a sign of inadequacy. Third, universities should facilitate transparent, two-way communication between students, career-guidance staff, and parents regarding the realistic duration and process of post-graduation job searching, so that parental encouragement is grounded in accurate expectations rather than optimism alone. Fourth, final-year students are encouraged to develop a proactive career orientation and structured self-development strategies, while communicating openly with parents about the challenges they face rather than presenting only favorable progress. Finally, university leadership and relevant local authorities should prioritize strengthening internship access and industry-partnership programs, particularly for institutions located outside Java, to narrow the gap between the competencies students believe are expected of them and the practical opportunities available to build those competencies.

Limitations and suggestions for further study

The study has several limitations worth addressing in further research. First, the cross-sectional survey design captures career anxiety and its predictors at a single point in time, which limits the ability to draw firm causal conclusions or capture how these relationships evolve as students move closer to graduation; a longitudinal design would allow the developmental dynamics of career anxiety to be examined more comprehensively. Second, reliance on self-reported Likert-scale questionnaires introduces the possibility of social desirability bias, so that supplementing survey data with qualitative methods such as interviews or focus group discussions could help triangulate students' self-reported experiences of adaptability, support, and anxiety. Third, the study was confined to a single faculty at one university, which constrains the generalizability of the findings; extending similar studies to other faculties or higher-education institutions, including those in other regions of Indonesia, would strengthen the generalizability of the model. Finally, the study focused on Career Adaptability, Perceived Organizational Support, Self-Efficacy, and Parental Support as predictors and mediators of Career Anxiety; future studies may benefit

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from incorporating additional variables such as resilience, peer support, or career literacy to build a more complete account of student career anxiety.

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