Factors Affecting Career Adaptability of Business Administration Students in Vietnam

LUU THI BINH NGOC

LAI XUAN THUY

*Author affiliations can be found in the back matter of this article

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify factors affecting Business Administration students' career adaptability and provide implications for universities to improve students' adaptability and raise awareness of their current level in Vietnam. We conducted a survey using the convenient random sampling method for students studying at ten representative universities in Hanoi on a voluntary basis and received 360 valid questionnaires. Based on the data obtained from the survey, common statistical analysis methods are used, including Exploratory Factor Analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis, and Structural Regression Modeling to test the research hypotheses. Research results show that three out of the four designed constructs have a statistically significant influence on students' career adaptability, in which the educational program is the most influential factor, followed by Social support and students' Career self-efficacy. However, the study did not show a statistically significant impact of Teacher support on students' Career adaptability. The research results suggest some implications for developing students' career adaptability through improving educational programs by adding soft skills to educational content and upgrading educational facilities and equipment that support active learning and encourage effective teaching methods by instructors. For social support, it is necessary to strengthen interactive and positive relationships between students and their families, universities, and communities. As for students, they need to further promote the improvement of their career self-efficacy, such as thinking positively and optimistically about the problems they face, always finding ways to solve difficulties in study and life optimistically, developing positive relationships with family, friends, and the community, and especially set and seek to achieve challenging goals.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:
Lai Xuan Thuy
Vietnam Women's Academy, VN
thuylx@vwa.edu.vn

KEYWORDS:
Career adaptability; career self-efficacy; social support; teacher support; educational program

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Vietnam has undergone extensive international economic integration and has gained remarkable development achievements in all aspects. Such success is largely due to Vietnam's innovation policies in terms of economy and politics. The economic development has made the working environment more dynamic and highly competitive. As a result, the number of unemployed workers, especially young people, has been increasing. According to the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the youth (young people aged 15–24) unemployment rate in the first nine months of 2022 was very high at 7.86% in the country and 9.65% in the urban areas, accounting for 37.5% of the total number of unemployed people of working age in Vietnam (MPI, 2022). According to Nguyen Thi Thu Trang (2017), there are many reasons for the high unemployment rate of graduates, some of which include the passivity of the students themselves, lack of soft skills, such as communication skills, situation-handling skills, problem-solving, teamwork; and lack of career orientation, adaptability, and initiative in finding jobs, etc.

To implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations, on September 25, 2020, the Government of Vietnam issued Resolution No. 136/NQ-CP on sustainable development. The resolution sets out 17 sustainable development goals for Vietnam by 2030, including SDG8, to guarantee sustainable and unceasing economic growth, productivity and full employment for all. Getting full employment and reducing the unemployment rate is among the main targets of the SDG8. Although the government, society, and organisations have made significant efforts towards SDGs, how employees exert their subjective initiative and enhance their career adaptability is fundamental to solving the employment issue. In recent research, Phan and Winai (2016) found that adaptability skills positively influence the employability of graduates in Vietnam.

Savickas (1997) defined career adaptability as a psychosocial construct that denotes an individual's capacity to cope with the current job, develop a future job, and change careers. Research by Sulistiani and Handoyo (2018) shows that career adaptability affects feelings of power, career management strategies, satisfaction and academic achievement, and life satisfaction. Recent research by Luu Thi Binh Ngoc et al. (2021) shows that, in general, business administration students are not strong in career adaptability skills, especially their ability to detect and quickly seize job opportunities, their skills in identifying and researching new opportunities, learning new things of the surrounding environment and completing tasks in accordance with their abilities (Luu Thi Binh Ngoc et al., 2021).

So, what are the antecedents of the students' career adaptability? This article presents research results on the career adaptability of business administration students in Vietnam to find the answer. The study used the International Standard Career Adapt-Ability Scale (CAAS) and the scales of influencing factors such as TSS, GSE, and MPSS, which have proven reliability and suitability in most countries worldwide. The measurement items have been developed and supplemented to suit the research subjects, which are Vietnamese students.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND, HYPOTHESISES AND RESEARCH METHODS

2.1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESISES

Career Adaptability

Savickas (1997) states that career adaptability is a psychosocial construct that indicates an individual's capacity to cope with current work, develop future jobs, change careers, and solve the deadlock at work. Scholars argue that employees face changing careers and adapting to different job positions at different times in their career lives (Savickas et al., 2009). Further, Duffy (2010) defines career adaptability as an important skill necessary for the job transition process of employees, demonstrating their ability to self-adjust to suit the changing professional roles. Changing careers requires individuals to reconsider their goals, attitudes, and personal characteristics, and this makes their ability to adapt to a career very important (Klehe et al. 2011). According to Yousefi et al. (2011), career adaptability is accepted as a construct that includes the abilities and behaviours of individuals necessary to adapt to changes in professional life. Based on these identifications, career adaptation has important implications for both students and working people. For students, it is necessary to be aware of their capacity

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to orient and adapt to future work. They need to be able to take responsibility for their future choices, make decisions, access new experiences, and be confident in their choices. Career adaptability is even more important for working people to increase their adaptability to the labour market.

Teacher Support and Career Adaptability

Career adaptability is jointly influenced by the personal active exploration and perception of the environmental atmosphere and the interaction between the individual and his surroundings. In the case of undergraduate students, career adaptability is greatly influenced by the perceived education environment (Han and Rojewski, 2015). Studies have shown that the support of lecturers has a positive effect on the career adaptability of university students in the following main dimensions. First, teachers can create a good learning ecosystem that can positively support individual adaptability, create a supportive learning atmosphere, and positively reinforce the adaptive capacity of the students (Babad, 1990). Next, lecturers' support helps students promptly solve problems, deadlocks or crises when facing difficulties, changes or failures in study as well as in life, helping them regain their courage and spirit and get up after failure to adapt to changes and challenges. At the same time, lecturers also often give instructions, orientations and suggestions on future jobs, helping students promote initiative in future work and improve adaptability to succeed on their future career path (Yan et al., 2021). From this, we make the following hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 1:** *Teacher support will be positively connected to students' career adaptability.*

Educational Program and Career Adaptability

An educational program is a system of educational activities designed and organized to achieve educational objectives towards granting an undergraduate degree to learners. The educational program includes modules that educate learners not only on professional knowledge and skills but also develop other educational values such as autonomy and responsibility, ability to adapt to new environments, self-control, etc. The educational programs also create conditions for students to contact and experience the real world, familiarize themselves with the actual working environment, participate in job fairs, etc. Wolniak and Pascarella (2005) argue that the educational program affects future job satisfaction through job-field congruence. This helps students get used to and adapt to the real-world career while still studying. In addition, Willcoxson and Wyndeer (2010) found that university students tend to change their major when they change their career direction. According to Pisarik and Whelchel (2018), students perceive their program to be relevant to their vocational preparation as well as their personal growth and development. From the above evidence, we proposed the following hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 2:** *Educational programs will be positively related to students' career adaptability.*

Social Support and Career Adaptability

Social support relates to a network of family, friends, school, neighbours and community members that is available in times of need to give psychological, physical, and financial help. Timely and effective social support can help students overcome psychological stressors and enhance their social adaptability. Researchers on student career adaptation have found that social support has a positive effect on students' learning and future career orientation (Flores and O'Brien, 2002). On the other hand, Hirschi (2009) argues that social support not only improves career adaptability but also increases students' life satisfaction. From the above arguments, we proposed the following hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 3:** *Social support will be positively related to students' career adaptability.*

Career Self-Efficacy and Career Adaptability

Taylor and Betz (1983) define career decision self-efficacy as an individual's beliefs that they can successfully complete the tasks related to decision-making in relation to their career. An individual's career self-efficacy enhances career choice and improves job performance,

thereby increasing career adaptability to help with career transition (Betz and Hackett, 1997). Researchers have proposed that self-efficacy is among the variables that relate to career behaviours (Parker et al. 2010). Scholars have shown that career self-efficacy is one of the predictors of increased career adaptability (Bartley and Robitschek, 2000; Johnston (2016). In their research on career adaptability among Chinese college graduates, Wang and Fu (2015) proved that there exist statistically significant positive correlations between career self-efficacy with career adaptability and social support with career adaptability. Based on the above, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: *Career self-efficacy will be positively related to career adaptability.*

The theoretical research framework is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

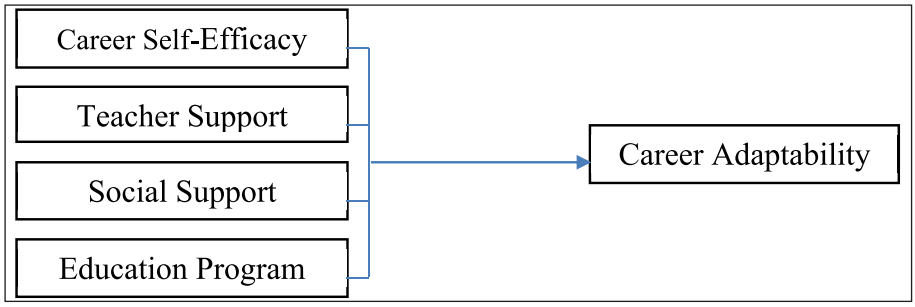

Figure 1 Research model framework.

2.2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.2.1. Research sample

The research sample includes 360 students of Business Administration at 10 universities, including six public and four private schools. Regarding gender, there were 166 men, accounting for 46.1%, and 194 women, accounting for 53.9% of survey participants. Divided by school year, there were 73 students in the first school year (20.3%), in the second year, there were 99 students (27.5%), in the third year, there were 104 students (28.9%), and in the fourth year, there were 84 students (23.3%). Regarding the academic results of the survey participants, the number of students with excellent, good, fairly good, good and poor academic results are 31, 68, 148, 83 and 30, respectively, accounting for 8.6%, 18.9%, 41.1%, 23.1% and 8.3%. Among the survey participants, 229 students participated in extra work outside of school hours, equivalent to 63.6%, and 131 students did not do extra work outside of school hours, equivalent to 36.4%. Classified by type of school, there are 216 students studying in public schools, accounting for 60% and 144 students studying in private schools, accounting for 40% of the survey participants (see Table 1).

Table 1 Statistical description of the sample (N = 360).

CRITERIA	CHARACTERISTICS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	%
Gender	Male	166	46.1
	Female	194	53.9
School year	First-year	73	20.3
	Second year	99	27.5
	Third years	104	28.9
	Fourth-year	84	23.3
Academic performance	Excellent	31	8.6
	Good	68	18.9
	Fairly good	148	41.1
	Good	83	23.1
	Poor	30	8.3
Partime work	Yes	229	63.6
	No	131	36.4
Type of University	Public university	216	60.0
	Private university	144	40.0

2.2.2. Survey questionnaire

The survey questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part is general information, including questions about demographics (gender, school year, academic performance, part-time work or not, type of university). The second part is detailed information, including 27 items on career adaptability (07 items of Interest in career future, 06 items of Curiosity about career discovery, 07 items of Confidence in career pursuit and 07 items of Control in trying to prepare for future career) and 20 items on factors affecting career adaptability (05 items of awareness of career self-efficacy, 05 items of awareness of social support, 05 items of perception of support from lecturers and 05 items of student evaluation of the educational program).

2.2.3. Methods of data collection and analysis

The questionnaire was distributed to survey participants directly at the universities during break time after asking for opinions and receiving consent from lecturers and students. Students participated in the survey on a voluntary basis. The purpose and content of the survey were explained to them, and they were instructed on how to fill out the survey form. Students who want to get survey results will fill out the registration box, and they need to leave their phone number and email account for contact. As a result, 396 survey forms were completed, of which 36 were incomplete and lacked much information, so they were eliminated. The number of survey questionnaires that met the information requirements was 360 used for analysis. Methods of data processing and analysis include Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using SPSS 20 and AMOS 20 software.

2.2.4. Measures

Career adaptability

The research model framework of career adaptability was formed based on the CAAS scale with four compounded factors (Cronbach's alpha = 0.910), including Concern (with a factor loading of 0.792), Curiosity (0.889), Confidence (0.850) and Control (0.881). Career concerns are the primary source of adaptability, related to perceptions of future career opportunities and options. It is understood as the ability to care about current career and future career development. Curiosity reflects the ability to effectively explore, learn, and recognise changes in the surrounding environment and opportunities for career development. Confidence means the employee's confidence in making career-related decisions and assigned tasks. Control indicates the ability to control problems that may occur at work and to master problems that are suitable for one's professional environment (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012). This 4C career adaptability model was proved to be highly reliable in the context of Vietnam (Lai and Nguyen, 2014; Tran et al, 2020).

Concern

The scale of Concern consisted of 7 items (Cronbach's alpha = 0.910), including Thinking about what my future will be like (with a factor loading of 0.752); Realizing that today's choices shape my future (0.670); Preparing for the future (0.855); Becoming aware of the educational and vocational choices that I must make (0.730); Planning how to achieve my goals (0.804); Concerned about my career (0.715); Analyze and evaluate options to minimize risk when choosing (0.653). The first six items of Concern were adopted from CAAS International (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012), and the seventh item was added by the authors.

Curiosity

The scale of Curiosity consisted 6 items (Cronbach's alpha = 0.889), all adopted from CAAS International (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012), including Exploring my surroundings (0.744); Looking for opportunities to grow (0.847); Investigating options before making a choice (0.773); Observing different ways of doing things (0.731); Probing deeply into questions that I have (0.730); Becoming curious about new opportunities (0.672).

Confidence

The scale of Confidence consisted of 7 items (Cronbach's alpha = 0.888), including Performing tasks efficiently (0.690); Taking care to do things well (0.766); Learning new skills (0.721); Working up to my ability (0.758); Overcoming obstacles (0.709); Solving problems (0.713); Confidently find effective solutions (0.682). The first 6 items of Confidence are adopted from CAAS International (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012) and the seventh item was added by the authors.

Control

The scale of Control consisted of 7 items (Cronbach's alpha = 0.932), including Keeping upbeat (0.796); Making decisions by myself (0.838); Taking responsibility for my actions (0.802); Sticking up for my beliefs (0.775); Counting on myself (0.878); Doing what's right for me (0.802); Taking responsibility for my own decisions (0.805). The first 6 items of Control are adopted from CAAS International (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012) and the seventh item was added by the authors (see Table 2).

The scales of factors influencing career adaptability include Career Self-Efficacy; Social Support; Teacher Support; and Educational program.

Career Self-Efficacy

The scale of Career Self-Efficacy was based on the LOT-R optimism scale (Scheier et al., 1985) and the GSE self-efficacy scale (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995). It consisted of 5 items (Cronbach's alpha = 0.844), including When I have a problem, I always find a way to solve it (0.649); I always set and stick to the set goals (0.748); I always know how to handle unexpected situations (0.726); I can solve almost any problem if I put in the effort (0.567); I always think optimistic and positive in all matters (0.799).

Social support

The scale of Social Support was developed based on part of the MSPSS scale (Zimet et al., 1988) that consisted of 5 items (Cronbach's alpha = 0.874), including I have a special person who always encourages and helps me when I'm in trouble (0.655); I always receive timely support and help from my family (0.766); I always get timely help from friends (0.867); I always receive timely support from the school (0.810); I can always share with others when I'm in trouble (0.418).

Teacher Support

The scale of Teacher Support was adopted from the TSS scale (McWhirter, 1996) and the work of Jennifer et al. (2008), which consisted of 5 items ((Cronbach's alpha = 0.887), including I have always been trusted by the lecturers (0.718); Most of the lecturers always listen to me and answer my questions enthusiastically, especially career related issues (0.905); I easily share my problems with my instructors and academic advisors (0.652); Most of my lecturers want me to continue my studies after graduation (0.597); Most of the lecturers and academic advisors always care and support me effectively (0.899).

Educational Program

The scale of the Educational Program was developed based on the study of Wenjie et al. (2018), which consisted of 5 items (Cronbach's alpha = 0.869), Including I am satisfied with the content of the educational program (0.732); I am satisfied with the school's soft skills educational programs (0.696); I am satisfied with the school's teaching staff (0.751); I am satisfied with the school facilities and equipment (0.749); I am satisfied with the school's learning, educational and outreach activities (0.739) (see Table 3).

The questionnaire uses a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. CAREER ADAPTABILITY

After assessing the reliability of scales by Cronbach's alpha, 27 items are used in the exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The results of testing the reliability of scales by the exploratory factor analysis show that KMO = 0.879, Sig. (Bartlett's Test) = 0.000 < 0.005, Eigenvalues = 61.489 > 50%. The results of EFA presented in Table 2 show that the international CAAS scale is quite suitable for the survey. All observed variables have Factor Loadings that range from 0.65 to over 0.85. The Cronbach Alpha coefficients of the factors are quite high, from 0.89 to 0.93. With this result, the scale is quite suitable and can be used with good validity in the context of this study (Hair et al., 1998).

CONSTRUCT	ITEMS (INDICATOR LEVEL 1)	MEAN	STANDARD ERRORS	LOADINGS	α
Concern	1. Thinking about what my future will be like	3.26	.999	.752	.910
	2. Realizing that today's choices shape my future	3.26	1.027	.670	
	3. Preparing for the future	3.23	.964	.855	
	4. Becoming aware of the educational and vocational choices that I must make	3.33	.982	.730	
	5. Planning how to achieve my goals	3.24	1.013	.804	
	6. Concerned about my career	3.24	1.048	.715	
	7. Analyze and evaluate options to minimize risk when choosing	3.20	1.001	.653	
Curiosity	8. Exploring my surroundings	3.15	.933	.744	.889
	9. Looking for opportunities to grow	3.26	.888	.847	
	10. Investigating options before making a choice	3.13	.901	.773	
	11. Observing different ways of doing things	3.20	.959	.731	
	12. Probing deeply into questions that I have	3.14	.903	.730	
	13. Becoming curious about new opportunities	3.13	.837	.672	
Confidence	14. Performing tasks efficiently	3.22	.970	.690	.888
	15. Taking care to do things well	3.29	.870	.766	
	16. Learning new skills	3.31	.918	.721	
	17. Working up to my ability	3.33	.896	.758	
	18. Overcoming obstacles	3.19	.875	.709	
	19. Solving problems	3.28	.907	.713	
	20. Confidently find effective solutions	3.22	.943	.682	
Control	21. Keeping upbeat	3.52	1.015	.796	.932
	22. Making decisions by myself	3.39	1.031	.838	
	23. Taking responsibility for my actions	3.38	1.029	.802	
	24. Sticking up for my beliefs	3.39	1.047	.775	
	25. Counting on myself	3.36	1.006	.878	
	26. Doing what's right for me	3.52	1.026	.802	
	27. Taking responsibility for my own decisions	3.44	.957	.805	
	Construct (indicator level 2)				
Career Adaptability	1. Concern	3.25	.810	.792	.910
	2. Curiosity	3.17	.725	.889	
	3. Confidence	3.26	.705	.850	
	4. Control	3.43	.857	.881	

Table 2 Means, Factor Loadings, and Cronbach Alpha of Career Adaptability.

The statistical analysis results described in Table 2 show that all indicators scored at the average level or higher. The indicator with the highest mean is Keeping upbeat (3.52/5), followed by Doing what's right for me (3.52/5), Taking responsibility for my own decisions

(3.44/5), Making decisions by myself and Sticking up for my beliefs (3.39/5), Taking responsibility for my actions (3.38/5), Counting on myself (3.36/5), Becoming aware of the educational and vocational choices that I must make (3.33/5), Working up to my ability (3.33/5) and Learning new skills (3.31/5). In the opposite direction, indicators with the lowest mean value include Overcoming obstacles (3.19/5), Exploring my surroundings (3.15/5), Probing deeply into questions that I have (3.14/5), Investigating options before making a choice and Becoming curious about new opportunities (3.13/5). The remaining indicators have average values in the range of 3.20/5 to 3.30/5.

The secondary assessment indicators calculate the average score of the factors, measuring students' career adaptability on four aspects. The highest score is control (3.43/5), followed by confidence (3.26/5), Concern (3.25/5) and finally, Curiosity (3.17/5). The average assessment score for career adaptability of the surveyed students is (3.28/5).

3.2. FACTORS AFFECTING CAREER ADAPTABILITY

The results of testing the reliability of scales by the exploratory factor analysis show that KMO = 0.916, Sig. (Bartlett's Test) = 0.000 < 0.005, Eigenvalues = 58.709 > 50%. The results of the EFA presented in Table 3 show that the measurement scale is suitable and reliable. All observed variables have factor loading ranging from 0.418 to 0.905 with a total variance extracted of 58.7%, without significant change, so the names of the factors are kept as they were. The Cronbach Alpha coefficients of the factors have a rather high value, from 0.844 to 0.887.

Table 3 Means, Factor Loadings, and Cronbach Alpha of Influencing Factors.

NO	FACTORS/ITEMS	MEAN	STANDARD ERROR	LOADINGS	α
I	Career Self-efficacy	3.24	.837		0.844
1	When I have a problem, I always find a way to solve it	3.24	1.06	.649	
2	I always set and stick to the set goals	3.26	1.04	.748	
3	I always know how to handle unexpected situations	3.13	1.04	.726	
4	I can solve almost any problem if I put in the effort	3.33	1.09	.567	
5	I always think optimistic and positive in all matters	3.24	1.10	.799	
II	Social Support	3.13	.802		0.874
6	I have a special person who always encourages and helps me when I'm in trouble	3.28	1.06	.655	
7	I always receive timely support and help from my family	3.21	1.04	.766	
8	I always get timely help from friends	3.01	.92	.867	
9	I always receive timely support from the school	3.04	.99	.810	
10	I can always share with others when I'm in trouble	3.13	.89	.418	
III	Teacher Support	3.42	.907		0.887
11	I have always been trusted by the lecturers	3.44	1.11	.718	
12	Most of the lecturers always listen to me and answer my questions enthusiastically, especially career related issues	3.64	1.05	.905	
13	I easily share my problems with my instructors and academic advisors	3.41	1.05	.652	
14	Most of my lecturers want me to continue my studies after graduation	3.12	1.14	.597	

(Contd.)

NO	FACTORS/ITEMS	MEAN	STANDARD ERROR	LOADINGS	α
15	Most of the lecturers and academic advisors always care and support me effectively	3.49	1.12	.899	
IV	Educational Program	3.20	.863		0.869
16	I am satisfied with the content of the educational program majoring in Business Administration	3.15	1.04	.732	
17	I am satisfied with the school's soft skills educational programs	3.21	1.07	.696	
18	I am satisfied with the school's teaching staff	3.13	1.06	.751	
19	I am satisfied with the school facilities and equipment	3.23	1.10	.749	
20	I am satisfied with the school's learning, educational and outreach activities	3.32	1.05	.739	

The statistical analysis results described in Table 3 show that all indicators scored at the average level or higher. Teacher support has the highest mean score (3.42/5), followed by Career self-efficacy (3.24/5), Educational program (3.20/5) and Social support (3.13/5).

3.3. THE RELATIONSHIP OF CAREER ADAPTABILITY AND INFLUENCING FACTORS

3.3.1. Reliability and Validity of Scales

In order to assess measurement validity, the authors performed the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) by using AMOS 20.0.

Table 4 CFA and SEM fit indices.

MODEL FIT INDICES	CFA FIT INDICES	CEM FIT INDICES	BASELINE VALUES (HAIR ET AL., 2020)	REMARKS
Chi-square	1559.063	1618.366	–	
Chi-square/df	1.550	1.017	<5	Good fit
GFI	0.922	0.911	≥0.9	Good fit
CFI	0.946	0.941	≥0.9	Good fit
TLI	0.942	0.938	≥0.9	Good fit
NFI	0.917	0.915	≥0.9	Good fit
RMSEA	0.039	0.041	≤0.05	Good fit

After assessing each construct, the full measurement model analysis is indicated in Figure 2 (unstandardized estimates). The results of CFA exhibited a reasonably good level of fit with the value of CMIN = 1618.366 (Default model), P = 0.000, CMIN/df = 1.591; Chi-square = 1559.063, p = 0.000, Chi-square/df = 1.550; CFI = 0.946, GFI = 0.922, TLI = 0.942, RMSEA = 0.039 (see Table 4).

3.3.2. Hypothesis testing

After the confirmatory factor analysis, structural regression analysis was performed to test the hypotheses. The overall fit statistics of the model illustrated an acceptable level of fit, such as Chi-square = 1618.366, p = 0.000, Chi-square/df = 1.017 < 5, GFI = 0.911 > 0.9, CFI = 0.941 > 0.9, TLI = 0.938 > 0.9, NFI = 0.915 > 0.9, RMSEA = 0.041 < 0.05 (see Table 4). So, the original model was used to test the hypothesized relationships. The results of testing the research hypotheses using SEM are shown in Table 5.

The hypothesis that Teacher support will be positively related to career adaptability is rejected as P = 0.219 > 0.05 and there is no significant relationship between teacher support and the students' career adaptability. The analysis result indicated that educational program has the strongest positive relationship with students' career adaptability with an estimate of 0.417 (p = 0.000), followed by social support with an estimate of 0.396 (p = 0.000), and career self-efficacy with an estimate of 0.286 (p = 0.008). The research findings are illustrated in Figure 3.

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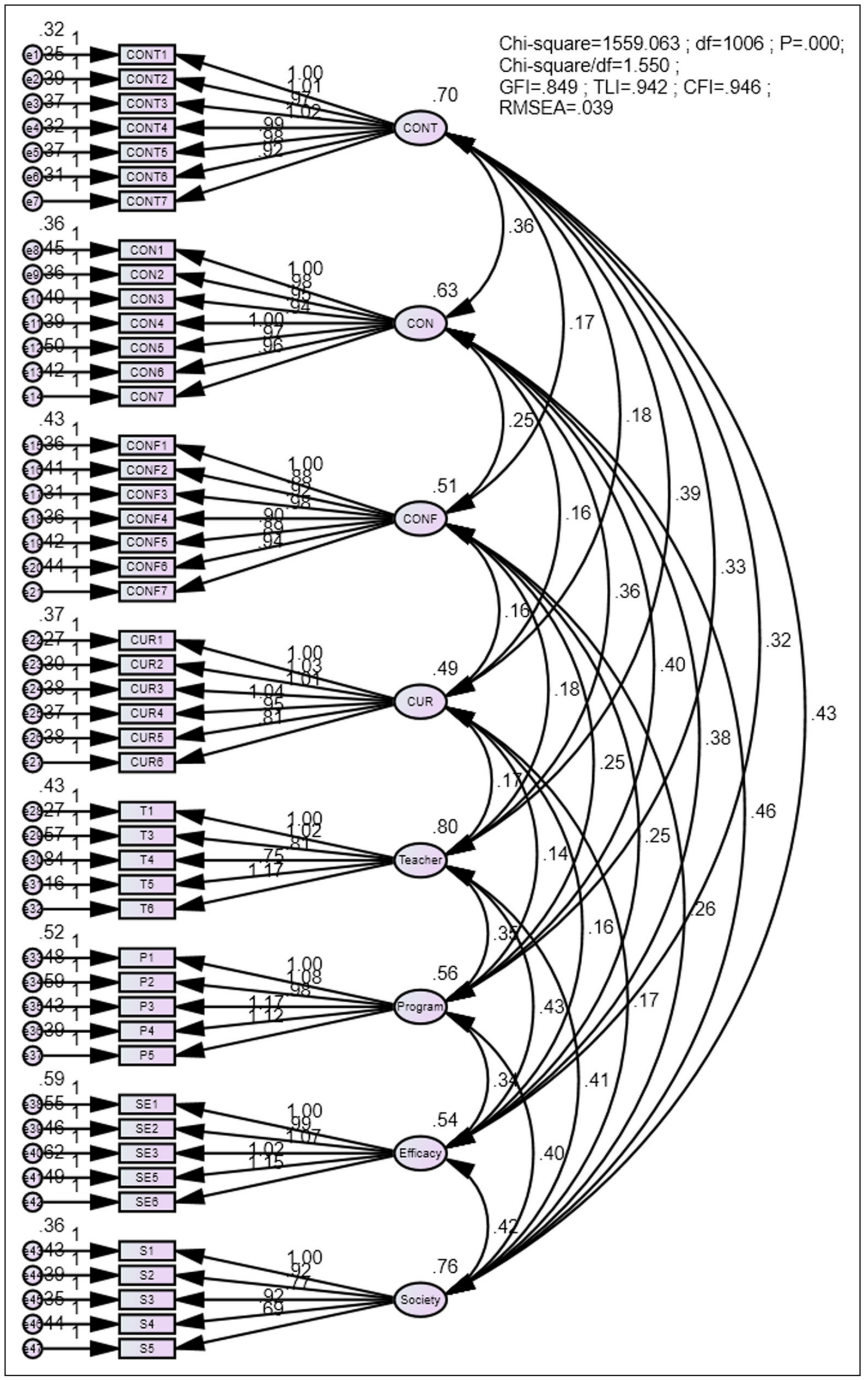

Figure 2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model.

HYPOTHESIS	INDEPENDENT VARIABLES		DEPENDENT VARIABLE	ESTIMATE	P	CONCLUSION
H1	Teacher support	→	Career adaptability	.087	.219	Rejected
H2	Educational program	→	Career adaptability	.417	.000	Accepted
H3	Social support	→	Career adaptability	.396	.000	Accepted
H4	Career self-efficacy	→	Career adaptability	.286	.008	Accepted

Table 5 The results of testing the research hypotheses.

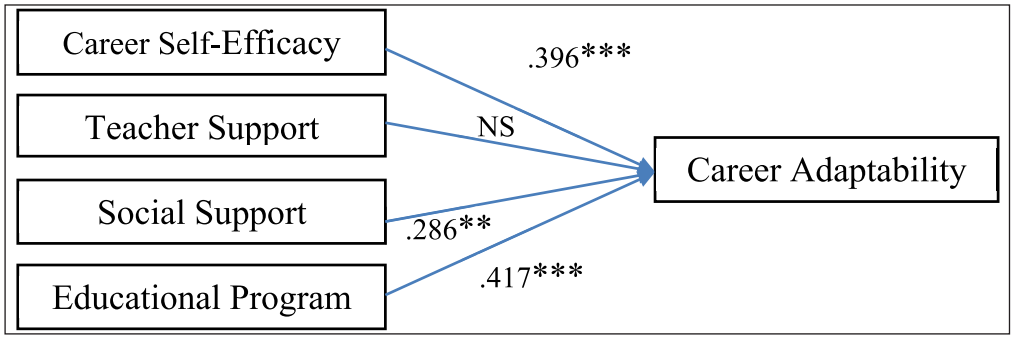

Figure 3 Summary of research findings.

Note: * Significant at .05 level.

** Significant at .01 level.

*** Significant at .001 level.

ns = No significant relationship.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study examines factors affecting the career adaptability of Business Administration students in Vietnam. The research results show that the educational program, including program content, expected learning soft skills, teaching staff, facilities and equipment, teaching, learning and extracurricular activities play the most influential role in forming and developing students' career adaptability. Following the educational program, the student's career self-efficacy, characterized by the student's ability to solve problems that arise, set and achieve goals, handle unexpected situations and think positively in all situations, strongly impacts the students' career adaptability. The third place is the impact on student's career adaptability of social support, which is composed of timely encouragement, sharing, and help from family, school, friends and the community when students encounter difficulties in study and life. The research, however, found that teacher support has no significant relationship with the students' career adaptability.

These findings have some theoretical and practical implications. From the theoretical perspective, the findings are consistent with and reinforce similar findings by Flores and O'Brien (2002), Hirschi (2009), Parker et al. (2010), Bartley and Robitschek (2000), Wang and Fu (2015), Pisarik and Whelchel (2018), applied to the contexts of Vietnam.

From a practical perspective, the study finds the importance of educational programs as well as social support, especially support from universities, families and communities in developing students' career adaptability. To do this, educational programs need to be improved in both content and educational methods in the direction of enhancing career orientation for students, increasing the amount of soft skills education, supplementing educational programs at businesses and extracurricular educational activities, enhancing interaction between students and businesses, and create conditions for students to experience the real world; increase investment in facilities, equipment and learning materials to encourage lecturers to apply active teaching methods to promote dynamic, creative and lifelong learning abilities of the students.

In addition, it is necessary to strengthen career adaptability education for students to help them improve their autonomy, proactively seek job opportunities, be confident and explore the world around them. For students themselves, developing career self-efficacy plays an important role in forming and developing career adaptability. Students need to learn how to pursue goals persistently, have the skills to handle difficult situations with their best efforts, and always be optimistic and think positively in study and life situations.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Luu Thi Binh Ngoc wrote and presented the first version of the paper at a student conference, organised by the Faculty of Business Administration, Vietnam Women's Academy during the third year of her undergraduate studies under the supervision of Associate Professor Dr. Lai Xuan Thuy. Together they edited this paper up to its final stage.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS

Luu Thi Binh Ngoc orcid.org/0009-0007-7092-5622
Vietnam Women's Academy, VN
Lai Xuan Thuy orcid.org/0009-0005-4939-0518
Vietnam Women's Academy, VN

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