The Dynamic Process of Individual Career Adaptation: An Adaptive Career Construction Model

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Abstract

The adaptive career construction model emphasizes that individuals achieve career success through a dynamic four-stage process consisting of adaptive readiness, adaptability resources, adaptable responses, and adaptation results. This review examines 101 empirical studies utilizing this model since 2012, finding that research primarily exhibits two orientations. One orientation involves testing the complete four-stage process mechanism of the model, with studies concentrated on the exploration and establishment stages of individual career development, aiming to investigate the model' s applicability within key developmental tasks and role transition contexts. The other orientation involves testing partial stage mechanisms of the model, such as focusing on "readiness-resources-responses" or "resources-responses-results," to refine the specific mechanisms of individual adaptation. Future research should further clarify the theoretical attribution of variables within the four stages of the model and elucidate the boundaries between internal individual factors and external contextual factors. Additionally, direct empirical evidence for the growth, maintenance, and decline stages of careers should be supplemented, and variable selection and definition should be adjusted according to the core tasks of different career development stages to compare adaptation patterns across various career phases. Furthermore, future research needs to strengthen the examination of feedback mechanisms and cyclical paths, thereby enhancing the explanatory power and application value of the model.

Full Text

Preamble

The Dynamic Process of Individual Vocational Adaptation: An Adaptive Career Construction Model*

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摘要

The adaptive career construction model emphasizes that individuals achieve career adaptation through a four-stage process: adaptive readiness, adaptive resources, adaptive responses, and adaptive results.

1.1 The Four-Stage Process of Career Construction

The model posits that career development is not a static state but a dynamic process of continuous adjustment. First, **adaptive readiness** refers to an individual' s psychological willingness or flexibility to prepare for upcoming transitions or challenges. This serves as the foundational motivation for the entire adaptation process.

Second, **adaptive resources** (often referred to as career adapt-abilities) represent the psychological capital and capacities—such as concern, control, curiosity, and confidence—that individuals utilize to manage career changes. These resources act as mediators that translate readiness into concrete actions.

Third, **adaptive responses** involve the actual behaviors and psychological adjustments individuals make when facing career transitions or work-related tasks. This includes career exploration, decision-making, and proactive skill development.

Finally, **adaptive results** are the outcomes of this process, which can be measured through indicators such as career satisfaction, work engagement, and successful professional integration. By navigating these four stages, individuals can maintain person-environment fit in an ever-changing labor market.

···achieve career success through a dynamic process across different stages. This review examines 101 empirical studies published since 2012 that utilize this model, revealing that research primarily follows two distinct orientations. The first category involves testing the complete four-stage process mechanism of the model. These studies focus on the exploration and establishment stages of individual career development, aiming to examine the model' s applicability within the contexts of key developmental tasks and role transitions. The second category focuses on specific stages of the model' s process···

Future research should focus on more nuanced testing of specific mechanisms, such as focusing on the "Preparation-Resource-Response"or "Resource-Response-Outcome"pathways, to further refine the specific mechanisms of individual adaptation. It is essential for future studies to more clearly define the theoretical categorization of variables within the four stages of the model, thereby clarifying the boundaries between internal individual factors and external contextual factors.

Furthermore, empirical evidence directly testing the stages of career growth, maintenance, and decline should be supplemented. Variable selection and definition should be adjusted according to the core tasks of different career development stages to facilitate a comparison of adaptation patterns across the lifespan. Finally, future research needs to strengthen the examination of feedback mechanisms and cyclical paths to enhance the explanatory power and practical application value of the model.

关键词

The Adaptive Career Construction Model: Career Adaptability, Vocational Adaptation, and Career Development Stages

Introduction

The Adaptive Career Construction Model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals navigate their professional lives in an increasingly volatile and complex labor market. Grounded in Career Construction Theory, this model emphasizes that career development is not a linear progression through predefined stages, but rather a proactive process of self-regulation and meaning-making. By integrating the concepts of career adaptability and vocational adaptation, the model offers a dynamic lens through which to view how individuals respond to transitions and challenges across various career development stages.

Career Adaptability as a Psychosocial Resource

At the core of the model is career adaptability, defined as a psychosocial construct that denotes an individual' s resources for coping with current and anticipated occupational transitions, developmental tasks, and work traumas. Career adaptability is conceptualized through four critical dimensions, often referred to as the "4Cs" :

1. **Concern:** The extent to which an individual looks ahead to their future and prepares for what might come next.
2. **Control:** The degree to which individuals feel responsible for shaping their own professional future and believe they have the agency to make career-related decisions.
3. **Curiosity:** The inclination to explore various career possibilities, work environments, and self-capacities.
4. **Confidence:** The self-efficacy required to solve problems and overcome obstacles encountered while pursuing career goals.

These resources enable individuals to manage the "boundaryless" nature of modern careers, where traditional organizational ladders have been replaced by frequent shifts between roles and industries.

The Process of Vocational Adaptation

Vocational adaptation represents the outcome of applying career adaptability resources to specific environmental demands. While career adaptability refers to the *capacity* to change, vocational adaptation refers to the *actual implementation* of that change and the resulting fit between the person and their environment.

The adaptive career construction model posits a sequential relationship: adaptive readiness (personality traits like openness) leads to career adaptability (resources), which in turn drives adapting behaviors (such as career exploration or planning), ultimately resulting in vocational adaptation. Indicators of successful vocational adaptation include job satisfaction, organizational commitment, work performance, and a sense of professional well-being. This process highlights that adaptation is an ongoing cycle of alignment and realignment throughout the lifespan.

Career Development Stages in a Modern Context

Traditional models of career development stages, such as those proposed by Super, have been reimagined within the adaptive career construction framework

1 引言

The Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) serves as a critical theoretical framework within the study of career adaptability. The CCMA conceptualizes vocational adaptation as a dynamic process comprising four core components. It posits that an individual' s vocational adaptation is not a one-time event but rather a continuous accumulation driven by a series of process mechanisms, ultimately leading to effective career construction [**?**, **?**].

This model is derived from Super' s career development theory (Super & Knasel, 1981; Savickas, 2005; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012), with its core concept—career adaptability—tracing its origins to the evolution of the concept of vocational maturity. The Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) further integrates career adaptability into a dynamic process framework. This framework is used to explain how individuals mobilize resources, take action, and ultimately achieve adaptive outcomes across various stages of career tasks (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Savickas, 2013; Savickas et al., 2018; Guan & Li, 2015). Specifically, the dynamic process of career adaptation consists of four sequential stages: adaptivity (adaptive readiness), adaptability resources (career adaptability), adapting responses (adaptive behaviors), and adaptation results (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Savickas, 2013; Savickas et al., 2018).

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Adaptive readiness refers to an individual' s willingness and psychological preparedness to face vocational tasks, role transitions, or uncertainties, addressing

the question of whether one is "willing to make a change." In contrast, adaptive resources represent the capabilities and assets an individual possesses to cope with environmental shifts—typically centered on career adaptability—addressing whether one "has the ability to change" [**?**, **?**]. Once adaptive readiness and resources are activated, individuals exhibit specific behavioral strategies or cognitive beliefs, such as career exploration and self-efficacy; these constitute adaptive responses, reflecting whether an individual "actually makes a change." Ultimately, these responses influence an individual' s performance within career construction, leading to adaptive results. This four-stage process framework provides a verifiable theoretical pathway for empirical research.

Since the introduction of the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA), research in the field of career development has increasingly shifted toward validating its process mechanisms. The focus of research has transitioned from "career adaptability" as a static trait to the dynamic process of "career adaptation."

According to the CCMA, career adaptation is a self-regulatory process consisting of four sequential components: adaptive readiness, adaptability resources, adapting responses, and adaptation results [**?**]. Specifically, individuals with high adaptive readiness (e.g., proactive personality) utilize their adaptability resources (e.g., career concern, control, curiosity, and confidence) to engage in adapting responses (e.g., career exploration and decision-making), which ultimately leads to positive adaptation results (e.g., career satisfaction and job performance).

[Figure 1: see original paper]

Recent empirical studies have provided robust support for this sequential model across diverse cultural contexts and professional groups. For instance, researchers have demonstrated that adaptability resources mediate the relationship between personality traits and career-related behaviors [**?**]. Furthermore, longitudinal studies suggest that the development of adaptability resources is a critical precursor to successful transitions in the modern, volatile labor market.

Despite these advancements, several gaps remain in the literature. Most existing studies rely on cross-sectional data, which limits the ability to draw causal inferences regarding the CCMA' s process mechanisms. Additionally, there is a growing need to examine how environmental factors, such as organizational support and social capital, interact with individual psychological resources to influence the adaptation process. Future research should prioritize longitudinal designs and multi-level modeling to capture the complexity of career construction in the contemporary era.

The focus of research has shifted from investigating whether "adaptability can predict positive outcomes" to "verifying whether the four-stage process mechanism of the model holds true." Researchers have validated the process mechanisms of the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) across various

career development stages and contexts to explain how individuals adapt during critical career transitions.

For instance, during the career exploration stage, the model has been employed to explain the process by which individuals form a vocational self-concept within educational settings, which subsequently leads to general adaptive outcomes such as well-being and life satisfaction [?, ?, ?, ?]. During the career establishment stage, the model is primarily used to explain the mechanisms through which individuals achieve vocational adaptation during career transitions. In this context, research most frequently focuses on vocational adaptation outcomes, such as career sustainability and perceived career success [?, ?, ?, ?].

Although the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) is widely regarded as the core framework for the career adaptation process, comprehensive review studies focusing on its underlying process mechanisms remain scarce. On one hand, existing research lacks consistency in how variables are categorized within the model' s four stages, which limits the integrability of available evidence. For instance, while CCMA theory typically treats variables such as the quality of parent-child relationships and the educational environment as external environmental factors, some studies categorize these variables under the "adaptivity" (adaptive readiness) stage to examine their impact on the subsequent adaptation process [?, ?, ?]. This approach blurs the boundary between internal individual factors and external contextual factors, thereby weakening the conceptual consistency of the model.

Similar confusion regarding variable definition exists between "adapting responses" and "adaptation results." Taking career or academic engagement as an example, some researchers view it as a proactive adaptive behavior and categorize it within the adapting responses stage [?, ?, ?]. Conversely, other researchers treat it as an outcome variable following the adaptation process, placing it within the adaptation results stage [?, ?, ?]. Such inconsistencies in classification not only reduce the comparability of results across studies but also pose significant challenges to the conceptual clarity of the model' s stages and the overall stability of its structural framework.

On the other hand, the scope of empirical testing regarding CCMA process mechanisms is inconsistent across existing literature, and evidence is primarily concentrated within specific career stages. Consequently, the applicable boundaries of the model across different stages of career development remain unclear. Currently, only one meta-analysis has centered on career adaptability to summarize its interrelationships with adaptivity, adapting responses, and adaptation results [?, ?, ?, ?].

However, existing literature has not yet provided a comprehensive review of relevant research from the perspective of the complete four-stage dynamic process. Career Construction Management Theory (CCMA) emphasizes that vocational adaptation is not directly determined by a single resource or stage; rather, it is progressively realized through the functional and sequential transformation

of variables across various stages. Compared to this theoretical framework, the scope of empirical testing regarding these process mechanisms remains inconsistent across current studies.

Some empirical research focuses only on the process mechanisms of localized stages, while only a small number of studies have validated the process mechanisms of the full four-stage model. This discrepancy in research scope reflects differing understandings of the operational logic of adaptation mechanisms. Studies validating localized stages tend to emphasize the direct prediction of outcomes by resources, focusing on the static associations between specific concepts [**?**, **?**, **?**, **?**, **?**]. In contrast, research validating the full model treats adaptation as a complete, dynamic sequential process—moving from the perception of a need for change to the proactive implementation of adaptive behaviors—thereby emphasizing that adaptation is a continuous process of interaction between the individual and their environment [**?**, **?**]. Currently, there is a lack of a systematic review of these process mechanisms from a full-model perspective.

This lack of clarity has hindered empirical progress in capturing the essence of individual dynamic adaptation processes. Furthermore, the applicability of the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) across different stages of career development remains unclear. The adaptation process necessarily occurs within specific career stages and serves the developmental tasks associated with those stages. Although existing research has covered samples from various career development phases, the relevant evidence has not yet been integrated according to these stages. Consequently, it is difficult to determine whether the same set of adaptive mechanisms holds stable across different career tasks, or whether it exhibits differentiated transmission pathways as career tasks change. For instance, some studies have found that the strength of the relationship between adaptive resources and adaptive outcomes varies depending on the specific career task (Veres & Szamoskozi, 2018). This suggests that the functional mechanisms of the CCMA process may not be consistent across different career developmental contexts.

Based on this foundation, the present study reviews the progress of empirical research on the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) and explores future research directions. Specifically, this paper aims to achieve three primary objectives. First, it summarizes the key variables commonly used across the four stages of the model, analyzes the rationality of variable categorization, and clarifies the definition standards for variables at each stage in conjunction with theoretical frameworks. Second, by relying on the process mechanisms of the CCMA, this study compares empirical tests of the complete four-stage mechanism against those focusing only on partial stages, providing a comprehensive assessment of the model' s empirical support.

Third, building upon these analyses, this paper proposes several directions for future research. These include: clearly defining the categorization of variables within the four stages of the model and clarifying the boundaries between internal individual factors and external contextual factors; providing direct empir-

ical evidence for career development stages such as growth, maintenance, and decline, while adjusting variable selection and definition according to the core tasks of different career stages to compare various adaptation patterns; and simultaneously testing the feedback mechanisms and cyclical paths within the model to enhance the explanatory power and practical application value of the CCMA.

2 方法

This paper conducts a systematic search of empirical studies related to the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA). The databases utilized include CNKI, Wanfang, VIP, Web of Science, PsycINFO, PsycArticles, and Elsevier ScienceDirect. The English search keyword used was "Career Construction Model of Adaptation/CCMA" ; Chinese search keywords included "Career Construction Model of Adaptation/CCMA" and its potential translated names such as "适应性生涯建构模型." Given that the translation of CCMA in the Chinese context has not yet been fully standardized, a fuzzy search strategy using keyword combinations—such as "Adaptation AND Career Construction AND Model AND Career Adaptability" (and their synonymous combinations)—was further employed to minimize the omission of literature due to translation variations. The search period was limited to the timeframe from 2012, when the model was first proposed, to the present.

The search focused on empirical research within the field of psychology. Building upon the database search, this study also supplemented the collection through backward citation tracking and subsequent screening for inclusion. Considering the vast number of studies on the antecedents and consequences of career adaptability, and to avoid an overly broad scope, this study excludes research that only discusses the antecedents or consequences of career adaptability without testing the sequential stage relationships. For studies where the full name or abbreviation of the model does not appear in the title or abstract but may implicitly utilize the CCMA stage logic, backward citation tracking was conducted starting from three classic CCMA empirical studies: Hirschi et al. (2015), Merino-Tejedor et al. (2016), and Šverko & Babarović (2019). After removing duplicates, a two-step screening process involving title/abstract preliminary screening and full-text secondary screening was adopted. First, titles and abstracts were screened; studies were directly excluded if they clearly failed to meet the inclusion criteria (e.g., non-empirical research, topics unrelated to CCMA, studies focusing solely on antecedents/consequences without testing stage paths, or those outside the relevant field or timeframe).

Literature retained after the preliminary screening underwent a full-text secondary screening, where each was verified against the following criteria: (1) the literature is an empirical study published in either English or Chinese; (2) the research topic is related to CCMA, and the theoretical section explicitly organizes research hypotheses based on the CCMA four-stage process logic; (3) the empirical analysis tests at least one stage path; and (4) the study provides

verifiable methods and clear reporting of results.

Any study failing to meet any of these criteria during the full-text verification was excluded. Based on these standards, 101 highly relevant empirical studies were ultimately included. The literature screening process is illustrated in [Figure 1: see original paper].

After determining the final set of included empirical studies, this paper performed a structured organization and analysis of the literature. First, basic information was extracted from the included literature, including research subjects and sample characteristics (such as age, group, sample size, country/region, etc.), research design, and primary measurement tools. Age and sample characteristic information were used to subsequently categorize the literature by career development stage. Second, based on the theoretical framework of the model, variables in each study were theoretically positioned. Variable classification followed these rules: if the literature explicitly defined the stage to which a variable belonged (Readiness, Resources, Responses, or Results), that definition was directly adopted; if not explicitly defined, two doctoral students specializing in psychology independently categorized them according to the theoretical definitions of the model' s four stages. The classification criteria were as follows: the Readiness stage includes traits and trait-like variables; the Resources stage includes career adaptability; the Responses stage includes behavioral variables, belief variables, and barrier-type variables; and the Results stage includes final state variables (e.g., career success, career satisfaction). During classification, specific stages were allowed to remain vacant, as some studies might only involve variables from certain stages. If a disagreement arose between the two experts, a third expert was invited to review and adjudicate, with the majority consensus serving as the final decision. This step aimed to place variables from different studies within a unified theoretical coordinate system to ensure comparability for subsequent comparison and integration. Finally, based on the theoretical positioning of variables, the literature was integrated across multiple dimensions: first, based on the completeness of the model paths tested, studies were divided into full-model tests (covering the complete path of Readiness, Resources, Responses, and Results) and partial-model tests (testing only some of these stage paths); second, based on the career development stage of the research subjects —combining extracted age information and sample characteristics and referring to existing career development stage theory [**?**, **?**]—the literature was assigned to corresponding career development stages to examine the applicability and characteristics of CCMA across different developmental periods.

3.1 变量使用现状与关键概念的理论定位

Existing research on the variables utilized during the adaptive readiness stage can be categorized into two groups: internal individual factors and external contextual factors. However, the inclusion of external contextual factors is inconsistent with the theoretical positioning of this stage as "psychological readiness." Career construction theory defines adaptive readiness as the state of psycho-

logical preparedness and the stable tendency toward adaptation exhibited by individuals during career development and environmental transitions [?, ?].

The variables employed in current studies generally fall into two categories. The first category consists of internal individual factors, such as the Big Five personality traits [?, ?], core self-evaluations [?, ?], proactive personality [?, ?], growth mindset [?, ?], and cognitive emotion regulation [?, ?]. These variables primarily reflect an individual' s relatively stable traits, foundational abilities, and developmental potential. The second category comprises external contextual factors, such as parental autonomy support [?, ?], parental career-related behaviors [?, ?], educational environments [?, ?], and the quality of parent-child relationships [?, ?]. These are used to reflect the supportive conditions and environmental contexts surrounding an individual' s career development.

The fundamental issue, however, is that external contextual factors are not directly equivalent to an individual' s adaptive readiness. Career construction theory views adaptive readiness as the starting point of an individual' s internal self-regulation mechanism, emphasizing the psychological baseline and subjective preparedness when facing developmental tasks [?, ?]. While factors such as parental support and educational environments influence the adaptation process, their role lies in shaping external conditions and subjective perceptions rather than constituting the individual' s own psychological readiness.

Incorporating these external contextual factors directly into the adaptive readiness stage blurs the boundary between individual psychological factors and environmental influences, thereby weakening the theoretical significance of this stage as an internal psychological preparation. Consequently, variables for adaptive readiness should be restricted to internal individual traits or trait-like characteristics. External contextual factors are more appropriately integrated into models as antecedents or situational variables to examine their impact on internal readiness and subsequent resource mobilization. Only by strictly focusing measurement indicators on internal psychological readiness can we more accurately capture the theoretical essence of adaptive readiness as the starting point of adaptation.

Secondly, while existing research on the adaptive resources stage primarily centers on career adaptability, some studies have incorporated motivational and emotional variables into this phase. This inclusion suggests a broadening conceptualization of what constitutes a resource during the career adaptation process. However, the inconsistent categorization of these variables highlights a need for greater theoretical precision in distinguishing between stable psychological resources and more dynamic motivational states.

Categorical variables are often directly juxtaposed within the resource stage, thereby blurring conceptual boundaries. Adaptability resources are defined as the psychological resources and capabilities that individuals can mobilize when facing career development tasks and environmental changes; their core function is to provide support for subsequent coping actions and further influence

adaptation results [?, ?].

In existing literature, the majority of studies utilize career adaptability as a single indicator, typically reflecting an individual' s resource level through the total score of four dimensions: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence [?, ?, ?, ?]. Simultaneously, however, some research has shown a tendency to expand the definition of these resources. Certain studies attempt to categorize attitudinal variables such as career motivation [?, ?], social interaction variables such as cooperation [?, ?], and even self-perception variables such as the impostor phenomenon [?, ?] into the adaptability resource stage. Such treatments deviate from the theoretical foundations of adaptability resources.

According to career construction theory, adapt-ability resources emphasize psychological capacities acquired by individuals through experience; these represent internal resource reserves used to cope with change and regulate one' s environment (Savickas, 2013). In contrast, motivations and attitudes primarily reflect the willingness to initiate behavior, while self-perception reflects an individual' s experience or judgment of their own state. These elements are not equivalent to the capacity for coping with change or the resources themselves.

Directly categorizing these variables alongside career adaptability would not only confuse the theoretical positioning of the concepts but also weaken the empirical rigor required to test how "resources are transformed into responses." Therefore, the definition of adapt-ability resources should be strictly limited to career adaptability. By using the four dimensions of concern, control, curiosity, and confidence as the benchmark indicators for this stage, the conceptual boundaries remain clear and distinct.

Furthermore, the variables utilized in existing research regarding the adaptive response stage are consistent with the theoretical definitions of that stage. These variables can be categorized into three types—beliefs, behaviors, and barriers—to characterize an individual' s coping process. Adaptive response is defined as the cognitive judgments, exploration and planning behaviors, and corresponding subjective career distress exhibited by individuals when facing career challenges and developmental tasks [?, ?].

In current literature, the first category consists of belief-based variables, such as career decision-making self-efficacy [?, ?], career self-efficacy [?, ?], and entrepreneurial self-efficacy [?, ?]. These variables reflect an individual' s cognitive evaluation of their own professional abilities and developmental prospects. The second category includes behavioral variables, such as career construction behavior [?, ?], career planning [?, ?], and career exploration [?, ?], which represent the actual actions taken by individuals during the process of career exploration and construction. The third category comprises barrier-based variables, such as career decision-making difficulties [?, ?] and career anxiety [?, ?], which focus on the internal distress and psychological obstacles individuals encounter during career decision-making or development.

Together, these three categories of variables constitute the critical process

through which resources are transformed into outcomes. Future empirical research should precisely select corresponding indicators based on specific research objectives. If the focus is on the cognitive transformation process, belief-based variables should be prioritized. If the focus is on the implementation and effectiveness of actions, exploration and construction behavior variables are more appropriate. Finally, if the research aims to examine psychological depletion and difficulties during the adaptation process, barrier-based variables are the most suitable choice.

Finally, regarding the adaptive outcomes stage, the utilization of variables primarily focuses on the state of person-environment fit. However, a small number of studies still exhibit the issue of mixing variables across different stages, which blurs the theoretical boundary between adaptive behaviors and adaptive outcomes. Adaptive outcomes are defined as the state of fit between the individual and their vocational context.

the matching state achieved between the individual and their environment [**?**, **?**]. In existing research, variables used in this stage are typically categorized into subjective outcomes and objective outcomes. Subjective adaptation outcomes include life satisfaction [**?**, **?**], job satisfaction [**?**, **?**], academic satisfaction [**?**, **?**], and professional identity [**?**, **?**], all of which aim to measure an individual' s internal experience and self-assessment during the process of career development.

The second category consists of objective adaptation outcomes, such as academic achievement [**?**, **?**] and job performance [**?**, **?**, **?**], which reflect quantifiable achievements or external performance metrics. Overall, while most studies define this stage clearly, a small number of researchers still classify individual adaptive behaviors within this phase. Taking academic engagement as an example, this variable is defined as a positive academic cognitive state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption, reflecting the degree to which an individual invests cognitive and emotional energy into a specific role.

Work engagement is conceptualized as a dynamic process (Schaufeli et al., 2002); however, in some empirical models, it has been directly incorporated into the adaptive outcomes stage as a result variable (Šverko & Babarović, 2019; Zhang et al., 2024). Equating procedural adaptive behaviors with the final state of person-environment fit not only weakens the rigor of the theoretical logic but also makes it difficult for empirical research to accurately test the actual impact of adaptive responses on adaptive outcomes. Future research should decouple adaptive behavior indicators, such as engagement, from the outcome stage to ensure that the measurement of adaptive outcomes focuses more precisely on competency states or objective performance following the adaptation process. [Figure 2: see original paper] presents the common variables used in each stage of the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) and the current status of model research.

3.2 过程机制的实证检验现状

Research examining the mechanisms of the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) can be categorized into two primary types: studies that test the complete four-stage process mechanism and those that focus on specific stages within the model.

Research investigating the complete four-stage process mechanism aims to validate the sequential model framework proposed by CCMA theory. These studies also examine the applicability of this process mechanism across different stages of an individual' s career development. In contrast, research focusing on partial stages of the model emphasizes the relationships between any two or three stages within the four-stage framework. The objective of these studies is to reveal the specific interaction effects and functional relationships between the various internal components of the model.

3.2.1 完整四阶段过程机制的生涯阶段适用性

The Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) emphasizes that career adaptation is not a static difference in levels, but rather a process-oriented mechanism that unfolds gradually as career stages progress and developmental tasks are addressed (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

Within this theoretical framework, the four-stage transmission mechanism described by the CCMA must be understood in conjunction with the individual' s current career development stage and core tasks. Only then can one grasp its processual essence: "from perceiving the need for change to proactively taking adaptive actions." Since core tasks and contextual challenges vary across career stages—for instance, the exploration stage focuses on vocational orientation, while the establishment stage emphasizes role stabilization (Super, 1980)—it is necessary to review the empirical status of the complete four-stage process model from a career development stage perspective. This approach reveals the unique patterns of adaptation mechanisms at different stages of career development.

First, in the early phase of the career exploration stage, existing research utilizes the CCMA as a framework to explain an individual' s generalized development and adaptation. From Super' s career development perspective, individuals in this period are primarily in educational settings, where the core task is to promote the crystallization of the vocational self-concept and to extensively explore both the self and the environment (Super, 1980, 1990). Accordingly, the CCMA in current research is mostly used to describe the overall process from early psychological readiness and career adaptability to generalized life and academic adaptation. Regarding generalized life adaptation outcomes, cognitive flexibility, self-esteem, and hope positively predict career adaptability and constructional engagement, which further enhance well-being, life satisfaction, efficacy in life skills development, and sense of meaning in life (Leung et al., 2022; Ochoco & Ty, 2022; Öztemel & Akyol, 2021). Regarding academic adap-

tation outcomes, adaptive readiness factors such as core self-evaluations and proactive personality are positively correlated with career adaptability and career construction engagement, negatively correlated with career decision-making difficulties, and can further predict academic satisfaction (Šverko & Babarović, 2019). Additionally, individual resilience can promote construction behaviors through career adaptability, thereby improving school life satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2023). These results indicate that the CCMA effectively explains an individual's general state of adaptation. However, according to the theoretical premises of Career Construction Theory for the early exploration stage, the activation of adaptive readiness and resources is not merely intended to enhance general well-being; more importantly, it serves the developmental task of "crystallizing the vocational self-concept." This involves making the vocational self-concept increasingly clear and alleviating conflicts between self-awareness and ambiguous vocational roles (Savickas, 2005). Therefore, current evidence more strongly supports the model' s explanatory power for general adaptation outcomes, while its explanation of the "crystallization" task itself remains relatively insufficient, making it difficult to directly illustrate the actual process of vocational goal clarification and vocational identity formation.

Future research should further focus outcome criteria on indicators related to "crystallization," such as vocational goal clarity, levels of decisiveness versus indecision, clarity of preliminary vocational identity, and the formation of professional commitment. Simultaneously, the key processes in the adaptive response stage should be explicitly defined as behavioral indicators closer to the crystallization task, such as vocational information seeking, self-reflection, identity exploration, and goal clarification.

Secondly, in the late phase of the career exploration stage, existing research often uses the CCMA to understand the process of vocational direction selection and career self-construction before and after entering the workforce. During this period, individuals have formed a preliminary vocational self-concept. The subsequent key tasks are to further clarify vocational direction and to achieve the "specification" and "implementation" of vocational preferences through learning and practice (Super, 1980). In this stage, research typically defines adaptive readiness as psychological inclinations and vocational orientations, views career adaptability as the core resource, and examines actions and outcomes more closely related to career transition tasks. Existing evidence primarily focuses on three types of tasks.

In career transition and adaptation tasks, factors such as social support, vocational orientation, personality traits, and approach-avoidance tendencies can further influence vocational certainty, well-being, and positive adaptation states through career adaptability and its subsequent response processes (Öztemel & Akyol, 2021; Soares & Taveira, 2024; Zhuang et al., 2018). In employability construction tasks, research has found that persistence can enhance perceived employability through the sequential effects of career adaptability and career engagement (Ayvaz & Elhatip, 2026). In career decision-making tasks,

the influence of career adaptability on career decidedness is mostly realized through decision-making beliefs (Karimi et al., 2024). Other studies indicate that proactive personality can further predict life satisfaction and career commitment via career adaptability and career construction behaviors (Ulaş-Kılıç & Peila-Shuster, 2023). Overall, relevant research is gradually shifting outcome indicators from general satisfaction to indicators more closely aligned with career transition tasks, such as vocational certainty, decidedness, career commitment, and employability. However, it remains necessary to return to the essential tasks of the late exploration stage to further optimize variable selection. Super explicitly defined this stage as "specification" and "implementation." "Specification" refers to the narrowing of broad vocational interests and self-knowledge into a more definite and stable vocational direction and plan; "implementation" refers to conducting real-world trials, decisions, and actions centered on this direction, and continuously revising and advancing the career path based on feedback (Super, 1980, 1990). Accordingly, the selection of variables for the response and outcome stages should be based on whether they truly correspond to these two tasks. The outcome stage should primarily reflect the completion of "specification" —that is, whether the vocational direction is clear, the choice is stable, and an actionable plan has been formed. The response stage should focus more on the "implementation" process—how individuals translate their self-concept into specific social roles and action paths through real-world trials and feedback-based revisions (Savickas, 2005, 2013). Under this task framework, existing research urgently needs to supplement "implementation" process indicators such as real-world trials, external feedback, and plan revisions to clearly demonstrate how resources are transformed into actual actions and drive individuals to gradually enter their professional roles.

Finally, early research on the career establishment stage has mostly tested the CCMA within key career transitions and complex work contexts. During this period, individuals enter specific work roles for the first time and gradually gain a foothold, consolidating or adjusting their formed vocational self-concepts through actual work experiences (Super, 1980, 1990). In the context of graduation transitions, vocational self-concepts related to future work roles

can further predict more positive employment status and higher quality of career entry through career adaptability and job search self-efficacy (Guan et al., 2014). In relatively stable career phases, research focuses on how adaptive resources are transformed into vocational outcomes through more vocationally specific response processes. For example, proactive personality can promote proactive career behaviors through career adaptability, thereby enhancing career sustainability (health, happiness, and productivity; Talluri et al., 2022), where happiness is primarily manifested as career satisfaction and productivity is reflected in performance and employability. On the other hand, research more explicitly incorporates organizational and job contexts into the model. For instance, transformational leadership can enhance employees' perceived career success through career adaptability and job embedding (Al-Ghazali, 2020); other studies have found that a kaleidoscope career orientation can promote the

career success of new-generation female employees through career adaptability and job crafting (Qiu & Wang, 2023). Additionally, career adaptability can influence task performance as evaluated by supervisors through work engagement and organizational citizenship behavior (Haynie et al., 2020), further promoting the formation and consolidation of professional identity (Merino-Tejedor et al., 2025).

In high-pressure or high-uncertainty work contexts, the role of external support and individual resources is more reflected in maintaining adaptation and protecting mental health. For example, work-family support can improve nurses' mental health through career adaptability and positive coping styles (Zhang et al., 2024). In higher-risk or institutionally uncertain work environments, a positive future orientation is associated with higher career adaptability and job competence satisfaction, further predicting job satisfaction and the experience of meaningful work (Green et al., 2023). Overall, research in the early establishment stage primarily uses the CCMA to explain how individuals transform adaptive readiness and career adaptability into specific vocational response processes. The core question is how individuals cope with role transitions and environmental uncertainty to achieve role adaptation and career development. According to Super, the core tasks of the early establishment stage include "stabilization" and "consolidation" (Super, 1980, 1990). "Stabilization" refers to individuals clarifying role requirements, mastering work rules, and forming preliminary competence. "Consolidation" primarily refers to individuals further improving performance after preliminary adaptation and gradually forming a stable professional status. Thus, when testing the CCMA, the selection and measurement of variables should be integrated with the developmental tasks of the individual' s career stage. Existing research has incorporated indicators such as job embedding, job crafting, work engagement, organizational citizenship behavior, career success, task performance, and career sustainability, but there is still a lack of clear distinction between whether these indicators correspond to "stabilization" or "consolidation." If the research focus is on "stabilization," the response stage should prioritize process indicators such as organizational socialization learning, role clarification, and feedback seeking, while the outcome stage can assess the degree of stabilization using early job competence, role clarity, and retention intention/behavior. If the research focus is on "consolidation," the response stage can further include job crafting and proactive career behaviors, while the outcome stage can employ indicators such as supervisor-rated performance, promotion, and person-job fit levels. This approach would better illustrate how career adaptability is transformed into different types of adaptation processes and developmental outcomes within organizational contexts.

3.2.2 部分阶段的过程机制验证现状

The process mechanisms between three consecutive stages have received significant attention, specifically focusing on two paths: "Readiness-Resources-Responses" and "Resources-Responses-Results." First, the "Readiness-Resources-

Responses" path emphasizes stable psychological traits and beliefs—such as core self-evaluations, proactive

personality, career success criteria, internal locus of control, as well as conscientiousness, openness, and self/emotional regulation—as adaptive readiness. These factors, mediated by career adaptability as a key adaptive resource, stably predict career planning, exploration, job-search self-efficacy, and broader career construction behaviors [?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?]. Building on this, a small number of studies have further placed these stages within a dynamic perspective. For instance, a bidirectional relationship exists between the future work self, career adaptability, and career exploration behaviors [?, ?]. Similarly, job variety may further enhance career adaptability by stimulating proactive behaviors [?, ?], revealing a potential cyclical and self-reinforcing dynamic process between adaptive resources and responses. Second,

the "Resources-Responses-Results" path further emphasizes how adaptive resources are transformed into career and life adaptation outcomes through specific adaptive behaviors. Research has found that career adaptability can predict higher quality career decision-making, career adaptation, and well-being through response variables such as decision-making self-efficacy, career identity clarity, and work engagement [?, ?, ?]. Further studies have refined the response stage into specific strategies—such as job crafting, job-search self-regulation, and strategic behaviors—to explain their impact on employment status, promotion potential, and subjective career success. Meanwhile, contextual factors such as organizational support and interpersonal relationships have been proven to constitute important boundary conditions [?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?, ?]. Overall, the testing of these two types of continuous stage paths reveals important transmission mechanisms within the adaptation sequence and reflects that this process is not a simple linear progression. Regarding the "Readiness-Resources-Responses" path, existing research effectively demonstrates how psychological readiness is transformed into specific adaptive responses via career adaptability [?, ?, ?]; however, it overlooks the interference mechanisms of internal trait conflicts on the adaptation chain. In reality, individuals often possess competing psychological traits simultaneously. Future research could examine whether conflicting traits, such as being enterprising versus conservative, generate internal resource depletion, leading to hesitation when taking adaptive actions. Regarding the "Resources-Responses-Results" path, while existing research clearly illustrates how psychological resources influence subsequent adaptation outcomes through specific behaviors [?, ?], less attention has been paid to the resource consumption caused by the adaptive behaviors themselves. Future research could further examine whether continuous adaptive behavior might overextend internal resources, leading to potential trade-offs between task achievement and physical or mental health.

Cross-stage discontinuous paths have currently received relatively less attention, specifically including three categories: "Readiness-Resources-Results," "Readiness-Responses-Results," and "Resources-Results." These

paths emphasize how the adaptive readiness and adaptive resource stages bypass certain steps to directly or indirectly influence final adaptive outcomes. First, the "Readiness-Resources-Results" path highlights how an individual' s psychological readiness indirectly influences career and academic outcomes through the accumulation of adaptive resources. For example, a sense of career calling promotes the enhancement of career adaptability, thereby predicting higher work engagement and career satisfaction [**?**, **?**]. In work contexts, psychological flexibility as adaptive

readiness can improve an individual' s quality of work-life and career motivation by enhancing career adaptability [**?**, **?**]. Similarly, the interaction between perceived overqualification and supervisor support also enhances career adaptability, further predicting subjective career success and promotability ratings [**?**, **?**]. Individuals with higher levels of self-differentiation tend to possess higher career adaptability, which in turn leads to higher work and life satisfaction [**?**, **?**]. Second, the "Readiness-Responses-Results" path emphasizes how an individual' s psychological readiness directly influences specific adaptive responses and further relates to career or academic outcomes. Research has found that grit, optimism, and engaged coping strategies are all positively correlated with work-life balance, work engagement, and academic adaptation [**?**, **?**, **?**]. This suggests that positive psychological readiness may lead to better adaptation outcomes through response processes such as engagement and persistence. Third, the "Resources-Results" path narrows the focus to the

direct effect of adaptive resources on outcomes. Existing research indicates that career adaptability negatively predicts career choice anxiety [**?**, **?**] and is positively correlated with academic domain satisfaction; this satisfaction further strengthens an individual' s intention to continue developing in that field and may have a positive impact on subsequent career development [**?**, **?**]. In career and life contexts, career adaptability has a positive cross-lagged effect on subsequent job and life satisfaction and a negative effect on perceived stress. When individuals perceive limited career prospects or experience major career events, the positive predictive effect of career adaptability on subsequent job and life satisfaction becomes stronger [**?**, **?**]. Overall, these cross-stage discontinuous paths reflect a certain degree of "leapfrog" transmission within the adaptation mechanism. For the "Readiness-Resources-Results" path, the core feature is the omission of the adaptive response stage, directly presenting the process of traits influencing outcomes through resources. However, in the absence of a response stage, existing research still lacks an explanation for how resources are further transformed into outcomes. Future studies could further examine under what conditions resources remain stably linked to outcomes even without explicit action indicators. For the "Readiness-Responses-Results" path, stage compression reflects the direct driving mechanism of traits on behavior and outcomes. This path bypasses the accumulation process of career adaptability, directly linking psychological readiness to adaptive behaviors or outcomes [**?**, **?**].

Future research could further investigate what conditions prompt individuals to

take direct adaptive action before resources have been sufficiently accumulated. For the "Resources-Results" path, the focus is on the direct effect of career adaptability on adaptation outcomes [?, ?]. Future exploration could identify what other variables enable adaptive resources to independently support and achieve final adaptation outcomes in the absence of specific adaptive behaviors.

4.1 明确变量归属与内外因素划界

To further integrate the research evidence regarding the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA), future studies must establish clear and operational criteria for categorizing variables into specific stages. The stage assignment of a variable within the model reflects the researcher' s understanding of its functional role within the career adaptation process. Specifically, theoretical distinctions must be clearly articulated regarding whether a variable serves as a psychological prerequisite when an individual enters a context, a resource that can be mobilized and utilized, a specific action centered around career tasks, or a state-based outcome formed after the adaptation process is complete.

To reduce the arbitrariness of stage assignment, future research should focus on the function of the variable to establish more consistent judgment criteria. Specifically, adaptive readiness should be primarily limited to an individual' s internal psychological preparedness and trait-like tendencies; adaptive resources should focus on mobilizable psychological capacities and coping capital; adaptive responses should focus on specific adaptive actions centered on developmental tasks; and adaptation results should correspond to the adaptive states and achievements formed following the adaptation process [?, ?, ?, ?]. Concurrently, external environmental factors are more appropriately incorporated into the model as contextual conditions rather than being directly equated with adaptive readiness, thereby avoiding the blurring of boundaries between individual and contextual factors. Engaging in more detailed theoretical argumentation centered on these functional roles will help further clarify the connotations and boundaries of the model' s four stages. On this basis, future research can compare differences in path results and theoretical explanations when the same variable is categorized into different stages.

For controversial variables, researchers can model them according to different stages and conduct competitive model comparisons or sensitivity tests, thereby gradually accumulating a consensus on the stage positioning of key concepts [?, ?, ?]. In other words, variable assignment should not be viewed as a minor operational issue. Instead, future research should treat it as a critical entry point for testing and advancing CCMA theory. By explicitly defining variable assignments in model specifications and addressing them directly in theoretical arguments, researchers can provide a solid conceptual foundation for the further development of the model.

4.2 考察职业生涯阶段差异下的模型适配性

Future research should aim to complete the evidence base across all career stages and ensure that the selection and measurement of variables within the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) correspond to the core tasks of each specific stage. From a career development perspective, an individual' s professional journey can be divided into stages such as growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement, each of which presents distinct core tasks [**?**, **?**]. Based on the distribution of existing research, empirical evidence is primarily concentrated in the exploration stage and the early establishment phase, while direct testing in the growth, maintenance, and disengagement stages remains relatively scarce.

This imbalance implies that current conclusions regarding the applicability of the CCMA across career stages are largely built upon career exploration tasks within educational contexts and role transition tasks for those newly entering the workforce. There is still insufficient evidence to determine whether the model remains applicable for mid-to-late career development and exit-related tasks, or how variables should be defined and selected in those contexts. Specifically, the core task for individuals in the growth stage is not making or implementing career choices, but rather forming basic self-concepts and vocational orientations related to the world of work, while acquiring initial information about their abilities and interests within family and school settings [**?**, **?**, **?**].

In the exploration and establishment stages, adaptive responses and outcome criteria can be further refined around "specification" and "implementation," as well as "stabilization" and "consolidation," respectively [**?**, **?**, **?**, **?**, **?**]. During the maintenance stage, the focus of adaptation shifts from entering a role to role maintenance and skill renewal. Here, adaptive responses are more likely to manifest as long-term adjustment processes such as resource management, skill updating, and job crafting. Consequently, the adaptive outcomes stage should incorporate indicators such as sustained job performance, career sustainability, and long-term person-job fit. Finally, in the disengagement stage, adaptive tasks involve role exit and identity transition. Adaptive responses in this phase can be defined as processes including retirement planning, managing the pace of withdrawal, expanding social roles, and reconstructing meaning, while the adaptive outcomes should align with retirement adjustment levels, the reconstruction of life structures, and psychological well-being.

···indicators such as health and social participation to examine how individuals utilize existing resources to achieve a smooth transition from professional to non-professional roles [**?**, **?**, **?**].

In terms of research design, future studies should prioritize the use of critical transition event sampling and longitudinal tracking designs. Specifically, research could focus on key life events such as educational transitions, initial entry into the workforce, promotions and job rotations, organizational restructuring, career interruptions, and the approach toward retirement. Such designs

would allow for the empirical testing of the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) to more directly capture dynamic adaptation processes across tasks at different career stages. By incorporating evidence from the growth, maintenance, and decline stages, and by ensuring that variable definitions and selections align with the core tasks of each respective stage, researchers will be better equipped to provide a comprehensive answer regarding the career stages in which the CCMA serves as an effective framework for explaining the career adaptation process.

4.3 强化 CCMA 中的反馈机制与循环路径检验

Existing research lacks an examination of the reciprocal effects and cyclical mechanisms within the four stages of the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA). Most empirical studies utilize longitudinal designs or mediation models to verify the sequential conduction paths of the CCMA, yet few have tested the potential reverse influences and feedback loops between these four stages. Furthermore, existing meta-analyses and reviews that integrate the antecedents and consequences of career adaptability have largely relied on linear conduction hypotheses as their organizational framework [**?**, **?**, **?**, **?**, **?**].

From a theoretical perspective, career construction theory emphasizes that individuals continuously "reconstruct" the relationship between the self and the professional world throughout their life course. This framework posits that a career is a cyclical process of ongoing construction and reconstruction (Savickas, 2005, 2013). Within this process, career adaptivity resources and adapting behaviors are not passive, one-time outputs; rather, they are psychological resources that are continually activated, adjusted, and accumulated across various task contexts. Furthermore, career outcomes—such as job satisfaction, well-being, or professional success—feed back into the system through resource gain or loss spirals, subsequently influencing an individual' s future motivation and resource base (Hobfoll, 2002; Hobfoll et al., 2018; Nie & Gan, 2017; Ye et al., 2019).

This implies that the outcomes of career adaptation do not represent a final destination; rather, they may be transformed into psychological resources required for the next cycle of adaptation, thereby reactivating an individual' s adaptive readiness and career adaptability. If this cyclical mechanism is ignored, it becomes difficult to explain how adaptation outcomes accumulate or transform over time. Furthermore, without accounting for this process, it is challenging to elucidate why career paths exhibit periodic leaps or significant transitions.

Specifically, future research can advance the examination of feedback and recursive loops at three distinct levels. First, it is essential to consider time scales with greater precision. The feedback from adaptive responses to adaptive resources may manifest within a short-term period of weeks or months. In contrast, the reverse influence of adaptation results on adaptive readiness and resources often requires a longer duration of experience and reflection. Consequently, research designs should incorporate a combination of short-interval

and long-interval longitudinal tracking. It is necessary to simultaneously measure adaptive readiness, resources, responses, and results at each wave, rather than relying on cross-sectional sampling of a single stage. This approach avoids missing the temporal information inherent in the interactions between different stages.

Second, the theoretical construction of feedback mechanisms must be further deepened. Future studies could more purposefully propose and test specific hypotheses, such as "adaptation results inversely affecting adaptive readiness" or the "reciprocal relationship between adaptive responses and adaptive resources." For instance, researchers could explore how career satisfaction and experiences of career success shape an individual's subsequent future time perspective, career goals, and willingness to explore. Furthermore, it is important to investigate under what circumstances positive results translate into motivation for further action, and under what conditions they are more likely to lead to developmental stagnation. Third,

Future research should fully leverage critical career transition phases to capture the cyclical trajectories of multi-round adaptation processes. Key transitions —such as advancing to higher education, the transition from university to the workplace, and professional promotions—represent the stages where individual adaptation changes most drastically. Future studies could arrange intensive longitudinal tracking around these specific phases. This approach would facilitate the observation of how adaptive resources and responses evolve over time following major transitions, as well as how they feed back into the preparation and resource stages through various adaptive outcomes.

Similarly, in intervention programs designed to enhance career adaptability, researchers should conduct medium- to long-term follow-up assessments. Such longitudinal tracking is essential to examine whether the resources or behaviors improved in the short term can be successfully transformed into stable adaptive readiness and superior adaptation outcomes over an extended period.

Furthermore, exploring the dynamic cyclical process of career construction necessitates the introduction of diverse methodological perspectives. Career development is not merely a collection of discrete events; rather, it is a dynamic narrative process that unfolds continuously across the temporal dimension [**?**, **?**]. Current research relies primarily on quantitative cross-sectional analyses or longitudinal tracking questionnaires, which struggle to capture the nuanced "adaptation-feedback-readaptation" loop that individuals experience within complex contexts.

This shift represents a profound qualitative change in "adaptation." To address this challenge, future research should adopt a more long-term strategy by drawing on Qualitative Longitudinal Research (QLR). By conducting multi-point, long-term thick descriptions centered on critical career transition points and daily practices, researchers can more closely capture the authentic trajectories of change within professional contexts [**?**, **?**, **?**]. At the same time, longitudi-

nal fieldwork and ethnographic methods emphasize the researcher' s immersive participation and observation within real-world settings over extended periods [**?**, **?**]. These approaches are instrumental in revealing how adaptivity outcomes —such as career success or burnout—gradually feed back into daily interactions and reshape an individual' s adaptive readiness and resources. Such interdisciplinary methodological expansions will help address the current lack of empirical evidence regarding the cyclical pathways of the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA).

5 研究结论

This review systematically examines 101 empirical studies conducted since 2012 within the framework of the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA). It categorizes the commonly used variables across the model' s four stages and summarizes the primary findings regarding both full four-stage process mechanisms and partial-stage mechanisms.

Overall, existing research has primarily focused on the exploration and establishment phases, effectively revealing how individuals adapt during key developmental tasks and role transitions while refining the specific relationships between the four stages of the model. However, several limitations persist: the classification of variables into specific stages and the definition of internal and external boundaries remain ambiguous; direct evidence regarding career stages such as growth, maintenance, and decline is still lacking; and there is insufficient empirical testing of feedback mechanisms and cyclical paths between stages.

Future research should aim to clarify the positioning of variables within the four stages of the model and optimize variable definition and selection by integrating the core tasks of different career development stages. Furthermore, strengthening the examination of feedback and recursive mechanisms will be essential to enhancing the theoretical explanatory power and practical application value of the CCMA.

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The dynamic process of individual career adaptation:

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Abstract

The Career Construction Model of Adaptation(CCMA)emphasizes that individuals achieve career success through a dynamic process involving four stages: adaptive readiness, adaptability resources, adapting responses, and adaptation results. This review synthesizes 101 empirical studies published since 2012 that have applied the model. The findings indicate two main orientations. One focuses on testing the full four-stage sequential process, with studies concentrated in the exploration and establishment stages of career development, aiming to examine the model' s applicability to key developmental tasks and role-transition contexts. The other focuses on testing partial process mechanisms, such as readiness-resources-responses and resources-responses-results, to clarify the specific mechanisms underlying individual adaptation.

Future research should further clarify the theoretical placement of variables within the four stages of the model and distinguish individual internal factors from external contextual factors. It should also extend empirical evidence to the growth, maintenance, and decline stages of career development, and align variable definition and selection with the core tasks of each stage in order to compare adaptation patterns across career stages. In addition, future studies should strengthen the examination of feedback mechanisms and cyclical pathways to enhance the explanatory power and practical value of the CCMA.

Keywords

career construction model of adaptation, career adaptability, career adaptation, career development stages

Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.