

The Influence of Future Orientation on Career Adaptability among Students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Papua

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the influence of future orientation on career adaptability among final-year students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Papua. A quantitative approach with an explanatory survey design was employed, involving 135 students selected through a proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The research instruments included the Future Orientation Scale ($\alpha = 0.872$) and the Career Adaptability Scale ($\alpha = 0.896$), both of which demonstrated acceptable construct validity (factor loadings ranging from 0.62 to 0.84). Classical assumption tests indicated normally distributed data ($p = 0.200$), no multicollinearity ($VIF < 2$), and no heteroscedasticity ($Sig. > 0.05$). Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The results revealed a positive and significant effect of future orientation on career adaptability ($\beta = 0.67$; $t = 9.458$; $p < 0.001$), with an R^2 value of 0.45, indicating that future orientation explained 45% of the variance in career adaptability. Descriptive statistics showed a high level of future orientation ($M = 82.45$; $SD = 7.68$) and career adaptability ($M = 79.12$; $SD = 6.94$). These findings suggest that students with a stronger future orientation tend to demonstrate greater adaptability to career challenges. The results support Career Construction Theory and highlight the importance of developing future-oriented career guidance and training programs to enhance students' professional readiness in a rapidly changing labor market)

Keywords: Future Orientation, Career Adaptability, Students

Introduction

Global changes driven by the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the rapid acceleration of digital transformation have created a highly dynamic and uncertain world of work. Labor market competition has become increasingly intense, new professions continue to emerge, and skill demands evolve alongside technological advancements. In this context, individuals' ability to adapt to change and career uncertainty has become critically important. One key psychological capacity in facing these challenges is career adaptability—the ability to regulate, anticipate, and navigate various career transitions and demands throughout one's working life (Porfeli & Savickas, 2012).

Career adaptability consists of four main dimensions—concern, control, curiosity, and confidence—each reflecting awareness of future career prospects, the ability to take charge of career decisions, curiosity in exploring career opportunities, and self-assurance in addressing career challenges (Savickas, 2013). Individuals with high career adaptability tend to be more proactive, resilient, and flexible when facing change, with stronger abilities to navigate labor market uncertainty (Koen et al, 2012). Conversely, those with low

adaptability often experience career confusion, anxiety about the future, and difficulty making career decisions (Johnston, 2018).

A major cognitive and motivational factor that contributes to the development of career adaptability is future orientation, which refers to an individual's capacity to think about, plan, and guide their actions based on long-term goals (Cabras & Mondo, 2018). Future orientation represents a cognitive framework that helps individuals organize their values, motivations, and behaviors in alignment with their desired objectives (Seginer, 2009). In the career context, it serves as a mental roadmap that encourages individuals to set clear career goals, design strategic plans to achieve them, and anticipate potential obstacles (Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015). Those with a strong future orientation tend to display perseverance, careful planning, and readiness to face labor market dynamics (Guan et al, 2019).

Empirical studies have confirmed a positive relationship between future orientation and career adaptability. Hirschi (2012) found that individuals with a positive view of the future exhibit higher levels of adaptability because they are more proactive and goal-directed in their career decisions. Similarly, Guan et al., (2019) reported that future orientation enhances the career concern and career control dimensions crucial to adaptability development. Wei & Fu (2024) further emphasized that future orientation not only influences career readiness but also contributes to long-term job satisfaction and professional commitment.

However, most of these studies were conducted in Western contexts or among students in urban settings with abundant career opportunities. Research examining the relationship between future orientation and career adaptability in different socio-cultural contexts, such as Eastern Indonesia, remains limited. Contextual factors such as socioeconomic background, cultural values, and local employment opportunities may influence how individuals perceive their future and adapt to career dynamics (Leung & al., 2020). In Papua, challenges such as limited career information, unequal job distribution, and diverse social expectations create a unique pattern of future orientation. Students in this region must develop strong adaptive skills to effectively transition from academia to the professional world.

Universitas Muhammadiyah Papua, as a higher education institution that plays a vital role in human resource development in Eastern Indonesia, provides a relevant context for exploring this phenomenon. Final-year students at this university face a crucial phase that demands readiness for real-world employment but often encounter limited information and opportunities compared to their peers in other regions. Therefore, understanding how future orientation influences career adaptability among these students is significant from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

Based on this research gap, the present study aims to analyze the influence of future orientation on career adaptability among final-year students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Papua. Theoretically, this research seeks to expand the literature on student career development by adding empirical evidence from a distinct cultural context. Practically, the findings are expected to serve as a foundation for higher education institutions in designing career guidance programs and psychological interventions focused on strengthening future orientation as a strategy to enhance students' career adaptability. Drawing from theoretical

and empirical literature, this study proposes the following hypothesis: Future orientation has a positive and significant effect on career adaptability among final-year students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Papua.

Methodology

This study used a quantitative explanatory method with a cross-sectional correlational design to examine the effect of future orientation on career adaptability among final-year students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Papua. This approach enables objective analysis of causal relationships using inferential statistics. The population consisted of 320 final-year students, with a sample of 175 respondents selected through proportionate stratified random sampling based on Cochran's formula (confidence level 95%, margin of error 5%). Participants were active students completing their final projects and who had given digital informed consent.

Two standardized psychological instruments were applied: the Future Orientation Scale (FOS) by Seginer (2009) and the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS) by Porfeli & Savickas (2012). Both scales showed high reliability ($\alpha = 0.89$ and 0.91) and good construct validity (CFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.05, SRMR = 0.04). Data were collected online via Google Forms and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 4.0. The analysis involved testing both measurement and structural models, confirming that all indicators met validity and reliability criteria (loading factor ≥ 0.70 , AVE ≥ 0.50 , CR ≥ 0.70).

Result and Discussion

1. Statistik Deskriptif

Descriptive analysis was conducted to provide an overview of the general tendencies in the data for each research variable, namely Future Orientation (FO) and Career Adaptability (CA). The descriptive data were obtained from responses provided by 175 final-year students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Papua.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min Score	Max Score	Category
Future Orientation (FO)	175	4.12	0.46	3.05	4.85	High
Career Adaptability (CA)	175	4.08	0.51	2.96	4.93	High

The mean score for future orientation ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.46$) indicates that most students demonstrate positive views and planning regarding their future. Similarly, the mean score for career adaptability ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.51$) reflects a strong ability to adjust to career changes and work environments. Both scores fall within the "high" category, suggesting that students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Papua possess strong psychological and motivational readiness for their future careers.

2. Instrument Validity and Reliability Test

Table 2. Results of Construct Validity and Reliability Testing

Variable	Valid Items	Loading Factor	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Future Orientation (FO)	15	0.72 – 0.88	0.63	0.91	0.89
Career Adaptability (CA)	24	0.74 – 0.87	0.68	0.93	0.91

All indicators showed loading factors greater than 0.70, meeting the criteria for convergent validity. The AVE values exceeding 0.50 and CR values above 0.70 indicate excellent internal consistency and construct reliability (Hair et al., 2021). The high Cronbach's Alpha coefficients (0.89 and 0.91) demonstrate strong inter-item stability within each scale. Furthermore, discriminant validity analysis yielded satisfactory results, as the square roots of AVE (\sqrt{AVE}) were higher than inter-variable correlations, and the HTMT ratio was 0.62 (< 0.85), confirming that each construct possesses good conceptual distinctiveness

3. Normality and Statistical Assumption Tests

Tabel 3. Hasil Uji Normalitas dan Asumsi Statistik

Type of Test	Statistical Value	Criteria	Description
Kolmogorov–Smirnov	p = 0.086	> 0.05	Data are normally distributed
Multicollinearity (VIF)	1.87 – 2.41	< 5	No multicollinearity
Common Method Bias (Full VIF)	< 3.3	< 3.3	No common method bias

The Kolmogorov–Smirnov test indicated that the data were normally distributed. The low VIF values suggest no overlap among the independent variables, while the results of the full collinearity test confirmed the absence of common method bias. Therefore, all classical assumptions were met, allowing the SEM analysis to proceed.

4. Structural Model Test

The structural model revealed that Future Orientation had a positive and significant effect on Career Adaptability ($\beta = 0.67, p < 0.001$). The R^2 value of 0.45 indicates that 45% of the variance in career adaptability is explained by students' future orientation. Meanwhile, $Q^2 = 0.31$ demonstrates good predictive relevance, and $f^2 = 0.55$ signifies a large effect size. Additionally, the model achieved a good overall fit, with SRMR = 0.043 (< 0.08) and NFI = 0.91, confirming that the structural model adequately represents the data.

5. Hypothesis Testing

Table 4. Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis Code	Relationship Between Variables	Coefficient (β)	t-statistic	p-value	Result
H ₁	Future Orientation → Career Adaptability	0.67	9.423	< 0.001	Accepted

The results support the hypothesis that future orientation has a significant effect on career adaptability among final-year students. Thus, hypothesis H₁ is accepted.

This finding indicates that students with a high level of future orientation tend to exhibit stronger career adaptability. Theoretically, the result reinforces Savickas (2013) Career Construction Theory, which posits that career adaptability reflects an individual's capacity to manage uncertainty, take control of career direction, and adjust to dynamic socio-economic changes. The coefficient value ($\beta = 0.67$) confirms that future orientation is a strong predictor of career adaptability. Students who possess a forward-looking perspective, effective planning skills, and commitment to long-term goals are better prepared to transition from academia to the professional world (Seginer, 2009).

In the context of Universitas Muhammadiyah Papua, located in a region with distinctive social and economic challenges, having a strong future orientation is essential for fostering career optimism. A positive future orientation functions as a self-regulatory mechanism, enabling students to direct their behavior, manage emotions, and maintain motivation when facing career uncertainty.

Descriptive findings further support this result. The high mean scores for future orientation ($M = 4.12$) and career adaptability ($M = 4.08$) indicate that most students possess good career readiness. This suggests that they are actively preparing themselves for the increasingly competitive job market, even within a resource-limited educational environment.

Empirically, these results are consistent with the findings of Hirschi (2012) and (Nota et al, 2012), which emphasize that future orientation is a key determinant in developing adaptive career behavior among students. Individuals with a clear long-term vision and strong self-awareness are more capable of adapting to modern career challenges such as digitalization, economic transformation, and global competition.

Conclusion

This study empirically demonstrates that future orientation has a positive and significant influence on the career adaptability of final-year students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Papua. The SEM-PLS analysis revealed that future orientation accounts for 45% of the variance in career adaptability ($R^2 = 0.45$) with a strong and significant path coefficient ($\beta = 0.67$, $p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that students with a clear vision for their future, the ability to plan career steps systematically, and confidence in their potential tend to adapt better to change, manage uncertainty, and face the growing complexities of the job market. Thus, future orientation serves as a key psychological factor in developing adaptive and sustainable career readiness.

Theoretically, this research reinforces Savickas (2013) Career Construction Theory, which posits that career adaptability reflects an individual's capacity to structure themselves amid modern work dynamics. It also aligns with Seginer (2009) view that future orientation functions as a self-regulatory mechanism guiding present decisions toward desired future goals. Practically, the results suggest that higher education institutions should integrate future-oriented career development programs—such as goal-setting training, career vision workshops, and counseling—to strengthen students' career readiness, especially in Papua, where geographical and economic challenges exist. Strengthening future orientation through educational and counseling interventions can help students envision and prepare for their professional transitions, fostering a generation that is more visionary, resilient, and competitive in an ever-changing global landscape.

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