Research Article

The Influence of Perceived Social Support on the Career Adaptability of Final Year Students with Resilience as a Mediating Variable

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the effect of perceived social support on career adaptability among final-year university students, with resilience as a mediating variable. Using a quantitative causal research design, data were collected from 110 final-year students at Universitas Negeri Padang through purposive sampling. The analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that perceived social support does not have a direct positive effect on career adaptability. However, perceived social support positively influences resilience, and resilience, in turn, positively affects career adaptability. Moreover, resilience mediates the relationship between perceived social support and career adaptability. These findings highlight the critical role of resilience in strengthening students' adaptability in career transitions. Career construction theory supports the study by emphasizing that resilience and social support are essential components in shaping individuals' career adaptability during transitional phases..

Keywords: career adaptability; perceived social support; resilience.

1. Introduction

College graduates are expected to have strong self-competence. In addition to thinking skills, they also need to have the ability to interact with others and practical skills. Adaptability is also an important process that graduates must have when they enter the workforce. One of the steps to enter the world of work is through careful preparation. College graduates need to be ready to compete and adjust in the work environment. In addition, adaptability is not only important in dealing with a new work environment, but also in determining and committing to career choices. This ability is often referred to as career adaptability according to Sarason (2013), (Koen et al., 2012) which includes the readiness of individuals to adjust to the demands and dynamics of the world of work.

According to Tolentino et al. (2014), career adaptability is an essential competency for adult individuals in achieving success in dealing with work demands and competition that can arise as a result of inevitable changes and developments, such as changes in the social, economic, and technological environment that continue to take place. This ability is very crucial, especially for a final student, because students who have high adaptability will be better prepared to face changes in the world of work and be able to overcome challenges well. As explained in the research of Autin et al. (2017), it is stated that students who have high adaptability in the work environment, have a greater capacity to face challenges that can arise in the workplace.

This career adaptability can arise from the individual's strengths and abilities in self-regulation that can be leveraged to address unusual, complex, and obscure problems. An individual's readiness in facing career problems is influenced by factors that come from within the individual and factors in the environment (Tolentino et al, 2014). The first is a factor derived from the characteristics of the individual itself, where Duffy et al. (2012), stated that

there are internal variables in individuals that affect the formation of career adaptability. Furthermore, factors that affect career adaptability are external variables, namely factors that come from outside the individual, such as the perception of social support.

The perception of social support can be understood as a form of help that individuals receive, both physically and psychologically, through positive social interactions. Such help can be obtained from other people close to the individual, such as support from friends, family, and other close people who play an important role in helping individuals manage stress, reduce emotional stress, and improve their ability to adapt in the social environment (Cobb, 1976). This perception of social support can be considered relevant and needed by students who will adapt in their careers Ningsih & Musoli, (2023). Therefore, social support can be used as a central factor that can affect a person's career adaptation (Wang et al, 2022).

Buyukgoze-Kavas (2016), also explained that factors derived from the characteristics of the individual themselves that there are internal variables in the individual that affect the formation of career adaptability. Among them are the variables of positive psychological traits, namely hope, optimism and resilience. Resilience is a variable that can be said to be positively related to the career adaptability of final year students (Sart & Sezgin, 2023). Resilience is in line with a person's ability to adapt to a person's career to continue to develop and adapt well in the midst of difficult situations in adjusting to pressures and changes in the environment (Smith et al., 2008). The results of the research by (Buyukgoze-Kavas (2016), also revealed that individuals who have a high level of resilience tend to be more able to adapt effectively in facing challenges and developments in their careers. High self-resilience makes it easier for a person to adapt to changes and challenges in the career, so that they are able to manage pressure and stay focused on goals despite facing various obstacles. This resilience is very necessary for final year students to be better prepared and able to face career challenges better.

Research conducted by Karacan–Ozdemir & Yerin Guneri (2017), shows that the perception of social support, resilience, and career adaptability are interconnected. Individuals who receive support from various parties, such as family, friends, and lecturers, tend to be more confident and confident in their ability to adapt to a career. With the perception of social support, individuals not only feel more emotionally strong, but also better able to face their career challenges, especially as their resilience is increasingly formed.

Adaptability is an important factor for students who are in a transition period to the world of work. This ability allows them to adapt quickly to the changing dynamic work environment as well as face new demands that they may not have experienced before. This is even more relevant considering that Padang State University, which is one of the largest universities in West Sumatra, annually produces many graduates who will enter the world of work. Therefore, good adaptability is very important for students, especially those in the final level.

In understanding how final year students face challenges in adapting to the world of work, the author conducted an initial interview survey with several students of Padang State University. From the results of interviews that have been carried out, it was found that the lack of perception of social support makes it difficult for final year students to adapt and hesitate in determining their careers. Without adequate support, they face immense pressure, while the role of resilience alone is not enough to overcome the challenges of the world of work for them.

Furthermore, this research is also corroborated by data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in February 2024 that the number of workers who are ready to work but have not yet found a job in West Sumatra reached 5.79%, slightly down compared to 5.90% in February 2023. So this data can be assumed as one that indicates unpreparedness in entering the world of work.

The increase in the number of unemployed among undergraduate graduates has become a significant issue in recent years. One of the main causes of this phenomenon is the low level of adaptability of an individual's career. Low career adaptability can result in students or graduates feeling pessimistic about their future prospects, difficulties in determining suitable career paths, having less accurate self-perception, and a lack of mental readiness and confidence to face challenges and obstacles in the world of work. This condition shows the importance of developing adaptive skills to improve adaptability and can reduce the risk of unemployment among graduates (Putri & Yuniasanti, 2023).

The phenomenon that occurs shows that many final year students have difficulty in determining a vision of the future that suits their talents, interests, and potential. This was found through observation of Padang State University students, where many of them found it difficult to adapt to the career they would be pursuing. This is also related to the large number of graduates from Padang State University students, which can be the basis for this research and which makes Padang State University students the object of research. This can be proven by student graduation data from the Academic and Student Affairs Bureau of the State University of Padang (BAK-UNP). During the graduation period from 2023 to 2024. In 2023, Padang State University will graduate 6,362 students. In 2024, Padang State University will also graduate 5,949 students. This figure shows a significant number and is considered appropriate in representing the student population in West Sumatra.

2. Literature Review

Career Construction Theory (CCT)

The Grand Theory in this study is career construction theory (CCT) proposed by Mark L. Savickas in 2005. This theory explains how a person builds and adapts their career to changes in the surrounding environment as well as personal development experienced. CCT emphasizes that careers are not just about work, but also part of an individual's life journey shaped by their experiences and stories. Each individual develops their career identity by looking at their life journey, the choices they make, and how they deal with the various changes and challenges that occur (Savickas, 2005).

In this theory, career adaptability is very important. This ability consists of four main aspects, namely concern (concern for the future of career), control (sense of responsibility in making career decisions), curiosity (desire to explore career opportunities), and confidence (self-confidence in facing obstacles). This adaptability is needed, especially for final year students who are entering the world of work, because they must be able to adapt to new challenges that may arise.

Career construction theory provides in-depth insights into how a person builds and adjusts their career, as well as the importance of external and internal factors such as social support and resilience in helping someone through the process of career adaptation, especially when facing major changes such as transitioning to the world of work.

Career Adaptability

Savickas (1997), also explained that career adaptation is the ability to overcome predictable challenges, as well as adapt to unexpected situations due to changes in the workplace. In this case, career adaptation is crucial in determining a person's success in making career decisions and overcoming the world of work (R. D. Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010). Overall, career adaptability reflects the ability to adapt to current and future job changes and challenges, as well as manage career direction effectively (Savickas, 1997). It can be concluded that career adaptability describes a person's ability to adapt to change, both planned and unexpected. This ability is useful for developing skills, completing existing tasks, and preparing for changes in the work environment. In addition, career adaptability is also useful in planning an individual's career future.

According to Savickas & Porfeli (2012), indicators to measure career adaptability include the following:
1. Concern: An attitude of concern for the future, including the ability to plan and prepare for oneself, as well as the belief that the efforts made will have a positive impact on career development.
2. Control: The ability of individuals to manage themselves and take responsibility for their career development, as well as believing that they are in control of their career journey.
3. Curiosity: Curiosity about the world of work, including exploring career opportunities that match your interests.
4. Confidence: An individual's belief that they can achieve their set career goals, as well as the ability to overcome obstacles and challenges.

According to Hirschi (2009), there are several things that can affect a person's ability to adapt to their career, these factors are divided into six categories, which are as follows:

1. Age Older individuals tend to have a better level of adaptability due to a more mature understanding of the long-term impacts of career choices.
2. Gender Women tend to be more active in exploring career interests, as more frequent interactions with various individuals open up more information opportunities.
3. Work experience Experience relevant to an individual's interests and skills allows them to gain deeper insights and plan their careers more maturely.
4. Family Parents play an important role in providing inspiration, advice, and being role models in children's career decision-making.
5. Higher Education Institutions that provide various activities that support career choice, such as seminars and job fairs that help students adapt to the world of work.
6. Social and Economic Status
   Individuals with higher socioeconomic backgrounds have wider access to explore career options and plan for the future more optimally.

Social Support

Sarafino & Smith (2014), define social support as feelings of comfort, attention, appreciation or help obtained from another person or group. They also add that individuals who receive support will be able to trust themselves in taking the next steps that will be taken in their career path. Zimet et al. (1988), define the perception of social support as a person's belief in the extent to which he feels he or she has adequate support from his social environment, such as family, friends, and other individuals who are considered important.

It can be concluded that the perception of social support is how a person assesses and feels the support provided by the surrounding environment, whether from family, friends, or other individuals who are considered important. This support is not only seen by the number of people who provide assistance, but also by how satisfied the individual is with the support received. In addition, social support has an important role in providing comfort, reward, and increasing a person's confidence in facing various life challenges, including in making decisions related to the future and career.

As for the indicators of social support perception according to Zimet et al. (1988), there are three basic aspects of social support perception as follows:

1. Family support: This support reflects the extent to which an individual feels supported by his or her family members, both emotionally and practically.
2. Friend support: This support includes emotional and social support provided by individual friends.
3. Significant other support: This support comes from someone who has an important role in the individual's life, such as a mentor's partner, or another meaningful figure.

According to Zimet et al. (1988), there are several factors that are influenced by social support, including:

1. Sources of social support
   A close and quality relationship with this source of support plays an important role in reminding an individual's sense of connectedness and self-worth.
2. Individual psychological condition
   When individuals are in a bad psychological state, they tend to feel less supported, even if objectively that support remains.
4. Past experience
   Individuals who previously received consistent and positive support will find it easier to feel and rely on social support in dealing with problems.
5. Individual personality and character
   Individuals who are more socially active tend to have wider access to social support and are more likely to recognize and receive help from the surrounding environment.

Resilience

Grotberg (1995), stated that resilience is the ability of individuals to assess, face, and develop themselves or adapt from difficult conditions and suffering in life. Individuals who have resilience are able to overcome various life challenges and rebuild life positively. Furthermore, Masten et al. (1990) also stated that resilience is a person's ability to adapt and survive in the face of pressure, challenges, or severe difficulties. Resilience is not just about surviving difficult conditions, but also reflecting an individual's capacity to bounce back, develop the right strategy, and utilize the various resources available to continue to grow.

It can be concluded that resilience is an individual's ability to not only survive in the face of difficulties but also to rise and develop through life experiences full of challenges. Individuals who have resilience are able to overcome suffering, recover, and can turn challenges into positive things. Resilience also requires social support and human resources which are essential to strengthen individual resilience and contribute to better life development.

According to Wagnild (2009), there are five main components in resilience that together form the core of resilience in individuals, namely:

1. Equanimity
   Individuals with resilience tend to have a positive and optimistic outlook on life, able to see the good side of difficult situations faced.
2. Perseverance
   Perseverance shows the ability of individuals to keep moving forward despite facing obstacles, and not easily give up in achieving goals.
3. Self-resilience
   Individuals who are resilient have confidence in their abilities and can solve problems independently, strengthening the individual's confidence.
4. Meaningfulness
   Awareness of the clear meaning of life encourages individuals to strive to achieve life goals with strong determination.
5. Existential aloneness
   Individuals who are resilient feel comfortable with themselves, independent and not dependent on others in facing difficulties.

3. Method

This study uses quantitative research with a causal design. According to Sugiyono (2013), quantitative research is usually used to look at the relationship between one variable and another, which focuses more on cause-and-effect relationships. So, in this study, there is a perception of social support as an independent variable and career adaptability as a dependent variable, the goal is to find out how much the perception of social support affects career adaptability mediated by resilience. This research will be conducted at Padang State University, Jln. Prof. Dr. Hamka Air Tawar, Padang 25131, West Sumatra, Indonesia, with the research time being conducted from January to May 2025.

The population in this study is a group of individuals who have the status of active final year students at Padang State University based on criteria that have been set by the researcher. The samples in this study were taken using the non-probability sampling method with purposive sampling techniques, with criteria namely students who are preparing thesis, students who live far from their families, and students who have organizational or community experience. Based on calculations according to Hair et al. (2019), and an additional sample of 10% was made to increase the accuracy of the data, the number of samples used in this study was 110. The data used in this study consisted of primary data obtained directly from final year students of Padang State University and secondary data obtained from various references, such as books, journals, and other relevant documents.

The variables studied in this study consisted of independent variables, namely Social Support Perception, dependent variables, namely career adaptability, and mediating variables, namely Resilience. Each variable was measured using relevant indicators based on the existing literature, and to measure the collected data, a Likert scale with five alternative answers was used.

Data collection was carried out by survey method through questionnaires by final year students at Padang State University. The data is focused on perceptions related to social support, resilience, and career adaptability. The collected data was then analyzed using descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. Inferential analysis was carried out using measurement models (outer model) and structural models (inner model).

4. Results and Discussion

Overview of Research Objects

Final year students are an academic group that is in the final stages of the higher education process, where they are faced with complex study loads, the preparation of final projects or thesis, as well as various demands for preparation to enter the world of work. At Padang State University (UNP), groups of final year students are spread across all faculties covering various fields of science, ranging from education, social, engineering, economics, to sports science.

With a total of nine faculties and more than a hundred study programs offered at the Diploma, Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral levels, UNP has a very diverse student population. This diversity provides an opportunity to understand the phenomenon that occurs in final year students comprehensively and across disciplines.

Description of Respondent Characteristics

This study involved **110 respondents** who were final year students of Padang State University. Based on **gender**, the majority of respondents were women, namely 55% (65 people), while 45% (53 people) were men. Based on the **faculty**, the most respondents in this study were the faculty of Economics and Business, which was as many as 60 respondents or 50% of the total respondents. Based on the **study program**, the most respondents in this study were from the Management study program, which was 34 students who became respondents or 28% of the total respondents.

Description of Research Variable Frequency

The following describes the description of each variable, namely career adaptability, perception of social support and resilience.

Table 1. Variable Frequency Distribution of Career Adaptability

Question	Mean	TCR	Category
Y1	4,78	95,76%	High
Y2	4,59	91,86%	High
Y3	4,59	91,86%	High
Y4	4,66	93,39%	High
Y5	4,55	91,19%	High
Y6	4,13	82,71%	High
Y7	4,31	86,27%	High
Y8	4,21	84,24%	High
Y9	4,54	90,85%	High
Y10	4,38	87,63%	High
Y11	4,29	85,93%	High
Y12	4,43	88,64%	High
Y13	4,34	86,95%	High
Y14	4,42	88,47%	High
Y15	4,44	88,98%	High
Y16	4.31	86,27%	High

Question	Mean	TCR	Category
Y17	4,17	83,56%	High
Y18	4,36	87,29%	High
Y19	4,19	83,90%	High
Y20	4,31	86,27%	High
Y21	4,22	84,41%	High
Y22	4,46	89,32%	High
Y23	4,10	82,03%	High
Y24	4,16	83,22%	High
Average	4,37	87,54%	High

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the average score obtained from 24 (Twenty-Four) question items is 4.13 or 16.55%. so it can be said that this value is in the High category. Thus, the average respondent's answer can be stated that the career adaptability of final year students of Padang State University is in the **High category**.

Table 2. Variable Frequency Distribution of Social Support Perceptions

Question	Mean	TCR	Category
X1	3,94	78,98%	Sufficient
X2	4,67	81,36%	High
X3	3,89	77,97%	Sufficient
X4	3,98	79,66%	Sufficient
X5	4,62	92,54%	High
X6	4,49	89,83%	High
X7	4,84	80,17%	Sufficient
X8	4,31	86,27%	High
X9	4,11	82,37%	High
X10	3,96	79,32%	Sufficient
X11	4,15	83,05%	High
X12	3,72	74,41%	Sufficient
Average	4,10	82,16%	High

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the average score obtained from 12 (Twelve) question items is 4.10 or 0.16%, so it can be said that this value is in the High category. Thus, the average respondent's answer can be stated that the perception of social support in final year students of Padang State University is in the **High category**.

Table 3. Variable Frequency Distribution Resilience

Question	Mean	TCR	Category
M1	4,39	87,79%	High
M2	4,55	91,19%	High
M3	4,27	85,42%	High
M4	4,56	91,36%	High
M5	4,55	91,02%	High
M6	3,93	78,64%	Sufficient
M7	4,39	87,97%	High
M8	4,55	91,02%	High
M9	4,38	87,80%	High
M10	4,23	84,75%	High
M11	4,28	85,76%	High
M12	2,52	50,51%	Quite low
M13	2,59	51,86%	Quite low
M14	2,43	48,64%	Quite low
M15	2,53	50,68%	Quite low
M16	2,61	52,20%	Quite low
Average	3,80	76,05%	Sufficient

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the average score obtained from 16 (Sixteen) question items is 3.80 or 0.15%, so it can be said that this value is in the Sufficient category. Thus, the average respondent answer can be stated that the resilience of final year students of Padang State University is in the **Sufficient category**.

Perception of Social Support Has a Positive Effect on Career Adaptability in Final Year Students

Based on the results of the analysis using PLS for the perception variable, social support did not have a positive effect on career adaptability in final year students at Padang State University. This is evidenced by the low t-statistic calculation result of 1.29. This value is lower than the calculated t-value of 1.96. These results mean that no positive influence between the perception of social support on adaptability is unacceptable.

Perception of Social Support Has a Positive Effect on Resilience in Final Year Students

Based on the results of the analysis using PLS for the variables of perception of social support has a positive effect on career adaptability in final year students. This is evidenced by the magnitude of the statistical t-calculation of 2.275. This value is greater than the calculated t-value of 1.96. These results mean that the positive influence between the perception of social support on resilience is acceptable.

This research is supported by research (Xie et al. 2024), which shows support from family, friends, or the surrounding environment positively increases an individual's ability to cope with psychological distress. This is also strengthened by the perspective of career construction theory (Savickas, 2005). Where resilience makes a person able to face difficult situations, while social support provides additional energy to stay optimistic and confident in planning the next career step. So this study concludes that the perception of social support possessed by final year students is good or sufficient, so that it can increase resilience for themselves.

Resilience Has a Positive Effect on Career Adaptability in Final Year Students

Based on the results of the analysis, using PLS for the resilience variable has a positive effect on the career adaptability of final year students at Padang State University. This is evidenced by the magnitude of the t-statistical calculation of 5.869. This value is greater than the calculated t-value of 1.96. These results mean that the positive influence between the perception of social support on resilience is acceptable.

The results of this study are similar to the research by Buyukgoze-Kavas (2016), which shows that factors derived from the characteristics of the individual themselves that there are internal variables in the individual that affect the formation of career adaptability. Likewise, research by Smith et al. (2008), which found that resilience is in line with a person's career adaptability to continue to develop and adapt well in the midst of difficult situations in adjusting to pressure and also changes in the environment.

So it can be concluded that the resilience possessed by final year students is enough, it will have an impact on their career adaptability. This is also reinforced by the career construction theory of Savickas (2005), that career challenges and transitions are part of the life story that helps individuals build their career identity. Strong self-confidence is an important element that can enable a person to respond to change in an adaptive and creative way. As part of career construction, individuals with good self-confidence are able to see pressure as an opportunity to design strategic steps in achieving their career goals.

Resilience Mediating the Influence of Social Support Perception on Final Students' Career Adaptability

The perception of social support has a positive effect on career adaptability mediated by resilience. This is supported by the test results that the t-statistic is 2.569 which has a value greater than 1.96 which means that the parameter is positive. Judging from the results of the indirect influence test, it shows that the influence of the perception of social support on career adaptability through resilience is positive. This shows that resilience is a mediator of the influence of the perception of social support on career adaptability in final year students at Padang State University. This also means that the perception of social support has an indirect effect on career adaptability through resilience.

This research is supported by research by Sheridan et al. (2022), which found that the perception of social support can be an important tool for individuals who have high resilience to face career challenges. With social support, such as family, friends, or co-workers, an individual's ability to rise from pressure and obstacles is stronger. This allows them to more easily adapt to changes and demands in the world of work, so that their career adaptability can also increase. Overall, a high level of social support perception can increase confidence and rise from stronger pressures and obstacles.

Furthermore, this research is also strengthened by the career construction theory of Savickas (2005), where career adaptability is formed through the process of building a career narrative influenced by life experiences and social support. Social support helps individuals find meaning, strengthen self-confidence, and create positive expectations for career goals. The process allows final year students to be more flexible and adaptive in facing challenges or career transitions, so they can design career journeys that align with their identities and life stories.

5. Comparison

It is important to refer to previous research that has addressed similar issues. This helps in evaluating the impact and suitability of this study with previous findings. A relevant comparison is with the research by Lee et al. (2021), titled Adaptabiity a Double-Edged Sword? The impact of work, social support, and career adaptability on turnover intentions during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of his research show that career adaptation can increase or decrease turnover intentions, depending on the level of supervisor/peer support.

Another relevant research is research by T. Wang et al. (2024), Career Decision Self-Efficacy, Mediates Social Support and Career Adaptability and Stage Differences, the results of the research show that Social Support and Career Adaptability can affect the stages of career decision-making through Career Decisions Self-Efficacy. The mediation role of Career Decision Self-Efficacy is stronger in the early stages of the career decision-making process. Furthermore, Öztemel & Yıldız-Akyol (2021), who examined The Predictive Role of Happines, Social Support, and Future Time Orientation in Career Adaptability. The results

of his research show that Happiness, Social Support, and Future Time Orientation can predict students' Career Adaptability.

6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion in the previous section, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. 1. The perception of social support does not have a positive effect on the career adaptability of final year students. These results suggest that final year students who have a low level of perceived social support tend to have low career adaptability.
2. The perception of social support has a positive effect on resilience in final year students. These results suggest that independent workers who have a high perception of social support are more likely to form resilience for themselves.
3. Resilience has a positive effect on career adaptability in students at the highest level. This result means that final year students who have high resilience to career adaptability will form a good career adaptation.
4. 4. There is an indirect (mediating) and positive influence between the relationship between the influence of social support perception on the career adaptability of final year students and resilience as a mediator. This shows that the perception of high social support from the surrounding environment will be able to increase the resilience of final year students. So that in the end it will tend to improve the career adaptability of final year students.

Refereces

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