

# **UNLOCKING CAREER POTENTIAL: THE MEDIATING ADVERSITY QUOTIENT IN PARENTAL SUPPORT TO CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG DUAL CAREER GIG ECONOMY STUDENTS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the effect of parental support on adversity quotient and career adaptability in dual career students who work in the gig economy sector. The main focus in this research is how parental support can strengthen the adversity quotient and career adaptability of students in facing academic challenge and uncertainty in the world of gig economy work. This research makes a new contribution by showing that parental support plays an important role in increasing the adversity quotient and career adaptability, which is still not widely explored in literature of dual career student in the gig economy. The results of research from a sample of 196 students who were processed quantitatively through SEM-PLS analysis showed that students who get parental support will have a higher adversity quotient and more easily adapt to changes that occur in the world of work gig economy. This study conclude that parental support help student reduce stress, increase self-confidence, and facilitate better career decision-making. The implications of this study are relevant to the majority of 21-23 years old, where students in phase are forming a career identity and often face uncertainty their career direction. Parental support provides support that strengthens curiosity and concern in students' career adaptability. Therefore, the research underlines the importance of parental support reinforced by university counselling guidance in providing in-depth and holistic academic and career self-development programs, especially for dual career students involved in the gig economy.

**Keywords:** adversity quotient, career adaptability, dual career students, gig economy, parental support

## INTRODUCTION

The shift in the career landscape triggered by the emergence of technology has encouraged the development of protean careers in the context of the gig economy workforce. Interestingly, this shift affects the paradigm of gig economy workers to proactively manage their roles and careers (Nilawati et al., 2021; Wiernik & Kostal, 2018). The zoomer generation, which is disrupted by technological advances, grows as digital natives, tends to have flexible and adaptive personalities reflected in the selection of career paths based on short-term work contracts (Firdasanti et al., 2021). The existence of job opportunities in the gig economy is increasingly in demand by students, especially in the midst of financial pressures and independent economic needs (Lestari, 2025), prompting students to plunge prematurely into the world of work before completing their studies. The phenomenon of dual career students emerged as an attitude of proactive behaviour in facing increasingly competitive job competition through early career portfolio building. The World Economic Forum emphasises that 61% of Gen Z faces economic uncertainty and deep protean career issues (Lestari, 2025). Furthermore, the Directorate General of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture revealed that 7,981,059 students have undergone dual career roles, becoming Gen Z as a potential generation in the gig economy (Firdasanti et al., 2021).

Dual career students are required to have crucial career resources career adaptability to be in the midst of precarious work in the world of gig economy which is characterized by uncertainty, flexibility and dynamics of career challenges (Firdasanti et al., 2021). Firdasanti et al., (2021) in their empirics reveal the vulnerability of gig economy careers is often related to low job security, uncertain contracts and problems in fairness and compensation transparency. Students who undergo dual careers are required to have high career adaptability to adjust to changes that occur both in the world of work and academics, and be able to overcome work obstacles responsively, including managing opportunities in developing long-term careers amid limited job security (Hadi & Salim, 2024; Li et al., 2019; Y. Zhang et al., 2022).

The phenomenon of dual-career students is increasingly common in Singaraja City, as it is a city of education with rapidly growing economic activity in Bali Province. Technological advances and the development of the gig economy in Singaraja provide opportunities for students to engage in project-based or freelance work. An initial survey of 10 dual career students in Singaraja revealed the challenges and experiences of managing two roles simultaneously. Students have gained valuable work experience and additional financial support, but often experience tension in dividing their time between studies and work. Dual career students recognise the importance of strengthening career resources that can effectively support dual career roles through external career resources, such as support and internal career resources, such as mental resilience in the face of failure, pressure and growing uncertainty.

Parental support plays an important role for dual career students in increasing career adaptability. Parents always provide emotional, instrumental and financial support to their children to overcome career challenges and focus on maintaining academic-career balance (Aguiar et al., 2011; Fouad et al., 2016). Parental support that is formed at an early age will build children's confidence in determining career goals, encourage exploration of future career aspirations to develop the work competencies needed in career development (Jiang et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2023; Ziomek et al., 2016). Song et al., (2024) emphasized that the effectiveness of support provided by someone will produce a unique reaction in the individual receiving support, depending on how comfortable and safe the individual feels in the presence of that support. The findings of Fouad et al., (2016) and Renée, (2023) show that families with middle to upper

economic backgrounds tend to be more involved in providing support for career adaptability and career exploration for adolescents. Support from parents provides resources and stability that enable adolescents to explore careers more adaptively (Renée, 2023). Le et al., (2023) and Yaqoob et al., (2023) revealed that family support, especially parents, has the potential to create dependence on children prioritising family interests rather than creating career adaptability in developing their careers. Diao & Yao, (2025) further explained that impact of this dependency also causes a decrease in one's career intention. Interestingly, empirically Dluha et al., (2020) revealed that parental support does not always affect individuals, where at the age of adolescence, support from peers has a significant influence compared to parents.

Savickas, (2014), the originator of Career Construction Theory (CCT), provides an important framework for understanding the career journey of dual career students built through the interaction between career adaptive with career adaptability as a source of adaptation resources. Savickas, (2014) refers in depth to career adaptive to the individual's ability to prepare mentally, emotionally and psychologically in facing changes and challenges in a career, one of which is the adversity quotient. Empirical Hadi & Salim, (2024) and Shalihah et al., (2018) state that the adversity quotient is the management of career resources in responding to and overcoming challenges and life difficulties when facing failure as an opportunity. Muarifah et al., (2022) emphasised that the ability of the adversity quotient is strengthened by parental support to overcome academic challenges, this empirical is the first step for parents in supporting children's career adaptability. Hadi & Salim, (2024) explore that the adversity quotient is able to mediate parental support on the career adaptability of vocational students in their career journey.

The main motivation of this research is to understand more deeply how Indonesian students, especially those who are dual-role in education and digital informal work, develop their adversity quotient and career readiness. Although the concept of dual career has been widely researched in developed countries, the local Indonesian context with its collective family structure and dominant parental role has not been studied much. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to the limited literature on the relationship between parental support, adversity quotient, and career adaptability in dual career students in developing countries. This research is also expected to contribute to the development of government policies related to labour regulations that support gig economy workers, especially dual career students. Copy that this research also has the potential to encourage comprehensive counselling programs, not limited to academic guidance but also involving career management support and planning. This counseling program will help dual career students to manage dual roles effectively, including coping strategies to face the demands of the gig economy career.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Career Construction Theory (CCT)**

Savickas, (2014) explains that a career is not just the end result of job achievement, but a dynamic journey that is formed through interactions between individuals and their social environment. Arastaman, (2019) reveals in Career Construction Theory (CCT) that individuals who are able to understand and reflect on their experiences as positive and constructive career development strategies. CCT also emphasizes that career adaptability is the main resource in dealing with career changes and challenges (Spurk et al., 2019). Several previous studies have shown that career adaptability is influenced by various factors including proactive personality (Klehe et al., 2021; Korkmaz, 2023), career self-efficacy (Green et al., 2020; Pambudi

et al., 2019), and social support (Agoes Salim et al., 2023; Hadi & Salim, 2024; Song et al., 2024) and others. Interestingly, the predictor of social support is one of the most significant conditions that increase career adaptability in solving career challenges (Hadi & Salim, 2024).

### **Career Adaptability**

Super and Knasel (Chen et al., 2020) suggest career adaptability as an individual's ability to adapt to changes, career demands, and challenges that arise throughout the career journey. Career adaptability plays an important role in helping individuals maintain the balance of their career roles, especially when career transitions occur. Hirschi (Rudolph et al., 2019) asserts that career adaptability along with other career resources interacts and has a unique impact on each individual, which is influenced by their respective personalities. Kamau (2022) and Zacher (2014) highlighted that the unique impact felt by individuals is due to adaptation resources developing with the environment to form an identity and imitation of role models from the surrounding environment. Haenggli and Hirschi, (2020) explain that career adaptation resources are generally also used by individuals to achieve career success, each element of the resources that make up career adaptability contributes differently and creates the meaning of the individual's career success.

### **Parental Support**

Social support provided by parents plays an important role as the main source of support in an individual's life, especially in career development. Parental support increases individual confidence in pursuing career goals, encourages exploration of future aspirations to help career planning and decisions (Jo et al., 2022). Forms of parental support generally include instrumental assistance, career modelling, verbal encouragement to emotional support (Hartnett et al., 2013). Parental support also plays a role in shaping an individual's vocational self-concept, as well as contributing to the development of personal agency and confidence in solving the challenges faced (Duffy et al., 2015). Savickas, (2014) explains that each individual has different adaptive readiness to accommodate change, and parents often provide important resources to help individuals face career development challenges. Parents encourage attention, control, concepts and self-confidence that strengthen individual persistence in facing change (Restubog et al., 2010). Based on this exposure, this study proposes the hypothesis

H1: Parental support affects the career adaptability of dual career students in the gig economy.

### **Adversity Quotient as Mediator**

Stoltz defines adversity quotient as an individual's ability to overcome difficulties by turning obstacles into opportunities (Safi'i et al., 2021). Individuals who have a high adversity quotient tend to be better prepared to handle job stress and achieve success, so that the adversity quotient becomes an antecedent of internal factors that affect a person's career adaptability (Hadi & Salim, 2024). Zhao & Sang, (2023) reinforce this finding that adversity quotient acts as a crucial predictor in assessing career success in the world of work, as well as increasing productivity in achieving higher positions. Hadi & Salim, (2024) proved that the adversity quotient is able to bridge the relationship between parental support and career adaptability, where support from parents both materially, emotionally and recognition can increase individual motivation and drive to achieve success even in difficult situations. Hidayati & Taufik, (2020) revealed that parenting that empowers parental support, teaches individuals strategies for survival so that they are skilled in facing challenges. These empirical findings reinforce the submission of hypotheses:

H2: Adversity quotient has a significant positive effect on career adaptability and H3: Parental support has a significant positive effect on adversity quotient.

Empirical Hadi & Salim, (2024) and Muarifah et al., (2022) show a positive and significant influence between adversity quotient and career adaptability. Hadi & Salim, 2024 found that Generation Z who have a high level of adversity quotient shows better career adaptability to the dynamics of the world of work. Empirical Hadi & Salim, 2024 also revealed that adversity quotient acts as a mediator that connects parental support with career adaptability. Muarifah et al., (2022) confirm the same thing, that the adversity quotient strengthened by parental support has an important role in overcoming challenges, and this is the first step for parents in supporting their children's career adaptability. This empirical finding strengthens the exploration of hypothesis:

H4: Adversity quotient is able to mediate the relationship between parental support and career adaptability of dual career students in the gig economy.

## **METHOD, DATA, AND ANALYSIS**

This research uses a quantitative approach with a survey method of students who are actively undergoing part-time or freelance work on the gig economy platform. Analysis was conducted to test the direct and indirect relationships between the variables studied. Emphasis is placed on how adversity quotient mediates the relationship between parental support and career adaptability, in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of the psychosocial mechanisms involved in developing students' career readiness.

Data collection is done through the use of questionnaires. The first questionnaire related to career adaptability uses a measurement scale developed by Savickas (Klehe et al., 2021) which has been widely used in career adaptability research. Sulistiani et al. (2019) Indonesian researchers have translated the Savickas scale into Indonesian which is reflected in 24 statement items covering four dimensions: concern (6 items), control (6 items), curiosity (6 items) and confidence (6 items). The Alpha Cronbach reliability of the career adaptability scale is 0.852.

The second questionnaire related to parental support used the Career-Related Parent Support Scale of Turner et al., (2003). This instrument consists of 20 items measuring four dimensions: instrumental assistance (7 items), career-related modeling (7 items), verbal encouragement (6 items) and emotional support (7 items). This measurement scale has demonstrated reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.937.

The third questionnaire measured the adversity quotient instrument using a measurement scale developed by Matore et al., (2020), consisting of 15 question items covering four dimensions: control (4 items), ownership (4 items), reach (3 items) and endurance (4 items). The adversity quotient measurement scale has reliability with an Alpha Cronbach value of 0.927.

The researcher included an attention check item to ensure the respondent's attention and seriousness in filling out the questionnaire. Participants in this study were selected using a non-probability sampling technique, namely purposive sampling with a specific purpose. All respondents are active students from Ganesha University of Education (Undiksha) who have part-time or freelance jobs on the gig economy platform. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed to students from various faculties at Undiksha. However, after verification with an attention check, only 196 questionnaires were eligible and considered valid. Questionnaires that involved respondents answering quickly without reading the question carefully

(58 questionnaires), giving inconsistent answers (13 questionnaires) and not complying with the instructions that had been given (33 questionnaires) were excluded from the analysis to maintain the validity and reliability of the data obtained. The majority of the 196 respondents consisted of 81 students (41.3%) and 115 female students (58.7%), with an age range of 21-23 years ( $M = 17.2$ ). These respondents were dominated by students from the Faculty of Economics (48.7%), Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (15.3%) from 8 Faculties.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of SEM-PLS analysis show that parental support has a significant positive effect on the adversity quotient ( $t = 3.382$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). The higher the parental support received by students, the greater their ability of career adaptability to adapt to the dynamics of the gig economy workforce. In addition, the effect of parental support on adversity quotient also shows a significant positive effect as well ( $t = 5.371$ ;  $p < 0.000$ ). SEM-PLS analysis found that the adversity quotient also has a significant positive effect on career adaptability ( $t = 5.296$ ;  $p < 0.000$ ). This result implies that the ability of high adversity quotient strategies will increase the career adaptability of dual career students.

Table 1. SEM-PLS Analysis Results

Description	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
(X) $\rightarrow$ (Y)	0.250	0.250	0.074	3.382	0.001
(Z) $\rightarrow$ (Y)	0.386	0.389	0.073	5.296	0.000
(X) $\rightarrow$ (Z)	0.383	0.389	0.071	5.371	0.000
(X) $\rightarrow$ (Z) $\rightarrow$ (Y)	0.147	0.152	0.043	3.416	0.001

Note: X = Parental support, Z = Adversity quotient, and Y = Career adaptability.

Table 1 and Figure 1 present the results of the mediation analysis of adversity quotient on the effect of parental support and career adaptability, which shows that adversity quotient plays a partial mediating role. Although the adversity quotient has a significant positive effect in this relationship, the effect of parental support on career adaptability is greater than the indirect effect through the adversity quotient. However, the role of adversity quotient as a mediator remains important in explaining the psychosocial mechanisms involved in the development of career adaptability.

The findings regarding parental support as a predictor of career adaptability imply that the higher the parental support, the higher the career adaptability (Hadi & Salim, 2024; Rençber & Baş, 2023; Dluha et al., 2020) on dual career students facing the challenges of gig economy work. Parental support in both instrumental and emotional forms provides a strong foundation for students to navigate the challenges they face, both in academics and careers in the gig economy workforce. Interestingly, students revealed that the most needed support was instrumental assistance and information related to career-related modelling. Practical resources in the form of financial assistance, access to professional networks to exchange career experiences can reduce the stress faced by students in balancing the roles of students and workers (Lent, 2024). The support received from parents allows students to be better prepared for the changes and uncertainties that often occur in the gig economy.

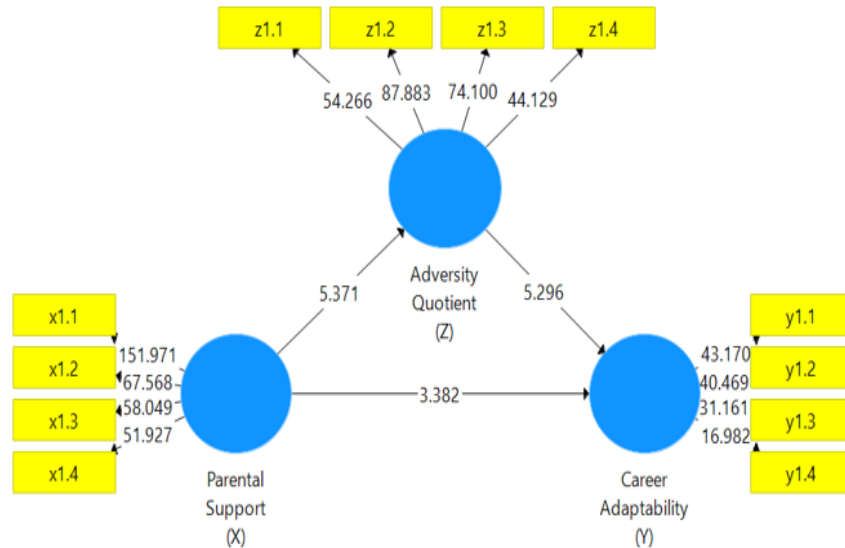


Figure 1. The Mediating Role of Adversity Quotient on Parental Support and Career Adaptability

Research shows that women tend to have higher emotional receptiveness to parental support (Lirio et al., 2007) especially from father figures. Women, especially in the world of work, face more complex challenges due to gender roles and glass ceilings that limit the space for future career mobility (Hartman & Barber, 2020; Moorthy et al., 2022). Affirmative support from parents can strengthen the confidence and control dimensions of dual career students to transcend structural and cultural boundaries that limit women's career development.

The majority of respondents were in the age range of 21-23 years, which is an important phase in the process of career identity formation. Students in this age range often do not have clear career direction, so parental support plays an important role in stimulating career exploration (curiosity) and strengthening career orientation (concern). The combination of work experience in the gig economy and parental support can form a more stable psychological foundation in long-term career decision making (Salim et al., 2023).

Hadi & Salim (2024) showed that career adaptability is negatively related to perceived challenges, where the challenge will be diverted into a positive challenge to get career opportunities in the midst of a precarious gig economy through adversity quotient strategies. This research is relevant to the findings of Hadi & Salim, (2024) which shows that adversity quotient is a predictor of career adaptability. Adversity quotient acts as an internal resource in predicting performance, perseverance, resilience to positive responses to current uncertain career changes (Hidayati & Taufik, 2020; Muarifah et al., 2022). Students who have the adversity quotient tend to be more optimistic in facing life's challenges, where resilience becomes self-control to find career opportunities.

Dual career students who face academic pressure, job uncertainty in the gig economy world require high mental toughness. When viewed from gender, female students tend to experience the challenges of social stereotypes and the lack of a work environment, so that adversity quotient becomes an internal resource in building personal resilience and adaptive sensitivity to career uncertainty. Thus, the adversity quotient is not just a motivating factor, but is the main psychological foundation in facing the complexity of the modern world of work, especially among dual-career students.



Parental support in this study as an external resource provides a strong emotional foundation, to help individuals develop self-character and effective coping strategies when facing various challenges in life. As part of psychosocial support, parental support fosters self-efficacy and adversity quotient, which allows individuals to remain resilient in facing the uncertainty of the world of work. In line with the findings of Hadi & Salim (2024) revealed parental support has a significant positive effect on the adversity quotient in students who undergo dual careers in the gig economy. Parental support helps reduce feelings of hopelessness and anxiety, both through emotional and practical support, which strengthens students' resilience. Perceived parental support allows students to take proactive action which is a reflection of self-responsibility for the career undertaken with their academic demands (ownership). Through this sense of responsibility, dual career students have a sense of control to manage the situation, where parental support builds optimism in making decisions and actions to improve conditions.

The adversity quotient helps students to be more focused on surviving the uncertainty of the gig economy world. Dual career students often face salary vulnerability, complex time management and short-term work contract challenges due to the lack of labour regulations (Firdasanti et al., 2021). Adversity quotient strengthens the role of parental support in increasing students' career adaptability.

According to Arastaman (2019) the relevance of CCT to one's career development is characterised by a process of adaptation to an integrated environment through self-construction. Arastaman, (2019) shows career adaptability is influenced by how individuals understand experiences with their environment (Tokar et al., 2020). Parental support shapes an individual's vocational self-concept, the development of personal agency to the confidence to solve career challenges, both during the early stages of adulthood and later stages (Zhang et al., 2023). Parental support can also reduce the negative impact on critical phases that occur in dual career students developing their careers (Gaile et al., 2024). This research shows that even though dual career students have a high adversity quotient to face the challenges and obstacles of career navigation, parental support still has a significant influence either with or without the presence of adversity quotient. Parental support acts as a buffer that helps students remain resilient and adaptable, especially when balancing academic and career demands in the gig economy.

## CONCLUSION

This study conceptually reveals that parental support has a significant positive influence on the adversity quotient and career adaptability in dual career students involved in the gig economy. Other findings show that the adversity quotient is a partial mediator that connects parental support with career adaptability in its contribution to students' readiness to face academic and career demands simultaneously. Practically, this study highlights the need for intervention in preparing dual career students involved in the gig economy workforce to equip themselves with skills relevant to the immersive technology. Strengthening support can be provided by the University through a career guidance program, considering that counselling guidance only involves student academics. The career guidance program will broaden the horizons of dual career students to manage the balance between academics and careers and manage coping strategies.



## IMPLICATIONS/LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study has limitations such as the use of a cross-sectional design that limits understanding of causal relationships and limitations in measuring variables through self-report. Therefore, this research is continued with a longitudinal design and more objective measurements to get an in-depth picture of the long-term influence of parental support and adversity quotient on career adaptability.

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