



Career Adaptability And Career Anxiety In Job-Seeking Individuals With Disabilities: The Mediating Role Of Future Time Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between career adaptability and career anxiety among job-seeking individuals with disabilities in Indonesia and tested the mediating role of Future Time Perspective (FTP) within the frameworks of Career Construction Theory and Social Cognitive Career Theory. Survey data from 120 respondents were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. Results show that career adaptability significantly reduces career anxiety and strongly predicts FTP. However, FTP neither predicts career anxiety nor mediates the relationship between adaptability and anxiety. These findings suggest that under structural labor-market constraints, adaptability functions primarily as a direct self-regulatory resource rather than through future-oriented cognition. The study highlights contextual limits of temporal cognition models and underscores the importance of strengthening adaptability in career interventions for individuals with disabilities.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary labor market is shaped by rapid technological change and growing uncertainty, which continuously alter skill demands across sectors (Lazarova et al., 2023; World Bank, 2025; World Economic Forum, 2025). In this context, disability represents a critical employment concern, as 1.3 billion people worldwide live with disabilities (World Health Organization, 2023). Despite policy advances, workers with disabilities continue to experience lower labor-force participation and wage disparities compared to non-disabled workers (International Labour Organization, 2024; Teborg et al., 2024).

In Indonesia, 22.97 million persons with disabilities face similar structural barriers, with labor-force participation declining by severity and self-employment predominating due to limited access to formal employment (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024). Employment disparities intersect with poverty risk, accessibility constraints, and stigma, while recent mass layoffs have intensified competition in the labor market (Hartini Retnaningsih, 2025; International Labour Organization, 2024; Kementerian

Ketenagakerjaan Republik Indonesia, 2024; Rosalina & Setiyowati, 2024; United Nations, 2024; World Bank, 2025). Consequently, job-seeking individuals with disabilities often experience rejection and psychological strain during career transitions (Al Atsari, 2024; Antara, 2021; Muhammad Indra Astrawan & Muhammad Elang Rizky Ramadhan, 2025; Sadinri & Peristiano, 2025).

To explain career anxiety in this context, this study integrates Social Cognitive Career Theory and Career Construction Theory. SCCT emphasizes interactions among personal cognitions, affect, contextual barriers, and goal-directed behavior (Brown & Lent, 2019; Lent et al., 1994; Lent & Brown, 2013). Within this framework, Future Time Perspective represents a future-oriented personal factor shaping self-efficacy and outcome expectations, whereas career anxiety reflects affective responses under low perceived control. CCT conceptualizes career adaptability as psychosocial resources of concern, control, curiosity, and confidence that facilitate career transitions (Rudolph et al., 2019; Savickas, 2013; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Empirical studies generally show that higher adaptability and broader future orientation are associated with lower career anxiety (Boo et al., 2021; Gao et al., 2025; Jia et al., 2022; Johnston, 2018; Langerak et al., 2022; Shen et al., 2024). Drawing on both frameworks, career adaptability can be viewed as a self-regulatory resource that strengthens efficacy and expectations, fosters broader future-oriented appraisals, and reduces anxiety under structural barriers (Fasbender et al., 2019; Guan et al., 2013; Jia et al., 2022; Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Although future-oriented cognition has been associated with lower anxiety (Carstensen et al., 1999; Jia et al., 2022; Kooij et al., 2018; Shipp et al., 2009; Zacher, 2014; Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999). However, under conditions of structural constraint such as stigma and limited accessibility, the protective role of FTP may weaken (Bonaccio et al., 2020; International Labour Organization, 2024; Jetha et al., 2023; Santilli et al., 2014; Shahidi et al., 2023; Ye et al., 2023).

Although equal-employment frameworks formally guarantee reasonable accommodation (Undang-Undang (UU) Nomor 8 Tahun 2016 Tentang Penyandang Disabilitas, 2016), implementation gaps remain substantial (Dewi, 2015; Schaerer et al., 2023). Research integrating adaptability, FTP, and career anxiety within an explicit SCCT process model remains limited in Indonesia's disability context (Merino-Tejedor et al., 2016). Much existing evidence derives from non-disabled student or early-career samples, where higher adaptability and broader future orientation are associated with lower anxiety (Boo et al., 2021; Fasbender et al., 2019; Guan et al., 2013; Jia et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2022), whereas disability-focused research typically examines these constructs separately, linking adaptability to psychosocial outcomes (Santilli et al., 2014), FTP to employment adaptation (Martz, 2003, 2004), and anxiety to employment difficulties (Dipeolu et al., 2002; Hildebrandt et al., 2024). Simultaneous modeling of these variables among job-seeking adults with disabilities in Indonesia or ASEAN contexts remains scarce.

Despite growing research on career adaptability and Future Time Perspective, important gaps remain. Conceptually, the mediating role of Future Time Perspective within an integrated Social Cognitive Career Theory and Career Construction Theory framework has rarely been tested under structural labor market constraints, as most prior evidence derives from student or general workforce samples in less constrained settings. Empirically, studies simultaneously modeling career adaptability, Future Time Perspective, and career anxiety among job seeking adults with disabilities, particularly in Indonesia or the ASEAN context, are limited, with these constructs often examined separately. This study addresses these gaps by testing whether Future Time Perspective mediates the relationship between adaptability and anxiety in a structurally constrained labor market context.

Accordingly, this study examines the direct effect of career adaptability on career anxiety and the mediating role of FTP among job-seeking individuals with disabilities in Indonesia. Based on the integrated SCCT and CCT framework, the following hypotheses

are proposed: H1: Career adaptability is negatively associated with career anxiety (Jia et al., 2022; Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). H2: Career adaptability is positively associated with Future Time Perspective (Fasbender et al., 2019; Jia et al., 2022; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). H3: Future Time Perspective is negatively associated with career anxiety (Jia et al., 2022; Zacher, 2014). H4: Future Time Perspective mediates the relationship between career adaptability and career anxiety (Fasbender et al., 2019; Ginevra et al., 2016; Jia et al., 2022).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Conceptual framework

Based on SCCT and CCT, the model tests a direct effect of Career Adaptability on Career Anxiety and an indirect effect through Future Time Perspective among job-seeking individuals with disabilities.

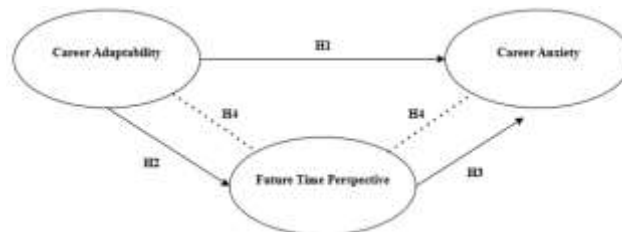


Figure 1. Research Framework

2.2 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative cross-sectional survey to examine the effect of Career Adaptability on Career Anxiety with Future Time Perspective as a mediator (Babbie, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM (SmartPLS) to evaluate measurement and structural models (Hair et al., 2022; Hair & Alamer, 2022).

2.3 Population and Sample

The target population comprises working-age persons with disabilities in Indonesia (Aryani et al., 2025; Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024). Due to the absence of an accessible sampling frame, purposive sampling was applied with inclusion criteria of self-identified disability, age ≥ 18 years, active job-seeking status, and residence in Indonesia (Etikan, 2016; Palinkas et al., 2015). A total of 120 respondents participated, exceeding recommended minimum sample sizes for PLS-SEM models of moderate complexity (Cohen, 1992; Faul et al., 2007; Hair et al., 2022; Kock & Hadaya, 2018). Participants represented disability categories recognized under Indonesian law (Undang-Undang (UU) Nomor 8 Tahun 2016 Tentang Penyandang Disabilitas, 2016).

2.4 Data Collection Technique

Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via disability-related Facebook and WhatsApp groups and organizational networks in Indonesia. Participation was voluntary and confidential, following web-survey ethical standards (Dillman et al., 2014; Fowler, 2018). Accessibility was supported through clear language and screen-reader-friendly formatting.

2.5 Research Instruments united

Career Adaptability was measured using the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS), consisting of four dimensions: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Sulistiani et al., 2019). Future Time Perspective was measured using an adapted scale grounded in socioemotional selectivity theory (Boo et al., 2021; Lang & Carstensen, 2002; Park et al., 2020). Career Anxiety was measured using the Career Anxiety Scale (Tsai et al., 2017). All instruments used 5-point Likert scales with minor wording adjustments for accessibility.

The instruments were selected based on theoretical alignment and empirical validation. The Career Adapt Abilities Scale was used because it operationalizes the four core dimensions of Career Construction Theory and has demonstrated strong psychometric properties, including in Indonesia. The Future Time Perspective scale was chosen for its relevance to socioemotional selectivity theory and its established role in career research as a measure of temporal orientation within the Social Cognitive Career Theory framework. The Career Anxiety Scale was employed because it specifically assesses employment related anxiety, making it appropriate for job seeking populations. Minor wording adjustments were made to enhance accessibility without altering construct meaning, ensuring suitability for structural modeling using PLS SEM.

2.6 Data Analysis Technique

PLS-SEM was applied using a two-stage procedure consisting of measurement and structural model evaluation (Hair et al., 2022; Hair & Alamer, 2022). Reliability was assessed using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's alpha (>0.70), convergent validity using AVE (>0.50), and discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Structural paths were evaluated through bootstrapping (5,000 subsamples), examining path coefficients, R^2 , effect sizes (f^2), and indirect effects. (Hair et al., 2022; Hair & Alamer, 2022).

2.7 Measurement Table

Table 1 summarizes the constructs, measurement sources, dimensions, number of items, and response scales used in this study.

Table 1. Measurement Table

Construct	Source	Dimensions	No. of items	Scale
Career Adaptability	Savickas & Porveli (2012)	Concern, Control, Curiosity, Confidence	7	5-point Likert
Future Time Perspective	Lang & Carstensen (2002)	Remaining Time, Opportunities	6	5-point Likert
Career Anxiety	Tsai et al. (2017)	Employment Environment, Personal Ability, etc.	8	5-point Likert

Note: Full item wording available upon request.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Descriptive Statistics

The sample consisted of 120 job-seeking adults with disabilities. Most respondents were male (66%) and in early adulthood, particularly aged 22 to under 30 years (55%). Participants were primarily located in Java (56%), followed by Kalimantan (21%) and Sumatera (13%).

Regarding disability characteristics, 52% reported physical disabilities, 33% sensory, 13% mental, and 3% multiple disabilities. Most respondents identified as having mild disability (70%), followed by moderate (26%), with only a small proportion reporting severe disability.

3.2 Measurement Model Assessment

All indicators demonstrated acceptable outer loadings ranging from 0.556 to 0.842. Although several items were below 0.70, all exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.50 and were retained due to theoretical relevance (Hair et al., 2022).

Internal consistency was satisfactory, with Composite Reliability values of 0.875 for Career Adaptability, 0.870 for Future Time Perspective, and 0.930 for Career Anxiety. Cronbach's alpha values also exceeded 0.70 (Hair et al., 2022). Convergent validity was established as AVE values were above 0.50 for all constructs.

Table 2. Reliability and convergent validity

Construct	AVE	CR	CA	Loading Range
CA	0.504	0.875	0.833	0.556–0.792
FTP	0.528	0.870	0.821	0.641–0.770
ANX	0.625	0.930	0.920	0.728–0.842

Source: Author's own analysis

Discriminant validity was supported by the Fornell–Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). HTMT values were generally below recommended thresholds, although the CA–FTP value of 0.928 slightly exceeded 0.90. Given the conceptual proximity between adaptability and future orientation, this result was considered acceptable when interpreted alongside other validity indicators (Hair et al., 2022; Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 3. Fornell – Larcker criterion

	ANX	CA	FTP
ANX	0.791		
CA	-0.126	0.710	
FTP	-0.053	0.777	0.727

Source: Author's own analysis

3.3 Structural Model Assessment

Collinearity diagnostics showed no multicollinearity issues, with VIF values well below 5 (Hair et al., 2022). The model explained 57.1% of the variance in Future Time Perspective and 19.0% of the variance in Career Anxiety. Effect size analysis indicated a large effect of Career Adaptability on Future Time Perspective ($f^2 = 1.329$), a small to moderate effect on Career Anxiety ($f^2 = 0.114$), and a negligible effect of Future Time Perspective on Career Anxiety ($f^2 = 0.001$) (Hair et al., 2022).

Table 4. Structural Model Assessment Results

Path	β	t	p	f^2
CA → ANX	-0.486	3.133	0.002	0.114
CA → FTP	0.757	13.237	0.000	1.329
FTP → ANX	0.024	0.199	0.842	0.001
CA → FTP → ANX	0.019	0.193	0.847	-

Source: Author's own analysis

Notes: $R^2 = 0.571$ for FTP and 0.190 for ANX. All VIF values were below 5.

Figure 2 illustrates the structural model results. Career Adaptability significantly predicts Career Anxiety and Future Time Perspective, while the path from Future Time Perspective to Career Anxiety is non-significant.

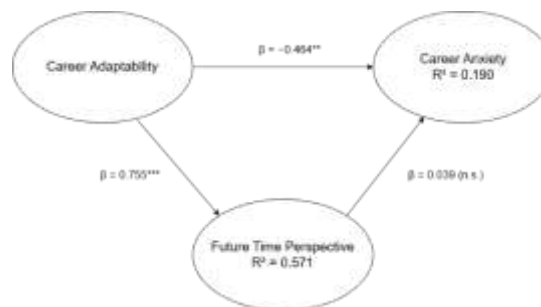


Figure 2. Structural model results

Note: *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; n.s. = not significant

3.4 Discussion

The negative relationship between Career Adaptability and Career Anxiety supports Career Construction Theory, which positions adaptability as a psychosocial resource for managing career transitions. Among job-seeking individuals with disabilities, adaptability appears to function as an emotional regulation resource that strengthens perceived control and coping capacity. This finding aligns with prior research linking higher adaptability to lower anxiety and psychological strain (Rudolph et al., 2017; Shin & Lee, 2019). and to better psychosocial outcomes in disability contexts (Bonaccio et al., 2020; Santilli et al., 2014).

The strong positive association between Career Adaptability and Future Time Perspective is consistent with evidence that adaptable individuals engage in proactive planning and long-term orientation (Fasbender et al., 2019; Zacher, 2014). The present findings extend this pattern to job-seeking adults with disabilities.

However, Future Time Perspective did not significantly reduce Career Anxiety. This result suggests that future-oriented cognition alone may be insufficient in contexts characterized by structural barriers. While broader time perspective has been associated with lower anxiety in student and general workforce samples (Kooij et al., 2018; Shipp et al., 2009), its buffering role may depend on perceived control and environmental support (Cate & John, 2007; Park et al., 2020). In disability-related job search contexts, stigma, discrimination, and accessibility barriers may limit the protective function of future-oriented thinking. The modest R^2 for Career Anxiety further indicates that additional contextual variables likely contribute to anxiety in this population.

The absence of mediation suggests a contextual boundary condition. In less constrained environments, Future Time Perspective has mediated the relationship between adaptability and emotional outcomes (Fasbender et al., 2019; Jia et al., 2022). However, adaptability can also exert direct effects independent of cognitive mediators, particularly under structural adversity (Ginevra et al., 2016; Rudolph et al., 2017). For job-seeking individuals with disabilities in Indonesia, adaptability appears to operate primarily as a direct coping resource rather than through temporal cognition.

Overall, these findings refine SCCT and CCT by highlighting that the explanatory role of future-oriented cognition is context-dependent. Under conditions of limited accessibility and structural constraint, adaptability functions as an independent emotional regulation mechanism in reducing career anxiety among marginalized job seekers.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings refine the application of Social Cognitive Career Theory and Career Construction Theory in structurally constrained contexts. The non significant mediation effect suggests that Future Time Perspective may not function as a central mechanism in reducing anxiety under persistent structural barriers, challenging assumptions within SCCT regarding cognitive pathways to affective outcomes. In contrast, the strong direct effect of career adaptability supports Career Construction Theory by affirming its role as a psychosocial self regulatory resource.

These results indicate that contextual constraints shape how personal resources operate, highlighting the need for career development models to more explicitly incorporate structural conditions in explaining emotional outcomes.

3.5 Practical Implications

The findings have important implications for policy and practice. Given the significant direct effect of career adaptability on career anxiety, interventions for individuals with disabilities should prioritize strengthening adaptability resources such as planning, autonomy, exploration, and confidence through career counseling, job search training, and mentorship programs. The non significant role of Future Time Perspective indicates that promoting future oriented thinking alone may be insufficient in structurally constrained labor markets. Therefore, psychological empowerment should be complemented by structural reforms, including accessible recruitment systems, inclusive workplace accommodations, and effective enforcement of disability employment regulations. Integrated approaches that address both individual capacities and environmental barriers are likely to more effectively reduce career anxiety among job seeking individuals with disabilities.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationships among Career Adaptability, Future Time Perspective, and Career Anxiety among job-seeking individuals with disabilities using PLS-SEM. The findings indicate that Career Adaptability significantly reduces Career Anxiety and strongly predicts Future Time Perspective, while Future Time Perspective neither predicts Career Anxiety nor mediates the relationship. These results suggest that under structural labor-market constraints, adaptability operates primarily as a direct emotional regulation resource, highlighting contextual limits of future-oriented cognition models.

This study contributes conceptually by refining the integration of Social Cognitive Career Theory and Career Construction Theory, demonstrating that career adaptability exerts a direct regulatory effect on career anxiety and identifying a contextual boundary condition in which Future Time Perspective does not function as an effective emotional buffer under structural labor market constraints. Practically, the findings emphasize the importance of strengthening adaptability resources in career development interventions for individuals with disabilities, suggesting that programs should prioritize adaptive competencies while policy efforts simultaneously address structural inclusion through accessible hiring practices and effective enforcement of anti discrimination regulations.

Future research should examine potential moderators such as perceived discrimination, accessibility barriers, and institutional support to clarify when Future Time Perspective becomes effective. Longitudinal designs are needed to establish causal relationships and assess changes over time. Comparative studies across disability types or cultural contexts may determine whether the absence of mediation reflects contextual specificity or a broader theoretical boundary condition. Incorporating environmental and policy level variables into structural models would also provide a more comprehensive explanation of career anxiety among marginalized job seekers.

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