
The influence of career adaptability on well-being indicators and job performance

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Abstract: Life aspects have been neglected yet are inseparable from work aspects to achieve career success in the current dynamic world, this study focuses on examining how employees' career adaptability can lead to enhanced job performance and its underlying mechanisms through well-being indicators including life meaning, life satisfaction, and job satisfaction. Using the structural equation modelling method to analyse data from 301 public servants in Long An Province, Vietnam, the results indicate that career adaptability is essential in helping employees experience a greater sense of well-being. Career adaptability and well-being both are statistically significant antecedents that enhance employee job performance. Another notable finding of the study is the mediating roles of life satisfaction and job satisfaction in the relationship between career adaptability and job performance. Based on the analysed results, recommended future directions and managerial implications contribute to enhancing employee performance in organisations.

Keywords: career adaptability; job performance; life meaning; life satisfaction; job satisfaction.

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1 Introduction

Over recent decades, the world has seen dramatic advancements in economy, society, and technology, which make individual ability to adapt to changing environments more significant than ever. This is true, especially in the work environment where constantly new requirements, diverse settings, and teamwork are becoming commonplace and inevitable in the current working environment. Thus, the labour force seems to fall short of the market’s expectations when individuals cannot adjust promptly to such increasingly demanding job requirements (Moore and Morton, 2017). In this situation, employees must frequently reflect and reconsider their current status quos to make sound and timely adjustments to elevate their performance and make career developments. Super and Knasel (1981) defined the term career adaptability as an adult’s ”readiness to cope with changing work and working conditions” (p.195).

Career adaptability is one of the primary elements of Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 1997), which proposed the need to improve self-competencies to address changing tasks constantly, and occupational hardships and achieve career success. Then, as expanding the career construction theory, Savickas (2005) defined career adaptability

as “a psychosocial construct that denotes an individual’s readiness and resources for coping with current and imminent vocational development tasks, occupational transitions, and personal traumas” (p.51). Employees’ competencies to adapt (or career adaptability) is believed to be a crucial resource to successfully cope with such a constantly demanding environment (Maggiori et al., 2017).

Career adaptability is characterised by four psychosocial dimensions: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012). Concern entails the purposeful consideration of upcoming career-related decision-making. Control refers to attempts to contribute to one’s career development, framed by a sense of responsibility and conscientiousness. Curiosity pertains to explorations of oneself and one’s work environment. Confidence represents a strong belief in one’s ability to conquer occupational challenges.

Although first introduced in Super and Knasel (1981), it was not until the establishment of the Career Adaptabilities Scale at a multinational level that career adaptability began to draw extensive research attention in both work and life contexts (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012). In work contexts, numerous empirical studies indicated that career adaptability is a positive determinant of work- or career-related outcomes, such as organisational commitment, job satisfaction (Maggiori et al., 2017; Zacher and Griffin, 2015); person-job fit (Guan et al., 2013; Yen et al., 2019); career satisfaction (Yen et al., 2019; Yu et al., 2020), and job performance (Ohme and Zacher, 2015; Yu et al., 2020; Zacher and Griffin, 2015). Another study has also shown a negative effect on work stress and career anxiety (Maggiori et al., 2013). Previous studies of career adaptability widely concentrated on environmental changes that stimulate individuals to reflect on themselves, re-orient themselves to new requirements, and prepare for upcoming opportunities (Guan et al., 2013), especially during a significant transition period from school to work (Akkermans et al., 2018; Hamzah et al., 2021; Işık et al., 2018). In life contexts, career adaptability is statistically shown to evoke various positive attitudes, including self-esteem, personality, and quality of life (Van Vianen et al., 2012); life meaning (Buyukgoze-Kavas et al., 2015); work volition and life satisfaction (Cristina et al., 2018); professional and general well-being (Maggiori et al., 2013; Ramos and Lopez, 2018).

Despite the significance of career adaptability, previous studies often paid attention to work and life-related outcomes separately, not work and life together. However, in the current working environment, it is hard to separate these two aspects from each other; instead, they complement one another and share inseparable values. In the realm of our current study centralising the role of career adaptability as a critical resource for career success (Haenggli and Hirschi, 2020), there is limited understanding of how career adaptability produces positive work outcomes and its underlying mechanism via well-being factors. In light of the research gaps, this study aims to examine the reciprocal relationship between career adaptability and job performance and potential mediating effects through well-being indicators, namely life meaning, life satisfaction, and job satisfaction. First, it is essential to study how career adaptability affects employee job performance and well-being, such as life meaning, life satisfaction, and job satisfaction, and the degree of effects in the public sector. The results enrich our understanding of how being adaptable can result in positive psychological outcomes in the workplace as well as in life. Second, the relationships between the three well-being indicators and job performance are investigated, especially the potential mediating effects of these variables on the career adaptability–job performance relationship. This helps provide a clear vision

of how employee job performance can be enhanced through not only work but also life aspects. Accordingly, based on the data-driven insights of the current study, managers can design appropriate practices that exploit studied mechanisms to improve employee performance at work in the public sector.

2 Literature review

2.1 Career adaptability, life meaning, life satisfaction, and job performance

Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 1997) broadens the primary focus from work roles to life roles that are of no less significance since many people perceive pursuing work goals and career success as equivalent to fulfilling life goals such as the presence of life meaning and life satisfaction (Hartung and Taber, 2008). This expanded perspective allows career construction counsellors to pay more attention to indicators of the general well-being of which life satisfaction and life meaning are established components (Buyukgoze-Kavas et al., 2015; Ramos and Lopez, 2018).

Successful career development is viewed through the lens of career construction as a continuous process of adaptation that results from the successful integration of personal needs with social expectations such as norms for preparing for, entering into, participating in, or exiting various work roles (Hirschi et al., 2015; Savickas et al., 2009; Savickas, 2005). Remarkably, the career construction theory looks at how people deal with work-related responsibilities, changes, and traumas (Savickas, 2013). Within this theory, the model of adaptation proposes that people gain control over their professions through adapting a set of psychological resources that help in the management of these expectations (and, therefore, the integration of the self at work) over time (Rudolph et al., 2019).

Empirical findings based on career construction theory propositions are significant because they provide a foundation for career development practice and inform professional career counsellors on how to assist their clients in making vocational decisions and constructing successful and satisfying work lives such as academics (Zacher et al., 2019), and professional athletes (Taylor et al., 2018). However, other essential components and assertions of the career construction theory have not been adequately explored in subsequent works. Thus, while this theory comprehensively accounts for the process of proactive and adaptive career growth through time, research has yet to fully untangle the subtleties that this richness enables (Rudolph et al., 2019). Motivated by this, we elaborated this theory to examine the reciprocal relationship between career adaptability and job performance and potential mediating effects through well-being indicators namely life meaning, life satisfaction and job satisfaction in the public sector.

Job performance – one of the most significant work-related outcomes – is defined as skillfully performed and measurable work behaviours over which employees can exert control and which add to the cohesive performance of the organisation (Campbell et al., 1993). Previous studies indicated that career adaptability enhances the management of demanding occupational changes, which eventually improve performance (Ohme and Zacher, 2015; Yu et al., 2020).

Life meaning can be defined as an individual's having a clear life purpose (Steger et al., 2006). Potential meaning in life can be developed thanks to improved career

adaptability competencies, which help stimulate individuals to create room for self-development and meaning in life through work experiences (Hartung and Taber, 2008). Moreover, such competencies can be self-regulated to integrate work into life in a meaningful way, rather than passively fitting into a job regardless of developmental, contextual, and motivational issues. Buyukgoze-Kavas et al. (2015) and Ramos and Lopez (2018) highlighted that employees with high adaptive career competencies are more likely to experience greater meaning in life. Based on the above arguments, the first hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Career adaptability is positively associated with life meaning.

Life satisfaction can be defined as how the quality of life is cognitively perceived when particular desires are fulfilled, or individuals feel satisfied with life occurrences in general (Diener et al., 1985).

Life meaning has also been widely studied as a significant antecedent of life satisfaction; for example, Ramos and Lopez (2018) and Steger et al. (2006) viewed adolescents and middle-aged adults in various contexts. The search for meaning in life was shown to be a determinant of life satisfaction among those who already experience meaning in life (Park et al., 2010). They also proposed that the presence of life meaning facilitates a further searching process by modifying or expanding life purpose. Meanwhile, without the presence of life meaning, individuals can find it disheartening to search for meaning because of the high requirement for a deep understanding of oneself and one's environment and extensive life experiences. Given that, the study focuses on the presence of meaning, suggesting a correlation between meaning and satisfaction in life.

H2: Life meaning is positively associated with life satisfaction.

Career adaptability competencies are crucial for individuals to understand better their self-identification regarding life purpose, orientation, and motivation. The more clearly individuals perceive themselves, the better they can adapt to fit into their environment and the higher the level of satisfaction they experience (Hartung and Taber, 2008; Maggiori et al., 2013). Buyukgoze-Kavas et al. (2015) proved that concern and control were important in increasing the level of life satisfaction, whereas the other two dimensions (curiosity and confidence) were not. As such, the study engenders a motivation to investigate the underlying mechanisms of this relationship. The scholars explained that once employees skillfully allocate their adaptability competencies to handle task requirements and fulfil work goals, they will experience a greater sense of life meaning and, thus, life satisfaction (Ramos and Lopez, 2018). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: Career adaptability is positively associated with life satisfaction.

Life satisfaction is perceived as a potential stimulus contributing to organisational performance (Erdogan et al., 2012). According to their findings, happy individuals were more inclined to be approachable and resilient and to discover more occupational opportunities. Moreover, their results showed a connection between positive energy and achievements. Wright and Bonett (1997) indicated that life satisfaction was a better predictor of outcomes (e.g., in-role performance, organisational citizenship behaviour, and the construct of the two combined) than job satisfaction. Life satisfaction significantly enhances employees' in-role and extra-role performance as rated by

supervisors (Chughtai, 2019; Erdogan et al., 2012; Talukder et al., 2018). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H4: Life satisfaction is positively associated with job performance.

2.2 *Career adaptability, job satisfaction, and job performance*

Job satisfaction, which is frequently used as an indicator of professional well-being, is illustrated by both affective and cognitive assessments regarding one's experiences in the context of work (Brief and Weiss, 2002).

Previous evidence supports the relationship between career adaptability and job satisfaction as an indicator of professional well-being and career success (Ohme and Zacher, 2015; Zacher and Griffin, 2015; Maggiori et al., 2017; Yu et al., 2020). As suggested in career construction theory, an individual's level of job satisfaction is anticipated to increase when career adaptability competencies help them achieve harmony between themselves and their environment. Moreover, these competencies can be regulated and activated to enable the achievement of challenging job tasks and later, career goals. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H5: Career adaptability has a positive influence on job satisfaction.

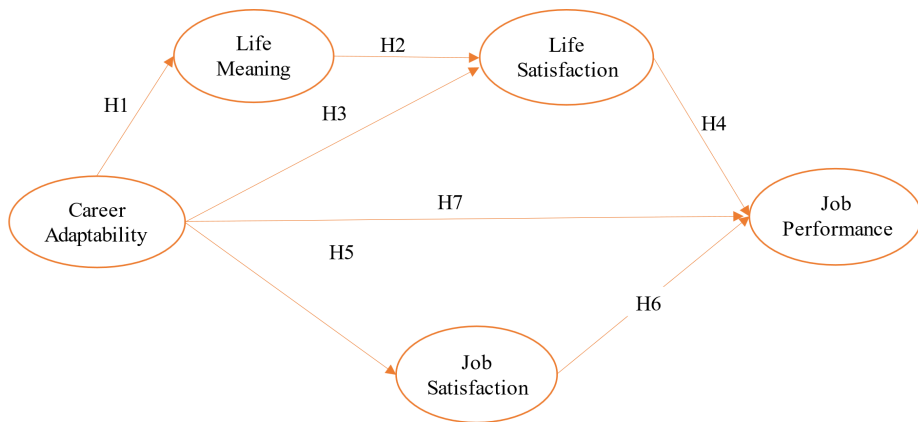
Well-being, of which job satisfaction is a central element, has been proved to significantly enhance performance (Choi et al., 2017; Talukder et al., 2018) by serving psychological functions, including enriching knowledge, organising mental recollections, triggering strategic problem-solving approaches, and stimulating individual participation (Brown and Treviño, 2006). Besides, individuals with favourable perspectives of their jobs (regarding pay, support from supervisors and co-workers, working conditions, and so on) are inclined to achieve satisfactory performance. Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H6: Job satisfaction has a positive influence on job performance.

Reciprocal associations between career adaptability and job performance and well-being indicators (e.g., life satisfaction and job satisfaction) have been of public interest for decades. However, there is limited understanding of how career adaptability impacts job performance or its underlying mechanisms through well-being. Such well-being indicators can be potential mediators in the following ways. A sense of satisfaction encourages adaptable employees to exert their adaptive competencies to achieve beyond-expectations performance diligently. The authors propose that satisfied employees who transmit knowledge and experience to their colleagues and successfully undergo work challenges will indirectly enhance teamwork, thus contributing to organisational performance. Similarly, the authors expect that satisfaction can encourage employees to exert their competencies and energy to cope with job tasks, fulfil goals, and enjoy their work and life, significantly contributing to their performance at work. Therefore, this study explores the following proposed hypothesis:

H7: Career adaptability has a positive influence on job performance.

Figure 1 illustrates the framework with the proposed hypotheses.

Figure 1 Hypothetical framework (see online version for colours)

3 Methodology

3.1 Measures

The measurement of all variables was evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). The authors used the back-translation method to ensure the equivalent meaning of the original English questionnaire when translated into Vietnamese. After seeking advice from government officials with extensive working experience in the public sector, the authors recommended excluding reversed measurement items and making suitable adjustments to the Vietnamese context. It is worth noting that most of the measured items have been modified from the original measures after conducting the back-translation method and a pilot test.

Career adaptability was measured using the 11 items of the career adaptability scale – a short form adopted from (Maggiori et al., 2017) as an updated and economical alternative to the 24-item Career Adaptability Scale by Savickas and Porfeldi (2012), especially for integration into international applied contexts. The short form illustrated the same factor structure and very similar psychometric properties to those of the full-length version, as verified by its applicability in not only European countries (Maggiori et al., 2017) but also in Asian countries such as Turkey (Işık et al., 2018) and China (Yu et al., 2020). The same four-dimension structures construct the shortened scale as the original scale – Concern, Control, Curiosity, and Confidence.

The four items of the life meaning in the questionnaire with no reverse-coded item (Steger et al., 2006) was used to assess the presence of meaning the target respondents experience in life. The scale for life satisfaction consisted of four items adapted from (Diener et al., 1985). Respondents were asked to indicate their satisfaction with several aspects of their life. Job satisfaction was measured using the 5-item scale developed by (Brayfield and Rothe, 1951). Participants responded with their level of satisfaction in a professional context. Respondents were asked to self-rate different aspects that are required for job performance using the In-role Behaviour Scale (Williams and Anderson, 1991). The finalised questionnaire is presented in Appendix.

3.2 *Participants and data collection*

We employed a non-probability convenient sampling method to collect data. The participants in this study were public servants from 19 government agencies in Long An Province, Vietnam. They are attending intermediate political courses at the Provincial Political School of Long An, Vietnam. It is worth noting that they were carefully recruited to participate in these courses before being promoted to higher positions in the state organisations. We get approval from managers and lecturers at this school to distribute the questionnaire to the participants from April to May 2020.

Before distributing a primary survey, we conducted the pilot study with 40 samples to confirm that the wording of the items and the scale's development were both adequate and understandable to the sampling frame for this study.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts:

- 1 demographic information, including gender, age, educational attainment, and current occupation
- 2 survey questions, including 30 items representing five factors (career adaptability, life meaning, life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and job performance).

The authors distributed 450 questionnaires to public servants working in the public sector and taking political courses at this politics-focused school. Eventually, 301 valid samples were collected (response rate of 67%) from the target correspondents, which satisfied the requirement for sample size.

Demographic characteristics are analysed as follows. Among the surveyed public servants and executives, the percentage of males and females was similar (49.2% and 50.8%, respectively), with more than 75% of the sample aged 25 and above. Most respondents earned bachelor's degrees or higher (>95%). 58.8% of respondents reported as government officials, while the remainder were pursuing teaching, research-related, or other occupations in public organisations.

4 **Results**

The analysis was conducted using SPSS 23.0 and AMOS 23.0. First, we performed a reliability test and exploratory factor analysis (EFA). As can be seen from Table 1, the values of Cronbach's alpha varied between 0.854 and 0.910, indicating the high internal reliability of each studied construct in the model. The composite reliability (CR) values were all above 0.858, satisfying the threshold of 0.7 and again confirming the internal consistency of the measurements. For EFA factor loadings, values are recommended to be above 0.5; hence, measurement items with underqualified factor loadings would be eliminated to ensure the reliability of the measurement. These eliminated items include CA7, CA10, CA11, and JP6. The remaining items ranged from 0.517 to 0.816, showing an adequate explanation of each variable's variance. Besides, The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test results were 0.923 at 0.000 significance. The cumulative variability explained by the total five factors (i.e., career adaptability, life meaning, life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and job performance) is 61.39% which is higher than the threshold of 50%, demonstrating that the data were satisfactory enough to explain the framework.

Table 1 Reliability analysis

<i>Latent variables</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Factor loading</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>AVE</i>
Career adaptability (CA)	CA1	0.663	0.887	0.867	0.522
	CA2	0.654			
	CA3	0.711			
	CA4	0.626			
	CA5	0.617			
	CA6	0.520			
	CA8	0.540			
	CA9	0.596			
	Life meaning (LM)	LM1			
LM2		0.617			
LM3		0.752			
LM4		0.740			
Life satisfaction (LS)	LS1	0.770	0.865	0.877	0.642
	LS2	0.791			
	LS3	0.702			
	LS4	0.521			
Job satisfaction (JS)	JS1	0.517	0.854	0.858	0.547
	JS2	0.517			
	JS3	0.719			
	JS4	0.689			
	JS5	0.617			
Job performance (JP)	JP1	0.769	0.910	0.911	0.672
	JP2	0.816			
	JP3	0.727			
	JP4	0.736			
	JP5	0.636			

Composite reliability (CR); average variance extracted (AVE).

Next, we computed confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with the maximum likelihood method to measure the structural validity and structural equation modelling (SEM) to test the proposed hypotheses. Specifically, this research aims to test and confirm the existing theory; hence, the covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) is appropriately selected.

We consider several goodness-of-fit indices that are χ^2 per degree of freedom (χ^2/df), the comparative fit index (CFI), the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI), incremental fit index (IFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) to ensure the proposed measurement structure has the optimal fit. Regarding CFA and SEM model fit indices shown in Table 2, the proposed model indicated an acceptable fit with the analysed data. The χ^2/df values for both CFA and SEM were way below the cut-off value of 5 (2.349

and 2.699, respectively), while the RMSEA values ranked between the acceptable threshold of 0.05 and 0.08. In addition, the CFA computed CFI, GFI, and IFI values were between 0.909 and 0.920, satisfying the threshold of 0.9. The CFI, GFI, and IFI values of SEM were close to 0.9, which did not indicate a good fit yet acceptable (Baumgartner and Homburg, 1996). These results provide evidence for the fitness of the model.

Table 2 CFA and SEM model fit indices

<i>Model fit indices</i>	χ^2/df	<i>CFI</i>	<i>TLI</i>	<i>IFI</i>	<i>RMSEA</i>
CFA	2.349	0.920	0.909	0.920	0.067
SEM	2.699	0.897	0.886	0.898	0.075

4.1 Common method bias (CMB)

Fuller et al. (2016) argued that if common method bias is strong enough to really bias results, the Harman's single factor test is sensitive enough to identify if an issue exists. As a result, if one factor has been merged, it was explained by 40.58% of the variance, which is less than the threshold of 50% (Kim et al., 2019). In addition, we also used a common latent factor (CLF) to capture the common variance among all observed items in the model. From the differences between the standardised regression weights of a model with the CLF and without the CLF, the findings showed that the largest value among the differences is 0.05, which is less than the threshold of 0.2 (Serrano Archimi et al., 2018). Thus, CMB is not a severe issue in this study.

4.2 Hypothesis testing

The data showed that the overall hypothesised model was adequately fit. We continued to test all proposed hypotheses. For a hypothesis to be accepted, p-values should be less than 0.05. Table 3 demonstrates statistically significant p-values of less than 0.01 for all coefficients with their respective estimates, indicating the acceptance of all proposed hypotheses.

Specifically, in line with our expectation, career adaptability was positively related to life meaning ($\beta = 0.822$, $p < 0.001^{***}$). Hence, Hypothesis 1 was accepted. Both life meaning ($\beta = 0.462$, $p < 0.01^{**}$) and career adaptability ($\beta = 0.379$, $p < 0.01^{**}$) had significant correlations to life satisfaction, providing statistical supports for Hypothesis 2 and 3. Subsequently, life satisfaction was found to be a positive antecedent of job performance ($\beta = 0.070$, $p < 0.01^{**}$); hence, Hypothesis 4 was supported. Career adaptability was also significantly related to job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.733$, $p < 0.001^{***}$), supporting Hypothesis 5. Finally, findings was evident to support the significant direct impacts of job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.157$, $p < 0.01^{**}$) and career adaptability ($\beta = 0.407$, $p < 0.001^{***}$) had on job performance, thereby supporting Hypothesis 6 and 7. It is essential to note that among the three direct stimulators of job performance (i.e., career adaptability, life satisfaction, job satisfaction), career adaptability was illustrated to have the most dominant direct impact on job performance.

Table 3 Hypothesis testing

<i>Hypotheses</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Results</i>
H1 Career adaptability → Life Meaning	0.822***	Accepted
H2 Life Meaning → Life Satisfaction	0.462**	Accepted
H3 Career adaptability → Life Satisfaction	0.379**	Accepted
H4 Life Satisfaction → Job Performance	0.070**	Accepted
H5 Career adaptability → Job Satisfaction	0.733***	Accepted
H6 Job Satisfaction → Job Performance	0.157**	Accepted
H7 Career adaptability → Job Performance	0.407***	Accepted

p*-value < 0.01, *p*-value < 0.001.

Next, we tested the potential mediating effects of how career adaptability enhances job performance using Baron and Kenny’s (1986) three-step approach, specifically through the effects on life satisfaction and job satisfaction (Table 4 shows the results). In step 1, it was statistically shown that career adaptability (independent variable-IV) was a significant predictor of job performance (dependent variable-DV). In step 2, career adaptability (IV) was subsequently linked to life satisfaction and job satisfaction (mediator-M). In step 3, satisfaction in life and work settings (M) correlated with job performance (DV). However, it was not sufficient to correlate the two types of satisfaction (M) on job performance as they were both the causal outcomes of career adaptability. Hence, we continued to control career adaptability in establishing the effects of mediators on the outcome. Statistics demonstrated that after the mediators (life satisfaction and job satisfaction) enter the reciprocal relationship between career adaptability and job performance, the effects of career adaptability on job performance significantly diminished. When life satisfaction served as a mediator, standardised indirect effect = 0.027, *p* < 0.001***. When job satisfaction served as a mediator, standardised indirect effect = 0.115, *p* < 0.001***. Thus, the results supported the partial mediating effects of life satisfaction and job satisfaction on the career adaptability–job performance relationship.

Table 4 Mediating effects testing

<i>IV</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>DV</i>	<i>IV</i> → <i>DV</i>	<i>IV</i> → <i>M</i>	<i>IV + M</i> → <i>DV</i>	
					<i>M</i> → <i>DV</i>	<i>IV</i> → <i>M</i> → <i>DV</i>
CA	LS	JP	0.407***	0.379***	0.070***	0.027***
CA	JS	JP	0.407***	0.733***	0.157***	0.115***

****p*-value < 0.001.

IV: Independent Variable; M: Mediator; DV: Dependent Variable; CA (Career adaptability); LM (Life meaning); LS (Life satisfaction); JS (Job satisfaction); JP (Job performance).

5 Discussion

In today's dynamic employment market, which puts an increasingly essential emphasis on individual agencies (De Vos et al., 2020), it is becoming more focal for individuals to regularly have a reflection on their current conditions and improve their career-related knowledge and skills to meet the arising career challenges in order to achieve well-being and career success. Using Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 2005) as the theoretical framework, this study attempted to the importance of career agency (i.e., career adaptability) in relationship to job performance through life meaning, life satisfaction and job satisfaction.

5.1 Theoretical implications

To the best of our knowledge, previous scholars have only investigated the application of Career Construction Theory, resulting in positive work or psychological outcomes in life. This study is one of the few attempts to examine the role of career adaptability in relationship with job performance via the mediating support of life satisfaction and job satisfaction.

The study extended the literature by making the following theoretical contributions. First, according to previous scholars, career adaptability directly impacts job performance (Ohme and Zacher, 2015; Yu et al., 2020; Zacher and Griffin, 2015) and indirectly through well-being factors as mediators. In detail, the findings highlight the prominent role of career adaptability in directly enhancing general and professional well-being, namely life meaning, life satisfaction, and job satisfaction (Buyukgoze-Kavas et al., 2015; Maggiori et al., 2017; Ramos and Lopez, 2018; Yu et al., 2020). The research results align with previous studies, confirming that career adaptability through concern, control, curiosity, and confidence is an effective tool for employees' self-reflection and improvement. This process facilitates the pursuit of their work goals and ambitions, which eventually gives rise to both professional satisfaction (i.e., job satisfaction) and general satisfaction (i.e., life meaning and life satisfaction) since career achievements have become increasingly necessary and inseparable to happiness values in life. Moreover, the statistics show that life meaning is a relatively potent stimulator of life satisfaction, supporting previous studies (Ramos and Lopez, 2018). The results confirm the theoretical notion of Career Construction Theory using career adaptability as a critical agency in promoting life and professional well-being.

Subsequently, these well-being factors were significantly correlated with job performance (Choi et al., 2017; Chughtai, 2019; Erdogan et al., 2012; Talukder et al., 2018), supporting the existing literature. While previous studies have considered life satisfaction a better predictor of performance than job satisfaction (Wright and Bonett, 1997), this study emphasises the stronger impact of job satisfaction. The result may be explained that job performance is enhanced by factors more proximally related to it (Salanova et al., 2009), such as being satisfied in the work setting itself. Meanwhile, life satisfaction can also have a direct impact on job performance when individuals become thoughtful for future career orientations (concern), eager to explore (curiosity), self-believed in one's ability to tackle tasks (confidence), proficient in managing job demands (Control). As such, it is warranted for future studies to investigate these mixed results further.

Finally, consistent with our expectations, statistics provide strong support for life satisfaction and job satisfaction as potential mediators in the relationship between career adaptability and job performance. An explanation is that career adaptability enables public servants to manage their tasks successfully and encourages them to adapt to the changing working environment. In this way, job satisfaction can be stimulated through a sense of fulfilment and social integration at work. Individuals highly satisfied with their job tend to be more open to opportunities and tolerant of risk-taking activities, which ultimately encourage them to improve their performance. The same attitudes may be observed among those with high life satisfaction, which contributes to better job performance. The findings of life satisfaction and job satisfaction as mediators reassure the inseparable values of work and life, which contribute to the existing literature that through practices for a higher sense of well-being in work and life contexts, career adaptability can be promoted to improve job performance.

5.2 Managerial implications

Based on the analysed results, the study suggests managerial implications that elevate employee performance in public organisations. Career adaptability is the dominant predictor of job performance and well-being indicators such as life meaning, life satisfaction, and job satisfaction. Regarding the importance of career adaptability in achieving career and organisational success, managers should facilitate the acquisition of employees' abilities to adapt in terms of self-development and goal achievement. Occupational training and professional qualifications equip and update employees with the necessary knowledge and skillsets. Meanwhile, being entrusted and assigned to challenging tasks offers employees chances to put knowledge into practice and accelerate the up-skilling process. Together with strengthening organisational interactions which provide needed support and guidance, these practices emphasise the development of the four dimensions of career adaptability – control, curiosity, concern, and confidence.

Second, well-being is essential in motivating employees to perform better at work. Employees can experience a greater sense of job satisfaction when offered professional promotions, bonuses, or improved working conditions and facilities. Empowerment can be a potential tactic for employees to have more control and confidence to prove themselves, make their own decisions, and pave their path to success. Moreover, it is not only employee well-being in work contexts but also in life contexts that managers can take into consideration for enhanced performance. Policies that provide improved welfare benefits, more annual leaves, or work-life balance are highly recommended to deal with top life-related concerns of employees when their overall quality of life, as well as physical and mental health, are taken care of.

6 Conclusions

To conclude, this study provided an understanding of reciprocal relationships between career adaptability, life meaning, life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and job performance in the organisational environment. The results, in line with previous research, highlight career adaptability competencies that significantly boost employee job performance through the mediating effects of life satisfaction and job satisfaction. Considering the significance of career adaptability as a direct and indirect antecedents of positive

organisational outcomes, possible management practices are suggested involving academic and on-the-job training programs through which employees can improve on each dimension of career adaptability and commit to higher-quality job performance. Besides, public organisations must take good care of employee well-being, which directly determines performance quality. Additional professional benefits, improved working environment, and empowerment are other possible approaches for higher job satisfaction. Employee life-related concerns such as health and living quality should also be taken into serious consideration.

6.1 Limitations and future research directions

There are several limitations in this study that give directions for future research. The first limitation is the possible issue caused by common method variance due to the use of self-rated measurements. However, we conducted several statistical tests to check whether it was an issue and found no serious problems. Although except for self-rated job performance, it is almost impossible to measure other variables in the study other than self-report methods, it would be essential to enhance the objectiveness in future research by measuring with different data sources (e.g., colleagues or supervisors) or reporting actual competencies (e.g., do employees actually look for available opportunities on the labour market). Next, as career competencies might change over time, longitudinal studies should complement the current study by better observing the acquisition of career adaptability on desired organisational outcomes. Third, we have not explored different relationships between job satisfaction and life meaning or job satisfaction and life satisfaction. The expected results may have more essential contributions to the future study. Finally, the use of the career adaptability scale – short form is up-to-date yet there is limited existing literature and its validation in different cultural contexts. This study calls for future research of other antecedents and outcomes of career adaptability in both work and non-work-related contexts and diverse work settings.

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Appendix

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Coding</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Life meaning	LM1	I understand the meaning of life	Modified from Steger et al. (2006)
	LM2	My life has a clear purpose	
	LM3	I know well what makes my life meaningful	
	LM4	I have found a satisfactory life purpose	
Life satisfaction	LS1	My current living conditions are very good	Modified from Diener et al. (1985)
	LS2	I am satisfied with my life	
	LS3	I am achieving the important things I want in life	
	LS4	If I could do it all over again, I wouldn't change anything	

Appendix (continued)

<i>Variables</i>		<i>Coding</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Career adaptability	Concern	CA1	I set out my thoughts about my future	Major adjustments from Savickas and Porfeli (2012)
		CA2	I make a plan to achieve my goals	
		CA3	I am aware that today’s academic and professional choices will shape the future	
	Control	CA4	I keep my enthusiasm and my faith	
		CA5	I make and take responsibility for all my decisions	
	Curiosity	CA6	I look for opportunities to develop myself	
		CA7	I consider different options before making the decision	
		CA8	I research carefully to answer my own questions	
	Confidence	CA9	I solve problems (find ways to overcome difficulties and try to make the best of them)	
		CA10	I do my best	
		CA11	I learn new skills	
Job satisfaction	JS1	My current job likes my hobby	Modified from Brayfield and Rothe (1951)	
	JS2	My current job is interesting, so I don’t get bored		
	JS3	I’m happier at work than most people		
	JS4	I like my job more than other ordinary employees		
	JS5	I find joy in working		
Job performance	JP1	I fully completed the assigned tasks	Major adjustments from Williams and Anderson (1991)	
	JP2	I fulfil the responsibilities specified in the job description		
	JP3	I perform ad-hoc tasks as required by the leader		
	JP4	I meet the formal performance requirements of the job		
	JP5	I participate in collective work activities		
	JP6	I work hard		