Accepted Manuscript

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PII:	S0001-8791(18)30085-X
DOI:	doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2018.08.001
Reference:	YJVBE 3205
To appear in:	Journal of Vocational Behavior
Received date:	5 February 2018
Revised date:	25 July 2018
Accepted date:	2 August 2018

Please cite this article as: Anna Carmella G. Ocampo, Simon Lloyd D. Restubog, Maria Emma Liwag, Lu Wang, Claire Petelczyc, My spouse is my strength: Interactive effects of perceived organizational and spousal support in predicting career adaptability and career outcomes. Yjvbe (2018), doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2018.08.001

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My Spouse is My Strength: Interactive Effects of Perceived Organizational and Spousal Support in Predicting Career Adaptability and Career Outcomes

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CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

Abstract

The mid-career stage is marked by a wider diversity of roles and responsibility in work and non-work life domains. To attain career success, mid-career workers cannot solely depend on their organization for information, skills, and training. Integrating career construction (Savickas, 1998) and conservation of resources (Hobfoll, 1989) perspectives, we developed a model linking perceived organizational support (POS), perceived spousal support, career adaptability, and subjective and objective indicators of career success. We tested the model using a sample of 160 independent employee-supervisor dyads across three measurement periods over two years. Results revealed that (a) POS was indirectly related to both subjective and objective career adaptability; (b) perceived spousal support was indirectly related to both subjective and objective career success via career adaptability; and (c) the conditional indirect effects of POS in predicting subjective and objective and objective career success via career adaptability were stronger for employees with high as opposed to low levels of perceived spousal support. Implications for theory and practice are discussed.

Keywords: perceived organizational support, perceived spousal support, career adaptability, subjective career success, objective career success

My Spouse is My Strength: Interactive Effects of Perceived Organizational and Spousal

Support in Predicting Career Adaptability and Career Success

Mid-career represents a period that facilitates opportunities for self-investment necessary for continued growth (Phillips-Miller, Campbell, & Morrison, 2000). Although mid-career adults are perceived to possess a range of coping resources, they are confronted with several work and life demands that impose unique risks to their career success. In the workplace, the career situation of mid-career workers is becoming more mobile, less secure, and accompanied by prolonged work hours and salary compression (Power & Rothausen, 2003). At the same time, at home, mid-career adult workers often face new and additional family-related responsibilities. The literature on work-family interface shows that along with work demands, mid-career adult workers are also confronted with caregiving obligations (Frone & Yardley, 1996). Most of them manage childrearing and childcare duties while some are responsible for caring for elderly family members (Still & Timms, 1998).

For mid-career adult workers, these challenges may seem particularly daunting as they must continuously expand their knowledge and develop their skill set to remain valuable in the current career landscape while at the same time dealing with increasing amounts of home responsibility and family demands (Van Vianen, De Pater, & Preenen, 2009). As a result, we suggest that a career adaptive stance characterized by readiness to cope with anticipated as well as unforeseen work-related transitions within and beyond the organization could be vital for mid-career adult workers today.

Career adaptability pertains to a set of "attitudes, competencies, and behaviors that individuals use in fitting themselves to work that suits them" (Savickas, 2013, p. 45). Increasing research evidence indicates that career adaptable individuals are more successful in obtaining better job opportunities, transitioning to various work roles, and attaining highquality employment (Klehe, Zikic, Van Vianen, & De Pater, 2011; Koen, Klehe, & Van

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

Vianen, 2012; Tolentino et al., 2014a; Tolentino, Sedoglavich, Lu, Garcia, & Restubog, 2014b; Tolentino, Garcia, Restubog, Bordia, & Tang, 2013). Given the importance of career adaptability, it is not surprising that organizational scholars are interested in examining its work and non-work antecedents (Hirschi, 2009; Ito & Brotheridge, 2005; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Nevertheless, although it is generally claimed that career adaptability results from a person-situation interaction (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012), more empirical research is needed to understand how certain contextual conditions foster the development of career adaptability among employed adults (Coetze & Stoltz, 2015).

Career success does not happen in a vacuum; it is supported by conditions in one's social environment (see Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005). This is an important area of inquiry as careers are contextually specific and embedded in social relationships (Dany, 2014). Individuals draw from two distinct albeit related types of social support to facilitate work and career performance: first, support originating from work which is captured through perceived organizational support (POS); second, support originating from non-work environments which is captured through perceived spousal support (Shaffer, Harrison, Gilley, & Luk, 2001). We contend that POS and perceived spousal support are two important work and non-work support resources that may complement valuable aspects of the self and compensate the lack of other career-related competencies in individuals (Halbesleben, 2006; Hobfoll, 2001).

In the work domain, for instance, the increasing re-entry and prolonged engagement of mid-career adult workers in the labor market lead organizations to offer significant opportunities to support skill and professional development among mid-career adult workers (e.g., bridge employment; Hall & Mirvis, 1995). Although extensive research has demonstrated that employees' perceptions of support provided by the organization is positively linked to a range of career outcomes such as career satisfaction and career

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

commitment (Kurtessis, Eisenberger, Ford, Buffardi, Stewart, & Adis, 2015; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), it is less clear whether POS can increase midcareer adult workers' career success via enhancing their career adaptability.

In addition to support from organizations, access to non-work sources of social support may help mid-career employees to respond to stressful career-related tasks and challenges (Adams, King, & King, 1996; Aycan & Eskin, 2005). However, it remains to be ascertained how non-work sources of support influence mid-career workers' ability to juggle demands across both life and work domains. While emerging studies indicate that spouses' personality influences occupational success (Solomon & Jackson, 2014), it is unclear how spousal support interacts with organizational conditions to predict employee outcomes (see Kraimer, Wayne, & Jaworski, 2001; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

By addressing the abovementioned gaps, we make several key contributions to the career adaptability literature. First, we integrate career construction theory (CCT; Savickas, 2005; 2002; 1997) with conservation of resources theory (COR; Hobfoll, 1989) to investigate the indirect effects of POS and perceived spousal support on career success via career adaptability among mid-career workers. CCT provides a theoretical foundation as to *why* individuals acquire new skills and abilities to influence career outcomes across the lifespan (Savickas, 2005). Mid-career adult workers may focus on gaining new skills and developing new resources in order to maintain employment security and attain career success given changing employment dynamics (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). We extend CCT by utilizing COR to explicate the role of both work and non-work domains of support in mid-career adult career development. To this end, COR provides a theoretical explanation for *how* individuals act to achieve their career goals (Hobfoll, 2001). Aligned with the theoretical suppositions of both CCT and COR, we theorize and predict positive indirect effects of POS and perceived spousal support on career success via career adaptability. Our proposed model assesses the

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

role of career adaptability as an underlying mechanism that enables POS and perceived spousal support to influence the career success of mid-career adult workers. Specifically, we argue that POS facilitates career adaptability as it supports individuals' psychosocial capacity for addressing unfamiliar, complex, and ill-defined problems that are presented by work traumas and transitions (Tian & Fan, 2014). Hence, mid-career adult workers who perceive stronger organizational support are more likely to become adaptive in their work environment, therefore maximizing opportunities for career success. This substantiates earlier conceptualizations of career adaptability as a key competency needed to thrive in the continuously evolving work context (Hall & Mirvis, 1995; Savickas, 1997).

Second, we also conceive spousal support as a boundary condition for the indirect relationship between POS and career success via career adaptability. Spousal support involves exchanges of partners' resources, providing feelings of safety and esteem that are critical for addressing life demands or coping with numerous stressors (Schulz & Schwarzer, 2004). Beyond POS, stronger support from spouses can potentially curtail work-to-family and family-to-work strains enabling employees to allocate resources (e.g., time, energy) that might ease job demands (Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999; Seiger & Wiese, 2009). We thus highlight that spousal support – an important non-work domain support resource – provides aid and affirmation necessary for enacting effective career management strategies. In addition, spousal support serves as an alternative support resource when POS is low. Mid-career workers who receive support from their spouses demonstrate increased capacity to cope with the challenges at work (Aryee, Luk, Leung, & Lo, 1999). That is, the positive indirect effect of POS will be more pronounced under high as opposed to low levels of perceived spousal support. Figure 1 illustrates the proposed moderated mediation model.

Third, we contribute knowledge on the role of career adaptability in predicting career success during midlife. Although career development is a lifelong process, existing empirical

literature has primarily studied career adaptability in the context of school-to-work transitions among young adults (Creed, Fallon, & Hood, 2009; Duffy, 2010; Duffy & Bluestein, 2005; Hirschi, 2009; Koen et al., 2012). It is crucial to address this oversight as career development continues through midlife and beyond (Savickas, 2005). Few have attempted to empirically test the role of career adaptability using samples of mid-career adult workers (Ito & Brotheridge, 2005; Klehe et al., 2005) in various employment situations (Maggiori, Johnston, Krings, Massoudi, & Rossier, 2013; McArdle, Waters, Briscoe, & Hall, 2007). Despite the commonly held notion that midlife is a period of increased sense of self-direction, we suggest that perceived organizational and spousal support in combination provide vital resources for successful adaptation with work-related demands and transitions for mid-career adult workers.

Finally, we respond to calls to generate more research on career adaptability using multi-source data and time-lagged research designs (Hirschi, 2009; Koen et al., 2012; Rudolph, Lavigne, & Zacher, 2017) by obtaining both subjective (i.e., career satisfaction) and objective (i.e., perceived and actual ratings of promotability) measures of career success using multiple sources (i.e., self and supervisor ratings) over a two-year period. In doing so, we depart from the common practice of studying career adaptability in transition contexts (i.e., students) that use cross-sectional designs, and therefore our data can broaden the implications of career construction theory. Below, we first review and integrate CCT and COR which serve as the theoretical foundation of our conceptual model. Next, we develop and formally test hypothesized relationships in the model, summarize our key findings, and discuss their theoretical and practical implications.

Theory and Hypotheses

Relationships among POS, Perceived Spousal Support, Career Adaptability, and Career Success

We draw upon career construction theory (CCT; Savickas, 2005; 1997) when examining mid-career adult workers' vocational behaviors during this stage of career development. Indeed, CCT asserts that career development takes place when individuals successfully integrate their personal needs with their social expectations which in turn influence their adaptation to current and future career conditions. Employees' capacity for positive integration, however, varies in the extent to which they are willing (i.e., adaptive readiness) and able (i.e., resources) to develop beliefs and exercise new behaviors (i.e., adapting results) that are adaptive to the changing nature and context of careers (Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

However, CCT does not provide an explicit theoretical explanation for how individuals acquire and utilize various work and non-work domain resources. For this reason, we draw upon the COR perspective (Hobfoll, 2001) because it explains how individuals use their resources to overcome threats and facilitate the achievement of valuable goals. According to the COR theory, individuals strive to build, protect, and conserve resources or "those objects, personal characteristics, conditions or energies that are valued" (Hobfoll, 1989, p. 516). Individuals employ personal (e.g., self-esteem) and contextual (e.g., social support) resources to organize, behave, or fit in to their current environment (Hobfoll, 2001). Following the key tenets of COR (Hobfoll, 2011), we demonstrate how work (i.e., POS) and non-work (i.e., perceived spousal support) conditions foster career adaptability that serves as a resource passageway that facilitates or enriches the development of other valued resources (i.e., career success).

Access to support resources from work and non-work environments can be seen as a favorable condition that maintains valued resources for mid-career workers to meet their career demands (Savickas, 2005; Hobfoll, 2001). Therefore, career-adaptable employees are more likely to fit themselves to new roles and to effectively cope with changes at work

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

(Rudolph, Lavigne, & Zacher, 2017). We propose that adaptive mid-career workers are wellequipped to attain career success since they are likely to engage in planning for future tasks (*concern*), take responsibility for learning new skills (*control*), explore their vocational characteristics and situations (*curiosity*), and exercise confidence in dealing with new challenges and demands (*confidence*). For instance, employees capable of developing a career vision and solving job-related problems demonstrate higher levels of career satisfaction and self-rated performance (subjective career success) at work (Zacher, 2014; Feldman & Ng, 2007). Similarly, those who are willing to explore and to tolerate uncertainty gain more opportunities for career progression and employability (objective career success), despite the increasingly unstable work environment (McArdle et al., 2007).

POS, Career Adaptability, and Career Success

POS enables individuals to gain competencies and acquire skills that increase their adaptiveness (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Savickas, 2005). It is a valued resource that relates to beneficial career-related outcomes (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). It refers to the extent to which employees believe that their organization values their contributions and is committed to their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). For example, POS can assist employees to effectively prepare for, and adjust to, changes in the work environment. On the basis of CCT and COR, we argue that POS represents a substantial resource for mid-career adult workers because it provides them with a range of socioemotional resources (e.g., respect, esteem, approval) and tangible economic benefits (e.g., wages, incentives, rewards) to address their career challenges (Eisenberger, Jones, Aselage, & Sucharski, 2004).

POS also aids employees in managing job-related stressors (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). As a consequence, employees are more likely to demonstrate greater willingness to initiate change and take on new challenges (Shore & Wayne, 1993; Wayne, Shore, & Liden,

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

1997). It also elicits a sense of job competence that enables employees to successfully manage high work demands (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). It fulfils employees' socioemotional needs (e.g., esteem, validation) which facilitate adjustment for work-related midcareer transitions (Kraimer, Seibert, Wayne, Liden, & Bravo, 2011; Wayne et al., 1997). Collectively, these findings suggest that POS should be positively related to career adaptability because it motivates and enables employees to develop more adaptive strategies.

CCT also asserts that the ability to adapt to a changing work environment influences career success (Savickas, 2005). As individuals assume different occupational roles at various points in their career development, they accumulate a wide range of skills, training, and knowledge critical for career advancement (Poole, Langan-Fox, & Omodei, 1993; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Because employees are likely presented with different career opportunities as they mature, their vocational interests may change in relation to the changing nature of their job features that could influence career success motives (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004; Warr, 2001). Mid-career adult workers, in particular, continuously engage in various career construction activities aimed at strengthening their adaptive fitness (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004; Savickas, 2007). Indeed, career adaptability is a form of human capital resource as it sustains individuals' construal and readiness to cope with changes in their work conditions (Hall & Mirvis, 1995; Savickas, 1997).

Taken together, we propose that POS indirectly influences career success through career adaptability because employees' general perception that their organization values them strengthens both their motivation and capacity to adapt to changes in occupational roles, tasks, and task environments. Increased motivation and capacity can lead employees to acquire occupationally-relevant attitudes, skills, and behaviors, thereby enhancing opportunities for attaining subjective and objective career success. In line with this reasoning, we predict that:

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

Hypothesis 1: POS is indirectly related to subjective career success via career adaptability.

Hypothesis 2: POS is indirectly related to objective career success via career adaptability.

Perceived Spousal Support, Career Adaptability, and Career Success

The view that work and family life are essentially intertwined (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Gatrell, Burnett, Cooper, & Sparrow, 2013) has stimulated considerable interest within the careers literature (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Hirschi, Shockley, & Zacher, 2017). Receiving prominent focus in this research is the spousal relationship and the ways in which, in Heikkinnen's (2015) words, 'the spouse *matters* within a career, and ultimately within organizations' (emphasis ours). The significant entry of women in the labor force and the growing prevalence of dual-earning households as well as a shift in family configurations and greater family involvement by husbands and fathers have produced a more holistic view of how both genders perceive a spouse's role in their careers. For instance, while many studies affirm that a partner's social support and encouragement are important to a successful work life (Heikkinnen, 2015), spouses could also be construed as a liability, source of stress, or distraction (Heikkinen & Lämsä, 2017; Heikkinen, Lämsä, & Hiillos, 2014; Liu & Wilson, 2001; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999).

We argue that spousal support is a strong type of social resource that promotes work functioning (Judge et al., 1995; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Wayne et al., 1997). Defined as the help, advice, and understanding that spouses provide for one another (Aycan & Eskin, 2005), spousal support can encompass emotional (e.g., providing reassurance), instrumental (e.g., assisting with a problem), tangible (e.g., helping with household chores or childcare), and informational (e.g., giving advice; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999) forms of support.

Following COR theory, supportive and collaborative interactions with spouses can serve as both a psychological and career-related resource. Because of their proximity and familiarity, spouses provide immediate support relevant to their partner's socioemotional and career needs (Berg & Upchurch, 2007; Cox & Paley, 1997) which suggests the possibility that spousal support may enhance career adaptability. In particular, employees consult with their spouses for career choices or dilemmas faced at work (*concern*); spouses can also help their partners make important career decisions such as taking or declining a promotion, leaving an organization, or changing a career (*control*); spouses act as cheerleaders who encourage their partners to explore and pursue difficult career-relevant endeavors (*curiosity*); and spouses may also boost their partners' esteem by affirming their capabilities (*confidence*) when dealing with significant career traumas or transitions. In turn, the support that their partner receives serves as a resource that improves their satisfaction towards their own career and ability to perform job demands (Halbesleben, 2006).

Hypothesis 3: Perceived spousal support is indirectly related to subjective career success via career adaptability.

Hypothesis 4: Perceived spousal support is indirectly related to objective career success via career adaptability.

We also contend that the influence of POS on mid-career adults' career adaptability and subsequent career success is dependent upon the degree of perceived spousal support. Employees who perceive high spousal support are more likely to utilize career-enhancing opportunities that result in career success. Employees may be more motivated to take advantage of POS when their spouses display positive attitudes about these career changes and opportunities (Konopaske, Robie, & Ivancevich, 2009). Indeed, married managers who received assistance with household work, emotional support, and immediate consultation about work-related concerns from their spouses are more likely to be considered for

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

promotion and career advancement training opportunities (Pfeffer & Ross, 1982; Phillips-Miller et al., 2000).

Building on CCT, the COR theory asserts that the lack or loss of resources will result in greater affective and behavioral reactions despite equivalent amounts of resource loss or gain (Hobfoll, 2001). This means that those whose resources are threatened or diminished (i.e., POS and perceived spousal support) are likely to experience resource loss spirals especially during periods of high stress. Consistent with this reasoning, mid-career workers who experience low levels of spousal support are less likely to utilize other resources (i.e., POS). For example, if a female manager is not supported by her spouse to take on additional work challenges, POS is less likely to energize her or make a difference in her career. Indeed, those who perceive low levels of spousal support have been found to experience greater stress and poorer work outcomes due to conflicts in addressing job-related demands (Phillips-Miller, Campbell, & Morrison, 2000).

COR theory further suggests that the loss of valuable resources imposes a greater psychological impact than does resource gain (Hobfoll, 2001). To this end, we contend that perceived spousal support is a more salient and relevant support resource than POS given that mid-career adult workers increasingly place greater importance on the family domain than any other life domain (Cinamon & Rich, 2002). When spouses do not support their work responsibilities and ambitions, employees may feel conflicted and, in turn, psychologically withdraw from such responsibilities in spite of strong support provisions at work. Employees who receive low spousal support may even perceive POS as an extra obligation that potentially burdens their family role. For instance, business expatriates with unsupportive spouses display reduced work adjustment which may prompt early termination of foreign assignments despite substantive support from the organization and the expatriate community

(Lauring & Selmer, 2010). Thus, perceived spousal support can foster effective adjustment in dealing with work-related changes especially when POS is low. In sum, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 5: Perceived spousal support will moderate the relationship between POS and career adaptability.

Hypothesis 6: The conditional indirect effects of POS in predicting subjective career success via career adaptability will be stronger for those employees with high as opposed to low levels of perceived spousal support.

Hypothesis 7: The conditional indirect effects of POS in predicting objective career success (i.e., supervisor-rated promotability and actual promotion) via career adaptability will be stronger for those employees with high as opposed to low levels of perceived spousal support.

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

Data were collected from 320 married full-time employees working in various business sectors in the central business district in the Philippines. Each participant received a survey kit containing an information sheet, an employee survey, and a rating form that the employee was requested to pass on to his/her immediate supervisor to complete. At Time 1, a self-report survey assessing demographic characteristics, POS, spousal support, and career adaptability was disseminated to employees. At Time 2, six weeks later, supervisors rated the employees' subjective (e.g., career satisfaction) and objective career success (e.g., promotability). Participants (employees and supervisors) returned the completed surveys and rating forms directly to the research team using a postage-paid return envelope. All participants were assured of confidentiality. We retrieved 217 completed employee surveys yielding a response rate of 67.81%. In addition, a total of 192 supervisors (60%) participated and provided behavioral ratings. We matched supervisor behavioral rating forms with

employee surveys via an anonymous code that each participant had included on each survey. To this end, we obtained 178 independent employee-supervisor dyads. At Time 3 (24 months after Time 2), a brief survey assessing actual promotion was mailed to participants with a corresponding supervisor report. We obtained completed surveys from 160 participants.

Our sample was 57.9% female and the average age was 47.83 years (SD = 6.02) ranging from 40 to 64 years. Average tenure was 14.94 years (SD = 9.72). The employee sample came from a broad range of occupations and industries including: banking and finance (28.7%), information and technology (10.1%), marketing and sales (9.6%), research and development (2.8%), education (12.4%), consulting (2.2%), health care services (4.5%), hotel and restaurant services (8.4%), manufacturing and production (7.3%), government and public service (14%). Majority of the participants had obtained a college degree (84.8%). The participants had been married for an average of 20.83 years (SD = 6.21) and also had an average number of 2.01 financially dependent children. As for the supervisor sample, 68.5% were female. Average age was 51.27 years (SD = 7.19) and average tenure was 19.77 years (SD = 9.47).

Measures

Established scales were used to measure the study variables. Survey items were prepared in English because this language is spoken by the Filipino population especially in business organizations (Bernardo, 2004). Unless otherwise specified, a seven-point Likert scale was used to assess the substantive variables (1 = Strongly agree; 7 = Strongly disagree) with items coded such that a higher score represented a greater amount of the focal construct (except for reverse-coded items).

Perceived Organizational Support ($\alpha = .81$). POS was measured using seven items from the scale developed by Eisenberger and colleagues (2001, 1986). Sample items from the

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

scale include: "My organization strongly considers my goals and values" and "My organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work."

Perceived Spousal Support (α =.97). Perceived spousal support was assessed using 10 items drawn from previous research (Verhofstadt, Lemmens, & Buysse, 2013; Parasuraman, Greenhaus, & Granrose, 1992). Sample items from the scale include: "My spouse gives advice or suggestions when I have a problem" and "My spouse shows willingness to listen to my problems."

Career Adaptability (α =.96). The CAAS-International form contains 24 items that combine to yield a total score indicating career adaptability (for the items, see Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). The 24 items are divided equally into four subscales that measure the adaptability resources of concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. Sample items include "Planning how to achieve my goals" (concern), "Looking for opportunities to grow as a person" (curiosity), "Taking responsibility for my actions" (control), and "Taking care to do things well" (confidence).

Subjective Career Success (α =.95). Subjective career success was operationalized as supervisors' appraisals of subordinates' career satisfaction and was measured using the career satisfaction scale developed by Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990). Sample items include: "This person is satisfied with the progress s/he has made toward meeting his/her goals for advancement" and "This person is satisfied with the success s/he has achieved in his/her career."

Objective Career Success. Objective career success was measured in two ways. First, at Time 2, we asked supervisors to rate the employees' likelihood of promotability. This was assessed using five items drawn from previous studies (Colarelli, Dean, & Konstans, 1987; Shore, Barksdale, & Shore, 1995). Sample items include "How promotable is this employee" (1 = Definitely not promotable to 7 = Definitely promotable) and "This

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

person possesses a high potential to assume more challenging work responsibilities" (1 = Strongly disagree to 7 = Strongly agree). The reliability coefficient for this scale was .93. Second, at Time 3, we asked participants to indicate whether they had been promoted to a higher position/rank within the same organization that they worked for. We coded 1 for "yes" and 0 for "no." This approach is in line with prior research which suggests that actual promotion is an important facet of objective career success (Hui, Lam, & Law, 2000).

Control Variables. We controlled for the effects of several demographic variables to rule out alternative explanations to our study findings. First, age has been shown to positively predict objective career success, while women have lower levels of objective career success than males (Judge et al., 1995; Cox & Nkomo, 1991). It has been shown that compared to men, women tend to expect less career growth opportunities (e.g., skill development) and attainment (e.g., promotion), and thus may be equally or more satisfied (subjective measure of success) with a lesser or equal level of objective success (Judge et al., 1995; Kirchmeyer, 1998; Kirchmeyer, 1998; Ng et al., 2005). Previous research has also found a negative relationship between age and tenure and subjective career success (Cox & Nkomo, 1991) and it has been argued that this occurs because older and more experienced employees may find a particular level of objective success (e.g., a promotion) less satisfying than perhaps a younger or less experienced employee (Judge et al., 1995). Age was measured by asking the focal employees to report their date of birth. We measured organizational tenure by asking the focal employees to report the number of years they have been employed in their current organization. Second, we controlled for education because a meta-analytic review (Ng et al., 2005) found significant positive relationships between education level and objective and subjective career success. Education was measured by asking the focal employees to report their highest level of education: high school (1), associate or vocational degree (2), college degree (3), master's degree (4), doctoral degree, and medical/law degree (5). Finally, we

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

controlled for the number of financially-dependent children because it has been found that for men, having children can have a positive impact on career success (Pfeffer & Ross, 1982). However, this is not the same for women. Having, and the number of, children can be negatively related to female career success (with income/salary used as a measure of objective success; Marini, 1989; Valcour & Ladge, 2008), and it has been argued that this difference may be due to an inequitable division of household responsibilities (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). This was measured by asking the focal participants to report the number of financially-dependent children they have.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics, zero-order correlations, and alpha reliabilities are presented in Table 1. All correlations were in the predicted direction. We tested our hypothesized relationships in three interlinked steps by generating 5,000 bias-corrected bootstrap estimates as recommended by Hayes (2013). This approach allowed us to test the significance of the indirect, moderated, and conditional indirect effects without relying on the assumption that these effects are normally distributed (Hayes, 2013). First, we examined a simple mediation model to test the indirect effects of POS (Hypotheses 1 and 2) and spousal support (Hypotheses 3 and 4) on subjective and objective career success via career adaptability. Second, we tested the moderating role of perceived spousal support in the relationship between POS and career-related outcomes (Hypothesis 5). Finally, we integrated perceived spousal support (moderator variable) into the model and empirically tested the overall moderated mediation hypotheses (Hypotheses 6 and 7). Demographic variables were entered as covariates. Given that we obtained 178 matched employee-supervisor dyads at Time 1 and Time 2, we used the full sample to test all hypotheses with the exception of analyzing objective career success operationalized as actual promotion. We used the sub-sample of 160

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

matched employee-supervisor dyads with Time 3 data to test the hypothesis involving selfreported actual promotion.

We assessed the indirect effects (H1 - H4) using the bootstrap procedure developed by Hayes (2013). Results of these analyses are shown in Table 2. The main effect of POS on career adaptability (B = .30, SE = .05, 95% CI [.20, .41]) was significant as well as the main effect of career adaptability on career outcomes: Time 2 supervisor-reported subjective career success (B = .36, SE = .10, 95% CI [.17, .55]), Time 2 supervisor-reported promotability (B =.45, SE = .11, 95% CI [.23, .67]), and Time 3 self-reported actual promotion (B = 1.04, SE =.34, 95% CI [.38, 1.70]). Time 1 POS had an indirect effect on Time 2 supervisor-reported subjective career success (*indirect effect* = .11, SE = .04, 95% CI [.05, .20]) via Time 1 career adaptability. The direct effect of Time 1 POS on Time 2 supervisor-reported subjective career success was non-significant (B = .01, SE = .07, 95% CI [-.14, 15]) indicating full mediation. As for the two indicators of objective career success, we found a significant indirect effect of Time 1 POS on Time 2 supervisor-rated promotability (*indirect effect* = .14, SE = .04, 95% CI [.06, .24]) and Time 3 actual promotion (*indirect effect* = .30, SE = .14, 95% CI [.10, .65]) via career adaptability. The direct effects of Time 1 POS on Time 2 supervisor-rated promotability (B = .07, SE = .09, 95% CI [-.11, .24]) and Time 3 self-reported actual promotion (B = .23, SE = .19, 95% CI [-.15, .61]) were no longer significant suggesting full mediation. Given that the confidence intervals for the indirect effects were positive and did not include zero, Hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported.¹

¹ We also conducted supplementary analysis whether each dimension of career adaptability influenced the association between POS and career-related outcomes. Our results suggest that POS was positively associated with each dimension of career adaptability. Similarly, each dimension of career adaptability was positively associated with Time 2 supervisor-reported subjective career success and the two indicators of objective career success (Time 2 supervisor-reported promotability and Time 3 self-reported actual promotion). We also observed that the indirect effects of POS on each career-related outcome via each dimension of career adaptability was statistically significant.

Hypothesis 3 and 4 predicted that spousal support will be indirectly related to both subjective and objective career success. The main effect of spousal support on career adaptability (B = .35, SE = .05, 95% CI [.26, .44]) was significant as well as the main effect of career adaptability on Time 2 supervisor-reported subjective career success (B = .25, SE =.10, 95% CI [.05, .45]) and the two indicators of objective career success: Time 2 supervisorreported promotability (B = .30, SE = .12, 95% CI [.06, .53]) and Time 3 self-reported actual promotion (B = .97, SE = .35, 95% CI [.28, 1.66]). We also observed the hypothesized indirect effect of spousal support on Time 2 supervisor-reported subjective career success (*indirect effect* = .09, SE = .04, 95% CI [.01, .18]) and the two indicators of objective career success: Time 2 supervisor-reported promotability (*indirect effect* =.10, SE = .05, 95% CI [.02, .21]), and Time 3 self-reported actual promotion (*indirect effect* = .34, SE = .19, 95% CI [.07, .82]) via career adaptability. The direct effects of Time 1 spousal support on Time 2 supervisor-reported subjective career success (B = .15, SE = .07, 95% CI [.02, .29]) and Time 2 supervisor-reported promotability (B = .25, SE = .08, 95% CI [.09, .41] were significant indicating partial mediation. In contrast, the direct effect of Time 1 spousal support on Time 3 actual self-reported actual promotion was non-significant (B = .29, SE = .22, 95% CI [-.13, 71]) suggesting full mediation. Overall, Hypotheses 3 and 4 were supported.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that the relationship between POS and career adaptability would be stronger for those with high as opposed to low levels of spousal support. The cross-product term between POS and spousal support in predicting career adaptability was significant (B = .14, SE = .05, 95% CI [.04, .23]). Simple slopes analyses were conducted to further examine the nature of the significant interaction between POS and spousal support on career adaptability at high and low levels of spousal support. As depicted in Figure 2, Time 1 POS was positively related to career adaptability for employees with high levels of spousal support (B = .15, SE = .07, 95% CI [.01, .28]). In contrast, at low levels of spousal support,

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

the relationship between POS and career adaptability was non-significant (B = -.18, SE = .11, 95% CI [-.41, .04]). Hypothesis 5 was supported.

Hypotheses 6 and 7 posed a test of the conditional indirect effects model for POS. As predicted (see Table 3), the significant indirect effects of POS was conditional on high levels of spousal support in predicting Time 2 supervisor-rated subjective career success (indirect effect = .05, SE = .03, 95% CI [.01, .12]) and the two indicators of objective career success: Time 2 supervisor-rated promotability (*indirect effect* = .07, SE = .03, 95% CI [.01, .15]) and Time 3 self-reported actual promotion (*indirect effect* = .16, SE = .10, 95% CI [.02, .45]). Conversely, the indirect effects of Time 1 POS in predicting the career-related outcomes (indirect effect for Time 2 supervisor-reported subjective career success = -.07, SE = .05, 95% CI [-.19, .01]; indirect effect for Time 2 supervisor-rated promotability = -.08, SE = .06, 95% CI [-.22, .02]; and indirect effect for Time 3 self-reported actual promotion = -.17, SE = .16, 95% CI [-.60, .07]) via career adaptability were all non-significant for low levels of spousal support. Furthermore, the indices of moderated mediation for the career outcomes were significant: (Index for Time 2 supervisor-reported subjective career success = .05, SE = .02, 95% CI [.01, .10]; Index for Time 2 supervisor-reported promotability = .06, SE = .03, 95% CI [.02, .12]; Index for Time 3 self-reported actual promotion = .14, SE = .09, 95% CI [.02, .37]). These results suggest that the moderator is linearly related to the mediated model and not just a specific path in the model (e.g., a or b path of the indirect effect; Hayes, 2013). Hypotheses 6 and 7 were supported.

To rule out alternative explanations to our study findings, we compared our research model to alternative models that might explain the relationships among the variables. Specifically, we examined both the conditional direct and indirect effects within the same model. This suggests that in addition to the conditional indirect effects, we examined the possibility that spousal support moderated the relationship between POS and career

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

outcomes. We did not observe any significant interactions in predicting the two indicators of objective career success (*B* for supervisor-reported promotability = .07, SE = .08, 95% CI [-.08, .22]; *B* for self-reported actual promotion = .32, SE = .17, 95% CI [-.02, .66]). However, the interaction involving POS and spousal support in predicting subjective career success was significant (B = .19, CI [.07, .32]). Specifically, the negative relationship between POS and subjective career success was significant for those employees with low spousal support (B = .49, SE = .15, 95% CI [-.79, -.20]). In contrast, the positive association between POS and subjective career success was non-significant for those employees with high spousal support (B = -.04, SE = .09, 95% CI [-.22, .15]).

DISCUSSION

Pattern of Results

Growing interest in career adaptability as a key self-regulatory factor in career development (Morrison & Hall, 2002; Zacher, 2014) has led to closer scrutiny of both work and non-work antecedents of the adaptability resources (i.e., psychosocial strengths; Savickas, 2013) that allow individuals to cope successfully with career tasks, transitions, barriers, and challenges. The overarching purpose of the present study was to investigate the role of two forms of social support - POS and perceived spousal support - in career success via career adaptability. Overall, our predictions were supported and the results demonstrated that both POS, a work-related resource, and perceived spousal support, a non-work, familyrelated resource, have the potential to increase career adaptability which in turn contributes to career success. However, the potential benefits of POS are contingent on perceived spousal support, and in particular, the conditional indirect effects of POS in predicting subjective career success via career adaptability was significant only for employees who perceive high as opposed to low spousal support. Likewise, the conditional indirect effects of POS in predicting supervisor-rated promotability and actual promotion via career adaptability was

significant also only for employees who perceive strong support from their spouses. Thus, the moderation-mediation model holds for both subjective and objective career success.

Considerable research has shown that the world's population is ageing, and so is the available workforce (Streb, Voelpel, & Leibold, 2008). While previous research has investigated career adaptability in young adults (as they transition from school to the workforce), few researchers have empirically examined the role of career adaptability using samples of mid-career adult workers in the work context (Ito & Brotheridge, 2005; Klehe, Zikic, van Vianen, & De Pater, 2011). This is relevant as workers today are faced with the introduction of new technology, increased job instability and insecurity, intensified productivity demands, and the requirement to regularly update and develop skills as a result of more frequent role transitions (Maggiori et al., 2013). The current research addressed this gap by surveying mid-career workers engaged in full-time employment and identified two important factors that can encourage such adaptation and facilitate career success in midlife and beyond. Our findings affirm that for these employees, a work setting and a spousal relationship that are both experienced as supportive and empowering can foster career adaptability and consequently greater occupational success as reflected in their supervisors' appraisal of their job satisfaction, their supervisors' judgment of their chances for promotion, and actual advancement in their profession's status hierarchy. The positive effects of POS only occurred for those individuals who reported high levels of spousal support. When spouses themselves manifest helpful and encouraging attitudes towards such career prospects, they can buffer the stresses that stem from career changes and challenges, they can enhance career adaptability by motivating their spouses to benefit from organizational support and career-advancing opportunities. On the other hand, low spousal support could be experienced as a form of work-family conflict. Conflicting expectations and demands from work and

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

home could drain rather than replenish employees' resources (Adams et al., 1996; Amstad, Meier, Fasel, Elfering, & Semmer, 2011; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

In sum, within the career adaptability and career construction literature, our moderated mediation model highlights career adaptability as a central mediating mechanism that enables perceived contextual supports to impact career success in midlife and beyond (Savickas, 1997; Hall & Mirvis, 1995). Also, by clarifying the roles of two enabling sources of career adaptation both within and outside the workplace, our research provides support for COR's proposition that individuals aim to increase their resources in order to attain goals (Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustein-Underdahl, & Westman, 2014). Our findings are consistent with the view that organizational support is a valued resource that relates to beneficial careerrelated outcomes and that social support in general furthers the acquisition of additional resources critical for goal pursuit (Kraimer et al., 2011; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Wayne et al., 1997). The moderating role of spousal support in the present study has also extended COR theory by emphasizing the complementary role of non-work domain resources in achieving career success. That is, spousal support positively affects employees, possibly by cushioning the negative effects of stress, and this external source of support has tangible benefits in the workplace.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Our research findings have a number of important theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, our research extends previous research by examining the role of context in the development of career adaptability. CCT argues that career adaptability stems from the influence of both personal characteristics and social context (Savickas, 2005). According to this theory, an individual's adaptability and thus future career success, depends on the extent to which they are willing and able, and are provided with the right social context, to alter their beliefs and behaviors in response to a changing work environment

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

(Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). In this research, we investigated the role of two pertinent social contexts of development, in both work (i.e., POS) and non-work (i.e. perceived spousal support) settings in predicting career adaptability.

In addition, mid-career workers have to manage a wider diversity of work and nonwork roles and responsibilities than at any other stage in the life cycle (Hall & Mirvis, 1995). Women, in particular, while working outside the home, may still need to act as a primary caregiver to children, grandchildren, and even ageing parents (Emslie & Hunt, 2009). On the other hand, the traditional view of men as mainly defined by their work has been gradually eroded by changes in family structures, increased number of dual-earner couples and single parents, and increased family involvement on the part of men (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Heikkinen & Lämsä, 2017). This brings into context how adult workers' careers unfold in tandem with family life and what role significant others, specifically spouses, have in shaping and influencing individual career trajectories. Given the well-established centrality of family life in Asian culture, consistent with its collectivistic orientation (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Restubog & Bordia, 2006; 2007), this is quite pertinent to our survey sample of Filipino employees. In other studies of Asian workers' motivational profile (Ilagan, Hechanova, Co, & Pleyto, 2014; Yao, Franco, & Hechanova, 2005), family-related aspects often emerge as an independent and unique factor. In the context of the present study, mid-career employees view their spouses as positive, helpful, and encouraging, thereby allowing them to adapt better to work demands and stresses and to avail more adeptly of organizational resources and structures that contribute to career adaptability, and consequently, career success.

Our findings further indicate that having a supportive spouse or a supportive workplace, either one by itself, is not entirely sufficient. The interactive effects of these dual support systems, from the organization and from the home front, had the strongest positive

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

impact. This underscores the notion that for greater career success, employees need multiple sources of support from a range of domains within their lives.

Practically, these findings offer implications for both individuals and organizations. On an individual level, it is evident that having multiple sources of support, both within and outside of the work domains is important to achieving career success. With this in mind, individuals should seek organizations and mentors/supervisors who offer support (e.g., treating them fairly, and ensuring their work is valued and significant, Zagenczyk, Gibney, Kiewtiz & Restubog, 2009). There can be greater awareness and appreciation among workers of how their careers could benefit from spouses' provision of emotional, instrumental, tangible and informational support. Given the increasing prevalence of dual-career couples, the importance of mutual support between the working partners can also be emphasized. While some employees may prefer to keep their work and home lives separate, the role of spousal support can be optimized in the particular Asian context of our research sample, where blurring the boundaries of work and family is generally acceptable (Caparas, 2014).

On an organizational level, workplaces can benefit from our research by introducing policies which encourage supervisors and other colleagues (from the top down of an organization) to extend support to all employees. This can include ensuring that employees feel that they are making a valuable contribution, creating initiatives to improve employee well-being, and providing training and support. By equipping employees with both emotional and instrumental resources, they will be better positioned to manage and adapt to changes within the workplace. Organizations should also understand the important role that spouses play, and may wish to recognize them in the workplace context and to encourage their employees to utilize this family-based resource whenever possible.

Methodological Strengths, Limitations and Further Research

We addressed calls for methodological rigor in career adaptability scholarship (Rudolph et al., 2017). Indeed, Rudolph and his colleagues noted that a majority of the studies in this research domain has relied heavily on single-source self-report methodology which can be contaminated by common method bias. They strongly encouraged the use of other-ratings. In the current paper, we utilized multi-source data, collecting both self- and supervisor-ratings and a time-lagged design spanning over two years that help reduce problems stemming from common method variance. While we found evidence for mediation, more complex experimental and longitudinal approaches are warranted to provide stronger conclusions to our findings.

This research is not without its limitations. First, this research was conducted in the Philippines, a highly traditional and family-oriented culture where high expectations of support from spouses and low expectations of support from the work setting may exist. Therefore, we would recommend that future research include cross-cultural investigations to examine whether the same relationships would be found, particularly in a Western culture where participants may have different expectations and perceptions of support from their employers and/or spouses. Second, our research only examined two support resources (i.e., POS and spousal support) in facilitating career adaptability. Future research should consider investigating the role of additional work and non-work support as these support sources were found to enhance career opportunities (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003; Kirchmeyer, 1998). It may be worthwhile to examine how relational resources such as leader-member exchange, career mentors, peers outside the immediate work group, and friendships outside the organization impact the career development of mid-career workers. Third, our research conceptualized and assessed POS as a general measure of support. Alternatively, future research should also consider the role of organizational support for development (OSD), defined as the extent to which employees perceive that organizational provisions of training

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

opportunities develop their technical skills and managerial abilities (Kraimer et al., 2011), in enhancing career experiences. Fourth, our research only accounted for the role of support resources in promoting career adaptability and in turn career success. Emerging research suggest that managers' perceptions of career barriers (e.g., presenteeism, organizational restructuring) influence career development that may substantially impact advancement opportunities (Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom, 2005; Simpson, 1998).

Lastly, to the three measures of career success utilized here, future research may incorporate additional ways of appraising career outcomes. There has been considerable debate in the literature as to which are the best and most appropriate measures of career success (for an in-depth discussion, see Heslin, 2005). In particular, Heslin argues that there "is the need for greater sensitivity to the criteria that study participants, in different contexts, use to construe and judge their career success" (2005, p. 113). This is exemplified in the findings discussed earlier that women may view their (objective) career success as more (subjectively) successful than their male counterparts (Judge et al., 1995; Ng et al., 2005). Therefore, we would recommend the utilization of more specific measures of objective success rather than just promotion, associated with particular career contexts (e.g., for teachers, this could be data on the test scores of their students, or for academics, number/quality of publications).

This research has surfaced other areas for future inquiry with regards to POS, spousal support and career adaptability. For one, while we assessed career adaptability as the aggregate score of its four dimensions, interesting dimension-level patterns may be revealed when we unpack the relationships amongst POS, perceived spousal support, and career concern, control, curiosity, and confidence and career success. This is in line with recent calls (e.g., Rudolph, Lavigne, Katz, & Zacher, 2017) to approach the career adaptability-adaptation

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

relationship at a more granular level as there may be actual distinctions in the predictive validity of the four dimensions on career outcomes.

In relation to perceived spousal support, it would be interesting to investigate the impact of specific types of supportive behaviours (e.g., emotional, instrumental and informational) on career adaptation. We may expect, for instance, that emotional support would be particularly relevant to career adaptability and success as it helps the employee manage and deal with stress. In addition, the current study did not measure quality of spousal support, which may affect the relationship between POS and employees' career adaptability differently than just the sheer presence of spousal support. Conversely, the lack itself of spousal support may be indicative of other family dynamics that are important to career adaptability but are not measured explicitly in the current study. One would be the possibility of troubled marriages. Recent research has begun to examine the long-lasting and diffusive impact of marital problems, such as domestic violence, on employees' work life (Garcia, Ng, Capezio, Restubog, & Tang, 2017; Tolentino et al., 2017). This issue certainly deserves more research attention. We therefore believe the focus on other dimensions of spousal support, such as its quality or its lack thereof, may represent another direction to extend the current research on how organizational and family forces interact to enhance career adaptability.

Future research can also build on our findings by taking a closer look at how this model applies differently across gender. For example, women typically perceive less spousal support than men (Phillips-Miller et al., 2000). Therefore, the moderating effect of spousal support may have less of an impact for women than for men. It would be interesting to investigate how much and what types of support are preferred by each gender, and how this contributes to career adaptability and career success. This is particularly important as women's participation in the workforce increases. It would also be beneficial to collect data

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

from the spouse of the focal employee to help us to gain a better understanding of actual, rather than perceived, levels of spousal support.

Similarly, for organizational support, future research should also collect data on *actual* types and quality of support offered by employers. For example, a company may offer a range of training courses developed to up-skill employees, but if these are not of interest to the workforce, employees may *perceive* that there are few opportunities for growth and development available to them. Again, this would also help create a more balanced perspective on the forms of support offered by organizations, and their utility and effectiveness. We hope that the research presented here highlights the importance of both work and non-work support resources and invites continued research on this topic.

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A CLARANCE

CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

43

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1

Variables	М	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Gender	.42	.50						C				
2. Age	47.83	6.02	.00				,0	3	~			
3. Tenure	14.94	9.72	21**	.42***			\mathbf{V}					
4. Number of financially dependent children	2.01	.99	.08	28***	20**	D						
5. Education	3.16	.72	.16*	19*	.01	.23*						
6. T1 POS	4.81	1.04	15	03	07	12	18*	(.81)				
7. T1 Spousal support	5.50	1.20	07	02	16*	08	23**	.67***	(.97)			
8. T1 Career adaptability	5.85	.79	.02	.03	02	03	06	.39***	.49***	(.96)		
9. T2 Supervisor-rated promotability	5.58	1.18	15*	.11	.04	18*	20**	.23***	.39***	.33***	(.93)	
10. T2 Supervisor-rated career satisfaction	5.63	.98	10	.16*	.01	14	18*	.16*	.32***	.30***	.73***	(.95)
11. T3 Actual promotion	.28	.45	.05	.07	.08	07	.00	.22**	.25**	.32***	.24**	.16*

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Running head: CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

Table 2

Simple Mediation Model Results

Model	Indirect Effect	SE	95% CI
POS, Career Adaptability, and Subjective Career Success (Supervisor- rated Career Satisfaction)	0.11	0.04	[.05, .20]
POS, Career Adaptability, and Objective Career Success (Supervisor- rated Promotability)	0.14	0.04	[.06, .24]
POS, Career Adaptability and Objective Career Success (Self-reported Actual Promotion)	0.30	0.14	[.10, .65]
Perceived Spousal Support, Career Adaptability, and Subjective Career Success (Supervisor-rated Career Satisfaction)	0.09	0.04	[.01, .18]
Perceived Spousal Support, Career Adaptability, and Objective Career Success (Supervisor-rated Promotability)	0,10	0.05	[.02, .21]
Perceived Spousal Support, Career Adaptability, and Objective Career Success (Self-reported Actual Promotion)	0.34	0.19	[.07, .82]

Running head: CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

Table 3

Estimates and Bias-Corrected Bootstrapped 95% Confidence Intervals at +1 and -1 SD of

Spousal Support

Model	Indirect Effect	SE	95% CI	
Conditional indirect effects predicting satisfaction)	subjective career su	ccess (supervisor-r	ated career	
+1 SD Spouse support	0.05	0.03	[.01, .12]	
-1 SD Spouse support ^{ns}	-0.07	0.05	[19, .01]	
Conditional indirect effects predicting promotability)	objective career suc	cess (supervisor-ra	ted	
+1 SD Spouse support	0.07	0.03	[.01, .15]	
-1 SD Spouse support ^{ns}	-0.08	0.06	[22, .02]	
Conditional indirect effects predicting promotion)	objective career suc	cess (self-reported	actual	
+1 SD Spouse support	0.16	0.10	[.02, .45]	
-1 SD Spouse support ^{ns}	-0.17	0.16	[60, .07]	
^{ns} Not Significant				

Running head: CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

Figure 1

Moderated-Mediation Model



Simple Slopes Analysis Testing the Moderating Role of Spousal Support



Perceived organizational support

Running head: CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG MID-CAREER WORKERS

Highlights

- Examined how work and non-work support resources predict career success in midlife.
- POS and perceived spousal support impact career success via career adaptability.
- Perceived spousal support moderated the link between POS and career adaptability.

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