






## IMPACTS OF CAREER ADAPTABILITY, LIFE MEANING, CAREER SATISFACTION, AND WORK VOLITION ON LEVEL OF LIFE SATISFACTION AND JOB PERFORMANCE

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### ABSTRACT

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#### Keywords

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Career adaptability has been considered as a critical and pivotal factor in catalyzing desirable positive outcomes for employees in terms of life satisfaction and work performance. This paper aims to investigate the mechanism by which state employees' ability to adapt in their careers can increase in levels of well-being as well as job performance. Using data collected from 301 respondents from public organizations in Long An Province, Vietnam, this paper implements partial least squares structural equation modeling to investigate the research model. The findings show that career adaptability have positive impacts on both career satisfaction and work volition, which both affect life satisfaction. On the other hand, although adaptability helps state employees easily cope with their work and feel a sense of purpose in life, life meaning had no relationship with life satisfaction. Finally, both career adaptability and employees' positive attitudes of high levels of life satisfaction can boost performance at work. This study also makes some theoretical contributions to the research field and suggests managerial implications for state organizations.

**Contribution/Originality:** This study contributes to the literature on career adaptability and its relationship with other employee constructs. Moreover, this is one of very few studies which investigate the subject in an emerging market, such as Vietnam, providing interesting findings to offer further practical suggestions for Vietnamese public organizations.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

As the business market has been increasingly competitive, Vietnamese companies, as well as foreign firms, are driven to develop more efficient and sustainable operating systems. Consequently, the high-performance working system has become an attractive research theme for human resource management (HRM) (Do, Budhwar, & Patel, 2019; Shin & Konrad, 2017). Specifically, organizations are finding ways to improve employees' job performance and boost the firm's working systems and overall success. Despite efforts made to improve the status quo, unsatisfactory job performance among Vietnamese public workers has remained a major issue (Vu, Plimmer, Berman, & Sabharwal, 2019). This inefficiency leads to undesirable civil service and has costly impacts for organizations.

Being a determinant of organizational outcome, employee job performance is defined as an individual's ability to successfully implement tasks by utilizing resources available at work (Jamal, 2007; Johari, Tan, & Zukarnain, 2018), and has been found to be affected by both internal and external factors. Numerous studies have investigated how firms can externally increase workers' performance by providing sufficient and high-quality equipment, applying suitable HRM practices or leadership styles, and offering promotions and higher salaries as incentives (Aguinis, Joo, & Gottfredson, 2013). However, internal motives, which also play critical roles in determining employees' attitudes and performance, have not received as much attention.

From the perspective of the career construction theory (CCT), human development is conceptualized as being motivated by adaptation to a social setting with the aim of person–environment integration. Viewing career construction as set of attempts to incorporate a self-concept into work roles focuses on adaption to frequent changes and challenges from school to work, from job to job, and from occupation to occupation (Tokar, Savickas, & Kaut, 2020). This adaptation is driven and directed by the objective of aligning inner needs and external opportunities bringing harmony.

Based on this theory, previous studies have suggested that career adaptability, as an internal motive, is a pivotal variable in determining better working performance and proactive behaviors (Douglass & Duffy, 2015; Ohme & Zacher, 2015). Past literature also shows the positive impacts of career adaptability on both work-related variables and life outcomes (Ginevra et al., 2018). Career adaptability not only enhances employees' work engagement, career-related skills, and employment status, but it also increases levels of job satisfaction and career success (Guan et al., 2014; Rossier, Zecca, Stauffer, Maggiori, & Dauwalder, 2012; Tolentino et al., 2014). Moreover, unfavorable workplace outcomes, such as stress, career anxiety, and turnover intentions are diminished when employees possess a higher degree of career adaptability (Johnston, Luciano, Maggiori, Ruch, & Rossier, 2013; Pouyaud, Vignoli, Dosnon, & Lallemand, 2012; Zhu, Cai, Buchtel, & Guan, 2019). These results, in turn, lead to positive effects on workers' general well-being and quality of life (Hirschi, 2009; Maggiori, Johnston, Krings, Massoudi, & Rossier, 2013; Santilli, Marcionetti, Rochat, Rossier, & Nota, 2017)

Despite the importance of career adaptability, few studies have investigated the level of impact as well as mechanisms that underpin the effect of career adaptability on workers' well-being and performance in the public sector, especially in developing countries such as Vietnam. Therefore, we fill the literature gap by clarifying the correlation between career adaptability and individuals' positive outcomes in the public sector. Specifically, we developed the research model that incorporates life meaning, career satisfaction, and work volition into the relationship between career adaptability and life satisfaction. We further study how career adaptability and life satisfaction can enhance one's level of job performance in the public sector. The findings of the study offer a more comprehensive understanding about the links between career adaptability, life satisfaction, and job performance. The study will come up with insights on how one's performance can be affected by internal factors besides monetary rewards and benefits. Given the implications, managers can develop appropriate programs and incentives to enhance state employees' productivity and build an efficient workforce.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Career Construction Theory (CCT)

CCT proposes that individuals who are willing or versatile to make changes (adaptivity) are more likely to acquire adaptive resources (adaptability), which will allow them to participate in career-related activities (adapting behaviors) and gain positive results (adaption) (Guan et al., 2017; Savickas, 2013). Moreover, according to CCT, to gain subjective and objective tasks and career success, continual adaptation to the work environment is essential. Employees are under pressure to work in a variety of work groups and environments in order to meet new demands and challenges as a result of rapid technical and economic growth (Zhu et al., 2019). This eventually leads to situations wherein employees do not have permanent career options, but occupy different jobs throughout their lives (Biemann, Zacher, & Feldman,

2012). Consequently, aligning one's ability to different shifts and challenges helps individuals to cope in a dynamic working environment and attain occupational accomplishments.

## 2.2. Career Adaptability, Life Meaning, and Life Satisfaction

Career adaptability refers to an individual's ability to deal with current and expected career shifts and challenges (Ohme & Zacher, 2015; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). It generally captures an individual's competent and appropriate behavior, attitude, and skills that enable job fit (Tolentino, Garcia, Restubog, Bordia, & Tang, 2013). Four main aspects related to an individual's career adaptability include confidence, control, concern, and curiosity (Ng, Lim, Cheah, Ho, & Tee, 2020). Confidence refers to an individual's optimistic beliefs, self-efficacy, and aspirations to achieve and accomplish goals despite difficulties. Control pertains to their responsibility and conscientiousness when making decisions in careers. Concern relates to the capacity to anticipate and prepare for the future as employees develop their visions. Finally, curiosity describes a person's ability to explore opportunities that helps them to achieve career development in the future.

Career adaptability strengthens one's career path since it enables individuals to adjust to changes and handle unfamiliar, unpredicted, and complicated problems (Ginevra et al., 2018; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Furthermore, as career adaptability gives confidence and control over an individual's capability, it promotes overcoming of future occupational fears (Rossier, 2015). People have consequently reported decreased levels of stress and fear when dealing with failures in their academic or professional careers. Besides, they are motivated to be engaged in future roles and more valiant in future objectives (Pouyaud et al., 2012).

Life meaning is considered as the extent to which people can perceive or fully understand and appreciate their personal life purposes (Steger, Oishi, & Kashdan, 2009; Yuen & Yau, 2015). It is considered a significant outcome to obtain, especially for young workers (Buzzetta, Lenz, Hayden, & Osborn, 2020). This idea was previously demonstrated in a study by Berg, Grant, & Johnson (2010), which described the tendency of young employees to decide on career and life matters, sharpen their capabilities, and set targets that help them to reach more meaningful working positions in the future.

Previous studies have suggested a positive correlation between one's ability to adapt to careers and life meaning. As stated earlier, career adaptability not only boosts work-related performance and competency, but it also decreases undesired occupational factors, such as stress and fear. As work is a major domain that greatly contributes to an individual's sense of life (Blustein, 2006), the positive effect of career adaptability on work-related outcomes will ultimately lead to higher life satisfaction. Previous empirical studies also support this notion (Guan et al., 2014; Johnston et al., 2013; Tolentino et al., 2013). For instance, the positive relationship between career adaptability and life meaning was affirmed by Yuen & Yau (2015). Their findings explained that people tend to feel an increase in life's meaningfulness as they capitalize on their own strengths when dealing with vocational tasks. Similarly, a study conducted by Praskova, Hood, & Creed (2014) explored a strong positive correlation between career adaptability and life meaning over a period of time. In line with the previous research, we propose the following hypothesis:

*H1. Career adaptability has a positive relationship with life meaning.*

Besides meaning, quality of life is another crucial objective for people to achieve. It conceptually relates to values, such as happiness and satisfaction, that emerge from fundamental aspects of life, such as health, family, and work (Santilli, Grossen, & Nota, 2020). Life satisfaction is the subjective component that generally describes this life quality. It is defined as the cognitive dimension of individual well-being that arises when individuals evaluate their lives based on particular personal criteria (Ginevra et al., 2018; Moons, Budts, & De Geest, 2006). A person's sense of satisfaction in life can help to promote better social relationships, increase the ability to attain higher academic achievements, and maintain emotional and social health (Lewis, Huebner, Malone, & Valois, 2011; Suldo, Thalji, & Ferron, 2011; Sun & Shek, 2013). A study by Suldo & Huebner (2004) also showed a negative correlation between life satisfaction and the

likelihood of developing later externalizing behaviors in the face of stressful life events. This means that people who feel more satisfied with their lives tend to have less intense reactions when dealing with adverse life events.

Various studies have identified life meaning as a precedent variable of life satisfaction (Duffy, Diemer, & Jadidian, 2012; Duffy, Allan, Autin, & Bott, 2013; Steger, Oishi, & Kesebir, 2011). As people find their true purposes and values in life, they will generally experience higher life satisfaction. Therefore, in line with previous studies, we propose the following hypothesis:

*H2. Life meaning has a positive relationship with life satisfaction.*

### *2.3. Career Adaptability, Career Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction*

Career satisfaction refers to accomplished feelings that arise internally as individuals reach goals and objectives related to their careers, such as titles and income, as well as subjective accomplishments, including perceptions and meanings of career success (Vrontis, Chaarani, Nemar, & Yamak, 2019). It is a broader indicator in comparison to job satisfaction as it captures long-term perception of work experiences (Hagmaier, Abele, & Goebel, 2018). In the context of frequent job transitions among employees, career satisfaction was found to shape an individual's long-term career commitment and increased employees' effort at work (Ahmed, 2017). It was further found to have negative correlation with occupational stress while enhancing in-role and extra-role performance (Nisar & Rasheed, 2020).

Studies have found that career satisfaction occurs in response to individuals' capability to adapt in their careers (Karatepe & Olugbade, 2017). The high level of workers' career adaptability enables them to thrive in challenging environments and positively contributes to occupational satisfaction (Buyukgoze-Kavas, Duffy, & Douglass, 2015; Takawira, 2020; Zacher, 2014). Employees with high scores for career adaptability have more flexibility and capability to cope with changes and effectively obtain more achievements and career goals. With these accomplishments, they will experience higher levels of satisfaction compared to others who are less adaptable (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). In addition, career adaptability enhances positive working attitudes in the workplace. As mentioned earlier, it can help employees overcome occupational stress and fears, which will elicit more optimistic and comfortable feelings, generating greater career satisfaction (Tolentino et al., 2013). Drawing from the discussion above, we propose the following hypothesis:

*H3. Career adaptability has a positive relationship with career satisfaction.*

Career satisfaction can also catalyze a sense of life satisfaction. Work, besides other factors such as family, community, and health, is considered an essential part in people's lives (Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976). Consequently, the satisfaction experienced from this essential aspect will create an increase in life satisfaction. The positive correlation between one's occupational contentment and general well-being was consistently reported as significant with various samples including professional women (Burke, Divinagracia, & Mamo, 1999), university alumni (Todd, Harris, Harris, & Wheeler, 2009), U.S. professionals (Boudreau, Boswell, & Judge, 2001), full-time employed MBA students (Murphy & Kram, 2010), and retired Israeli army veterans in a second career (Vigoda-Gadot, Baruch, & Grimland, 2010). In accordance with earlier research, we propose the following hypothesis:

*H4. Career satisfaction has a positive relationship with life satisfaction.*

### *2.4. Career Adaptability, Work Volition, and Life Satisfaction*

Work volition is the perceived capability to freely make occupational choices in the future regardless of difficulties or constraints (Aamir, Hamid, Haider, & Akhtar, 2016; Duffy, Diemer, Perry, Laurenzi, & Torrey, 2012). It has been found to have positive links with career decision self-efficacy and social cognitive constructs (such as domain self-efficacy, outcome expectations, interests, and goals).

Although there has been little investigation into the impact of career adaptability on work volition, previous researchers have noticed its positive effect on similar factors, including sense of control, career decision self-efficacy, and job search self-efficacy (Douglass & Duffy, 2015; Duffy, 2010; Guan et al., 2013). Furthermore, as being adaptable

at work helps employees to become better prepared to address vocational fears and overcome future obstacles, the number of vocational difficulties may be reduced and they will feel a greater sense of control regarding decisions at work. Given that satisfaction in the workplace contributes greatly to individuals' lives (Blustein, 2006), being free to make career decisions can enhance employees' life satisfaction. The study by Guan et al. (2013) also confirmed the positive effect of high occupational control on the sense of life satisfaction as they found a moderate positive relationship between work volition and life satisfaction. Based on the above discussion, we hypothesize that:

H5. Career adaptability has a positive relationship with work volition.

H6. Work volition has a positive relationship with life satisfaction.

2.5. Career Adaptability, Life Satisfaction, and Job Performance

According to Tolentino et al. (2014), career adaptability enhances employees' competency and flexibility, and therefore increases their probability of succeeding in their jobs by overcoming work-related demands despite changes and difficulties in the working environment. Another study also provided more evidence to support a positive relationship between career adaptability and self-assessed career performance (Zacher, 2014). Therefore, we expect that a higher level of job performance will result from an individual's ability to adapt.

We further expand the existing literature by proposing a positive connection between life satisfaction and employees' performance. Workers' satisfaction in life and positive attitudes can have great impacts on their interpersonal interactions and work effectiveness (Erdogan, Bauer, Truxillo, & Mansfield, 2012; Hamad & Al-Kwafi, 2015; Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005). Moreover, as individuals become happier, they tend to be more creative, open-minded, successful in other life domains, and be more willing to take risks and opportunities. Therefore, employees who scored high in life satisfaction are expected to be effective in their work, while those who are less satisfied may underperform at work (Talukder, Vickers, & Khan, 2018). From the discussion above, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H7. Life satisfaction has a positive relationship with job performance.

H8. Career adaptability has a positive relationship with job performance.

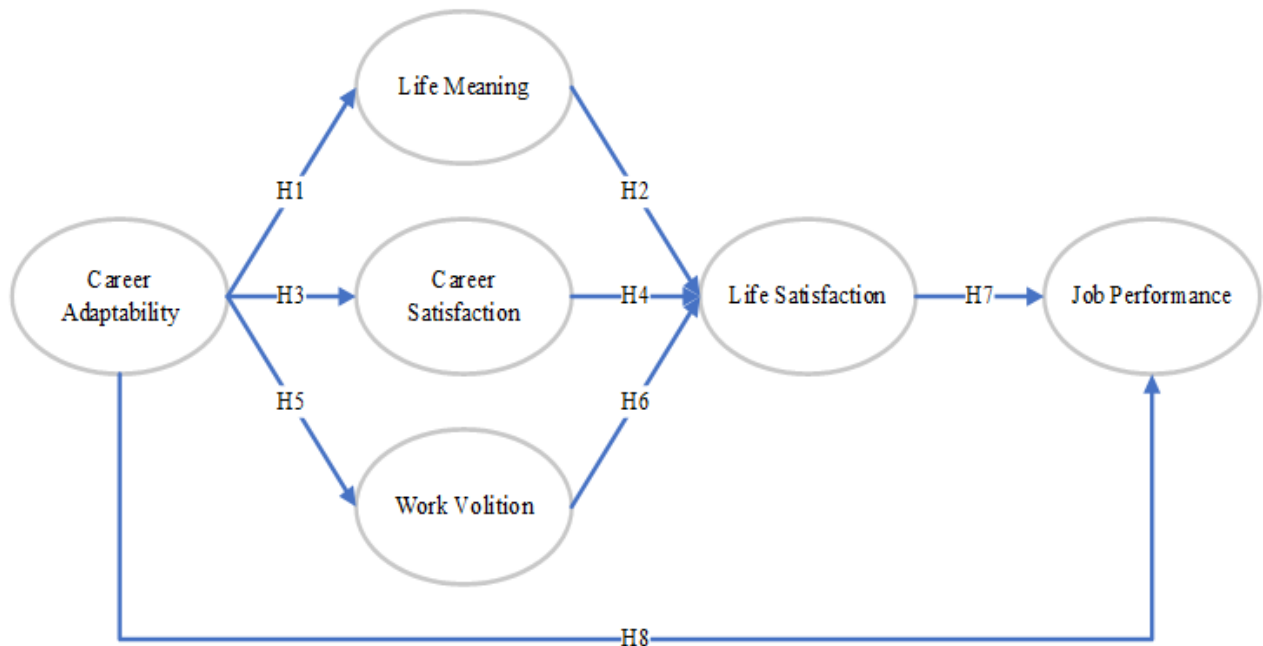


Figure 1. Description of the research model and hypothesis development.

Figure 1 presents the research model based on eight proposed hypotheses.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Data Collection

The population of this study included state employees working at 19 government departments belonging to the People's Committee of Long An Province, Vietnam. We used a non-probability convenient sampling approach to conduct data collection. We worked with managers and lecturers at the Provincial Political School, Long An, Vietnam to get approval to distribute the questionnaire to their students. It is worth noting that the students are state employees. Before being promoted to higher positions in the government departments, the students were carefully selected to take intermediate political courses this school.

The survey was conducted over the course of two months (April 2020 to May 2020). We sent a total of 450 questionnaires to the students (target respondents) in 12 different classes at the Provincial Political School. Ultimately, we received a total of 301 valid observations, which is equivalent to a 66.9% response rate.

The questionnaire included questions on career adaptability, life meaning, career satisfaction, work volition, life satisfaction, and job performance. Demographic information, namely age, gender, job position, and educational attainment, was also collected for the purpose of controlling the bias of collection.

From the data collected, 50.8% of respondents were female, 48.8% were between the ages of 25 and 35, 83.4% of respondents had earned a bachelor's degree, and 58.8% held the occupation of government official. Respondents' demographic information is illustrated in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics.

	Respondents	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	148	49.2
Female	153	50.8
<b>Age</b>		
< 25	67	22.3
25–35	147	48.8
35–45	87	28.9
<b>Education level</b>		
High school degree	11	3.7
Bachelor's degree	251	83.4
Postgraduate degree	39	12.9
<b>Occupation</b>		
Government official	177	58.8
Teacher/Researcher	3	1
Other	121	40.2

#### 3.2. Measures

This study adopted all measurement items from prior studies. First, based on the assessment by Savickas & Porfeli (2012), we selected 16 items to measure career adaptability. After reviewing them, we sought advice from government officials in order to fit the Vietnamese context. Some of unsuitable items as well as reversed statements were eliminated to improve comprehensibility. Therefore, we selected and modified 11 items to measure career adaptability, for instance: thinking about what my future will be like (CA1); realizing that today's choices shape my future (CA2); planning how to achieve my goal (CA3); and solving problems (CA11).

Second, we adopted four items from Steger, Frazier, Oishi, & Kaler (2006) to measure life satisfaction, including "I understand my life's meaning" (LM1); "My life has a clear sense of purpose" (LM2); "I have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful" (LM3); and "I have discovered a satisfying life purpose" (LM4).

Third, we adopted three items from Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley (1990) to reflect the career satisfaction variable. They included "I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career" (CS1); "I am



satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income" (CS2); and "I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills" (CS3).

Fourth, we adopted seven items from Duffy et al. (2012) to measure the work volition variable. They included items such as "I will be able to change jobs if I want to" (WV1); "Discrimination will not affect my ability to choose a job" (WV2); "Once I enter the work world, I will easily find a new job if I want to" (WV3); and "I will be able to do the kind of work I want to, despite external barriers" (WV7).

Fifth, we adopted four items from Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin (1985) to measure the life satisfaction variable. They included "The conditions of my life are excellent" (LS1); "I am satisfied with my life" (LS2); "So far I have gotten the important things I want in life" (LS3); and "If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing" (LS4).

Finally, items for the job performance variable were adopted from Rupp & Cropanzano (2002). They included "Adequately completes assigned duties" (JP1); "Fulfills responsibilities specified in job description" (JP2); "Performs tasks that are expected of him/her" (JP3); "Meets formal performance requirements of the job" (JP4); "Engages in activities that will directly affect his/her performance evaluation" (JP5); and "Neglects aspects of the job he/she is obligated to perform" (JP6).

All the items were assessed on a five-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). The questionnaire was translated into and conducted in Vietnamese, enabling respondents to fully understand and easily complete it. To ensure the precise translation and meanings of the questions, it was then translated back into English and compared to the original English version.

### 3.3. Data Analyzing Approaches

The hypotheses were examined using a structural equation modeling (SEM). SEM is a statistical approach for testing cause-effect relationships that reflect multiple equations. In addition, the partial least squares SEM (PLS-SEM) approach is highly suitable for examining a complex model with many simultaneous relationships. It is used in development in business research, marketing, economic management, and many other social sciences. This study mainly focuses on identifying the impact of career adaptability, life meaning, career satisfaction, and work volition on life satisfaction and job performance. Therefore, the PLS-SEM method is appropriate for testing our research hypotheses (Gefen, Straub, & Boudreau, 2000; Peng & Lai, 2012). Moreover, considering the absence of distributional assumptions in some social science studies, the use of PLS-SEM is clearly an advantage (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019).

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Testing for Convergent and Discriminant Validity

First, we evaluated the Cronbach's alpha of each construct. The results were all higher than 0.7, demonstrating the constructs' reliability. Second, the factors' composite reliability was also above 0.7, indicating high internal consistency (Gefen et al., 2000; Hair, Anderson, Babin, & Black, 2010; Hair, Babin, & Anderson, 2014).

To achieve convergent validity, which tests whether the latent factors are well presented by their observed variables, the average variance extracted (AVE) must be higher than 0.5. As shown in Table 3, all indicators of AVE were above this threshold, ensuring convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2010) and showing that each construct explained 50% or more of the variance of the items that made up the construct. Furthermore, most variables had outer loadings higher than 0.7, except for CA6, CA7, CA10, and WV1, satisfying the theoretical requirement of Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt (2012) and reinforcing the scale's reliability. Table 2 summarizes the key indicators of each remaining item and each latent variable in the research model.

For discriminant validity, the statistical difference between the two constructs was tested by examining the cross-loadings. The outer loadings of all items within a construct should be higher than their cross-loadings with

another construct. For this criterion, all the cross-loading values satisfy the requirement (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013). Next, according to the Fornell–Larcker criterion, the square root of the AVE of a factor must be higher than that factor’s highest correlation coefficient with other factors, or the AVE must be higher than the square of the highest coefficient correlation (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2010). As demonstrated in Table 3, all indicators satisfy this criterion.

Subsequently, discriminant validity was tested using Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratios, which describe the mean value of all item correlations across constructs relative to the mean of the average correlations for items measuring the same construct. It has been suggested that HTMT values should be compared to a threshold of 0.85 (Clark & Watson, 1995; Kline, 1998). If the HTMT value is higher than this threshold, it can be concluded that the model lacks discriminant validity. Since all indicators are below 0.85, the discriminant validity of this model is confirmed (see Table 4).

Table 2. Summary of key indicators.

Latent variables	Items	Mean	SD	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Rho_A	Composite reliability	AVE
	Threshold				≥ 0.6	≥ 0.7	≥ 0.7	≥ 0.5
Career Adaptability (CA)	CA1	4.472	0.6708	0.748	0.890	0.892	0.912	0.564
	CA2	4.458	0.7365	0.742				
	CA3	4.528	0.6904	0.787				
	CA4	4.595	0.6597	0.765				
	CA5	4.691	0.5952	0.728				
	CA8	4.478	0.6301	0.749				
	CA9	4.641	0.5694	0.772				
Life Meaning (LM)	LM1	4.422	0.6517	0.844	0.891	0.894	0.925	0.754
	LM2	4.495	0.6664	0.859				
	LM3	4.495	0.6813	0.886				
	LM4	4.346	0.7485	0.884				
Career Satisfaction (CS)	CS1	4.163	0.8466	0.897	0.879	0.881	0.925	0.804
	CS2	3.967	0.9123	0.898				
	CS3	4.126	0.8391	0.895				
Work Volition (WV)	WV2	4.000	0.9899	0.755	0.863	0.870	0.897	0.593
	WV3	3.701	1.1620	0.764				
	WV4	3.910	0.9943	0.747				
	WV5	4.113	0.8168	0.774				
	WV6	3.963	0.9532	0.821				
	WV7	3.917	0.9814	0.758				
	Life Satisfaction (LS)	LS1	4.043	0.8764				
LS2		4.010	0.9949	0.888				
LS3		3.821	1.0038	0.877				
LS4		3.674	1.2057	0.785				
Job Performance (JP)	JP1	4.505	0.5393	0.858	0.910	0.914	0.930	0.690
	JP2	4.478	0.5571	0.870				
	JP3	4.455	0.5792	0.834				
	JP4	4.458	0.5737	0.861				
	JP5	4.542	0.5560	0.826				
	JP6	4.638	0.5643	0.729				

Notes: CA6, CA7, CA10, and WV1 were eliminated because of outer loading values less than 0.7.

Table 3. Fornell–Larcker criterion.

	Career adaptability	Career satisfaction	Job performance	Life meaning	Life satisfaction	Work volition
Career adaptability	<b>0.751</b>					
Career satisfaction	0.533	<b>0.897</b>				
Job performance	0.621	0.427	<b>0.831</b>			
Life meaning	0.686	0.570	0.450	<b>0.869</b>		
Life satisfaction	0.372	0.630	0.427	0.426	<b>0.852</b>	
Work volition	0.521	0.610	0.495	0.532	0.572	<b>0.770</b>

Note: Square root of AVE in bold on diagonal.



Table 4. Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) ratio.

	Career adaptability	Career satisfaction	Job performance	Life meaning	Life satisfaction	Work volition
Career adaptability						
Career satisfaction	0.595					
Job performance	0.698	0.477				
Life meaning	0.763	0.644	0.503			
Life satisfaction	0.416	0.717	0.477	0.478		
Work volition	0.580	0.692	0.553	0.601	0.654	

4.2. Testing Results

Table 5 and Figure 2 illustrate the results of the hypothesis testing. Seven hypotheses were accepted, as their p-values were less than 0.01, and only one was rejected with a p-value over 0.10. Career adaptability can lead to greater life satisfaction through the mediating effect of career satisfaction and work volition. However, although higher career adaptability leads state employees to perceive a higher level of life meaning, life satisfaction is not necessarily increased due to greater life meaning. Furthermore, both life satisfaction and career adaptability were shown to have a strong positive impact on job performance of state employees.

Table 5. PLS-SEM path coefficients.

Hypotheses	Estimates	P-Values	Results
H1: Career adaptability → Life meaning	0.684	0.000	Accepted
H2: Life meaning → Life satisfaction	0.018	0.747	Rejected
H3: Career adaptability → Career satisfaction	0.531	0.000	Accepted
H4: Career satisfaction → Life satisfaction	0.441	0.000	Accepted
H5: Career adaptability → Work volition	0.521	0.000	Accepted
H6: Work volition → Life satisfaction	0.294	0.000	Accepted
H7: Life satisfaction → Job performance	0.221	0.000	Accepted
H8: Career adaptability → Job performance	0.550	0.000	Accepted

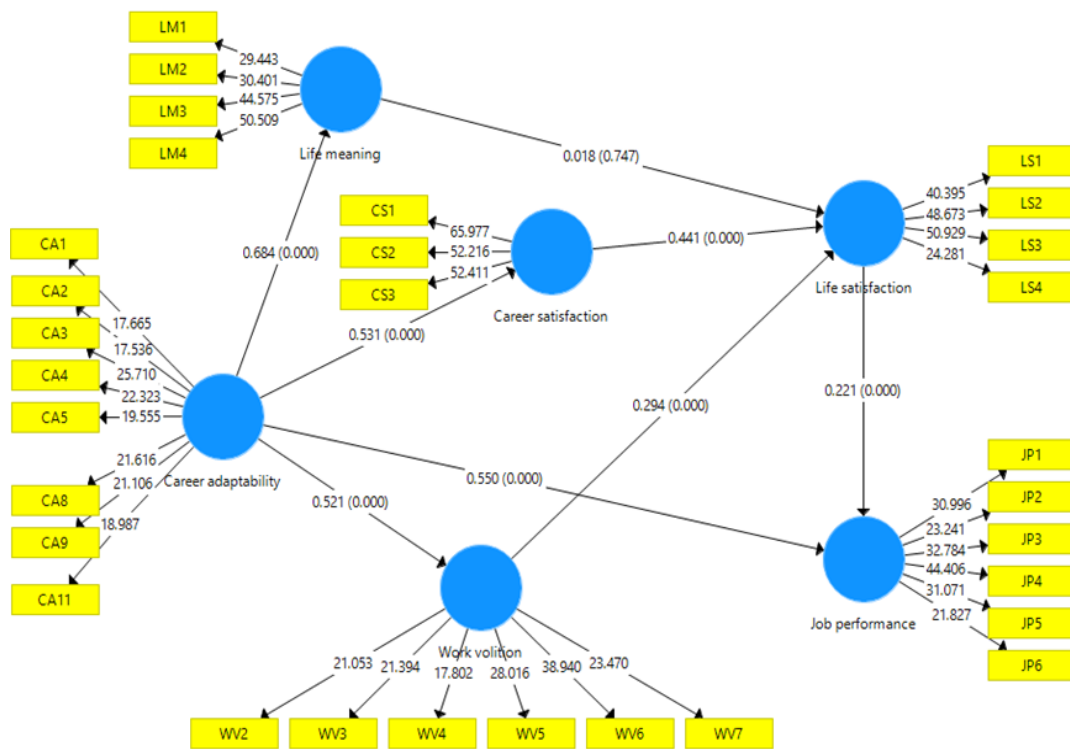


Figure 2. Results of the structural equation modeling.

## 5. DISCUSSION

Our results provide a better understanding regarding the correlation between career adaptability with additional variables including life meaning, career satisfaction, and work volition based on CCT. In line with previous studies (Buyukgoze-Kavas et al., 2015; Tolentino et al., 2013; Zacher, 2014), we found that enhancing state employees' ability to adapt in their careers made them more likely to feel satisfied with their careers and, later, to experience increased life satisfaction. This is understandable, as when state employees have the ability to fit into different working environments and successfully attain their goals and complete tasks, they will be rewarded with benefits and recognition, which are the major components of determining how satisfied people are with their jobs. Ultimately, given that work plays an important role in life (Campbell et al., 1976), this will result in higher life satisfaction.

Our second finding, the positive correlations among career adaptability, work volition and life satisfaction, is also consistent with earlier studies (Duffy et al., 2013; Duffy, Douglass, & Autin, 2015). State employees who are free and unconstrained in making occupational choices as a result of having the ability to adjust to different jobs will experience greater control over what they are doing, which leads to higher satisfaction in life. It should be noted that the work volition shared similarities in terms of feelings of control regarding career adaptability. Therefore, there is a robust connection between career adaptability and work volition, as they both promote state employees' sense of well-being.

However, this study suggests that life satisfaction cannot be improved by having greater life meaning. Although career adaptability has been shown to improve life meaning among employees (Hartung & Taber, 2008; Praskova et al., 2014), increased meaning does not necessarily lead to greater satisfaction, contrary to the findings of Duffy et al. (2012) and Steger et al. (2011). It should be emphasized that the concepts of meaning and satisfaction in life are very different. Meaning refers to an individual's purpose and goals, while satisfaction describes a person's happiness as their personal criteria are met. According to a study conducted by Baumeister, Vohs, Aaker, & Garbinsky (2013), helping people in need and viewing oneself as wise and creative in work are highly correlated with enhanced life meaning but not life satisfaction. Furthermore, a lack of monetary benefits significantly reduces life satisfaction but not meaning. In other words, it is implied that satisfaction in life is more closely linked to having one's needs satisfied and feeling good, whereas meaning is more related to developing a personal identity and expressing oneself. Therefore, it is expected that state employees may find high levels of life meaning as their careers involve helping other people and gaining recognition for holding prestigious positions and working for the government, but they may have not received sufficient monetary values and benefits corresponding to the work and effort that they have put into their careers. Another unconsidered factor that leads to insignificant correlations between life meaning and life satisfaction is that life satisfaction is affected not only by occupation but also other fundamental aspects of life, such as health and family (Schallock et al., 2002). One person may find that their life is meaningful because of the work that they perform, but their lack of well-being in terms of physical or mental health or relationships can diminish this meaning and lead to dissatisfaction in life.

Finally, the results of this study are consistent with those of prior studies, as both career adaptability and higher life satisfaction positively influence job performance (Buyukgoze-Kavas et al., 2015; Shaw & Gupta, 2001; Zacher, 2014). It is evident that being adaptable at work makes employees more successful in coping with competing work demands and therefore achieving better performance. Additionally, experiencing a greater sense of well-being means that employees have a more positive attitude towards interpersonal interactions, more creativity, and greater effectiveness in their workplace (Erdogan et al., 2012; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

### 5.1. Theoretical Implications

This research makes a theoretical contribution to the framework of an individual's career development process by adding life meaning, career satisfaction, work volition, and life satisfaction as new variables to clarify the

mechanism of impact between career adaptability and job performance. Extended on the base of CCT (Zhu et al., 2019), better performance is reached when individuals demonstrate continuous adaptation to work their environment, and therefore remain efficient under high pressure of extensive challenges and new demands. Since employees' ability to adapt to different shifts was mostly tested regarding the relationships with other work-related outcomes in previous research (Buyukgoze-Kavas et al., 2015), the level of impact of career adaptability on internal motives and employees' general well-being has not yet been fully discovered. This study shows how one's ability to adapt in his/her career can activate internal well-being and how these internal motives can ultimately affect job performance. The findings of how life satisfaction is developed indirectly through career adaptability and the positive effect of life satisfaction on job performance have broadened the scope of career adaptability and promoted further research on its correlation with other well-being indicators.

### 5.2. Practical Implications

The findings also suggest several managerial implications for fostering state employees' job performance as follows:

First, the finding provided strong evidence that career adaptability can significantly affect employees' work performance as well as satisfaction in life by creating greater career satisfaction and work volition. Therefore, managers are advised to invest in improving state employees' career adaptability through interventions, training programs, or education on subjects such as self-control skills, new work-related knowledge, and confidence at work. Furthermore, motivating employees to show high levels of control, curiosity, concern, and confidence, which are the four components of career adaptability, is also desirable.

Second, managers can create a stronger sense of well-being among state employees by enhancing their satisfaction with their careers and work volition. Providing monetary rewards—such as promotions, bonuses, and higher salaries—or other conveniences at work—such as shift schedules or improving working conditions and facilities—can increase employees' satisfaction in the public sector. Moreover, managers should allow state employees autonomy and opportunities to determine their own career development to improve their work volition.

Finally, based on the correlation found between life meaning and life satisfaction, it is suggested that managers not only focus on work itself but also consider other facets of employees' lives, such as their relationships with family and coworkers and their physical and mental health. This can be achieved by providing medical welfare benefits, more annual leave, and development programs on work-life balance and dealing with other daily life issues.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

In summary, this paper discovered a correlation between career adaptability, life meaning, career satisfaction, work volition, life satisfaction, and job performance of state employees in Long An Province, Vietnam. Career adaptability has been found to positively enhance career satisfaction and work volition, which later leads to greater life satisfaction and job performance. The findings imply that, by instating training and programs that build employees' curiosity, concern, control, and confidence, managers can trigger satisfaction in life among employees and improve their performance. Providing state employees with additional benefits, better working environments and facilities, and autonomy in managing their own careers will also lead to similar results. However, it is also suggested that management in the public sector should not overlook other aspects—such as employees' relationships and health—to secure their life satisfaction, which closely correlates to their performance.

### 6.1. Limitations and Future Research Directions

Since our research was conducted in Long An province of Vietnam, the study primarily helps to understand the variables in a Vietnamese context. Therefore, further national and international studies in other areas should be

carried out to validate our findings and obtain more objective perspectives. Future work can also use different samples besides employees working in the public sector to enhance the generalizability of the effect of career adaptability on well-being and performance. Lastly, future studies can consider other variables that indicate employees' internal factors when investigating the correlation between career adaptability, life satisfaction, and job performance, such as resilience or optimism.

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