Navigating Through Turbulence:

Investigating Individual Characteristics, Well-Being, and Career Outcomes in the Face of Career Shocks

Navigeren door turbulentie:

Onderzoek naar individuele kenmerken, welzijn en loopbaanresultaten in het licht van loopbaanschokken

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List of Acronyms

AIC	Anticipated Impact of Change
ATC	Attitude Toward Change
CA	Career Adaptability
CAAS	Career Adapt-Abilities Scale
CCT	Career Construction Theory
CE	Career Engagement
COR	Conservation of Resources Theory
CR	Career Regret
DTC	Disposition toward Change
EWB	Employee Well-Being
HR	Human Resources
IA	Individual Adaptability
IAC	Individual Adaptability- Crisis
IAU	Individual Adaptability-Uncertainty
JD-R	Job Demands-Resources
LWB	Life Well-Being
NCS	Negative Career Shocks
PCS	Positive Career Shocks
PWB	Psychological Well-Being
RTC	Resistance to Change
SE	Self-Efficacy
SM	Self-Monitoring
WWB	Workplace Well-Being

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Preface

"A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor."
Franklin D. Roosevelt's

Embarking on my PhD journey as a mother, senior executive, and Ph.D. candidate was a multifaceted challenge, blending demands from family, work, and academia. Starting in November 2018 with the goal, to defend my thesis by June 2022, I approached this endeavor with meticulous planning; however, despite the careful preparation, life introduced unexpected challenges, notably the October 2019 revolution in my country, which plunged us into economic turmoil and tested my resolve. Amidst this uncertainty, my passion and determination were reignited, driving me to persevere against the odds.

A few months later, the world faced the COVID-19 pandemic, further exacerbating the severe economic crisis in my country. The situation even worsened in August 2020 with the catastrophic Beirut port explosion, causing extensive loss of lives and deep sadness and plunging us into more profound economic despair, a crisis ranked among the worst by the World Bank.

Amidst the chaos, our currency's value plummeted, creating conditions that could lead anyone to despair. Yet, despite the darkness surrounding these events, I found a reservoir of strength within me to press on. Admittedly, there were moments when we lacked essential commodities, like electricity, internet, and fuel, which nearly halted my progress, testing my strength to its limits.

Facing constant frustration and the temptation to quit the program, I was driven by personal goals and the desire to inspire my sons, Majd and Iyad. At the age of 45, against all odds, my perseverance was fueled by the aim to teach them the value of persistence. I wanted to achieve my goals not only for personal fulfillment but also to make my sons proud and show them the power of resilience. This journey, filled with obstacles, serves as a lesson in endurance and hope for them, proving that overcoming adversity is possible.

During my challenging journey, I was fortunate to have the unwavering support of two remarkable women. Professor Weili, acting as more than the program director, became a guardian angel to me. Her constant belief and support, especially during tough times, have been a source of immense strength and gratitude. Similarly, Professor De Vos has been an exceptional mentor, pushing me into new research territories and helping me find my true passion.

Together, these two incredible ladies have not only enriched my academic pursuits but also left an indelible mark on my personal growth. Their wisdom, compassion, and mentorship have been the pillars upon which I have built my aspirations and dreams.

Moreover, I am profoundly grateful for the unwavering support and guidance of my advisory committee, Dean Sidani, and Dr. Jos Akkermans. Your willingness to embark on this journey with me, despite no prior acquaintance, and your constant support in every inquiry have been invaluable. Your kindness and readiness to assist from the beginning have significantly contributed to my academic and personal growth. For this generosity and impact, my gratitude is boundless.

Finally, I extend my deepest gratitude to Prof. Bart Cambre, the first person I met on this journey. His approachable demeanor and encouragement instilled in us the belief that moving at a steady pace, even if slowly, would eventually reach our destination (The turtle style). Thank you, Prof. Cambre, for everything.

On a personal note, this journey would not have been conceivable without my family's steadfast encouragement and love. Their unwavering belief in me has been a cornerstone of strength and inspiration, guiding me through the most challenging moments of this endeavor.

To my mother, your unwavering support and the care you've provided for my children during the demanding days of my PhD journey have been my pillars of strength. Without your

presence, achieving this milestone would have been unimaginable. Your selflessness and love have supported me and enabled me to focus and persevere. I am deeply grateful for everything you've done. Thank you for being my backbone. Without you, I wouldn't be where I am today.

My heart overflows with profound gratitude for my life partner, Hussein Chami, my anchor and guiding star. Your unwavering belief in me during my lowest days has been the foundation of my strength. The wisdom of your words, “trust the process and enjoy the journey”, has illuminated my path with hope and resilience. Your support is a treasure I hold dear, a constant reminder that with love and belief, every step forward is a step toward greatness.

To my sons, Majd and Iyad, who embarked on this journey with me at ages 14 and 10, your boundless understanding and support have been my guiding lights. Despite the moments when I was physically present but mentally miles away, lost in my work, your unwavering faith and patience have been the bedrock of my perseverance. Your smiles, encouragement, and unconditional love have fueled my ambition, turning every challenge into a moment of joy. Thank you for being my inspiration, my motivation, and my happiness.

Finally, I sincerely thank all my friends and colleagues for their support and belief in me. Special gratitude goes to an extraordinary person who deeply inspired me with her resilience and spirit. Her courageous battle against cancer last year demonstrated the strength to overcome the toughest challenges. Her influence in my life underscores the importance of resilience, motivating me to overcome any obstacle. Her spirit, imbued with positive vibes and an indomitable attitude, has inspired me at every step.

To Roula Nohra, mere words cannot express my immense gratitude and love. Your constant support has been my example of hope and strength. This achievement is dedicated to your unique spirit, fabulous determination, unconditional support, and love.

Summary

Our thesis delved into the complex landscape of career changes, introducing the “Career Shock” concept. This term encapsulates significant, unexpected events triggered by external factors, prompting individuals to reevaluate their career trajectories. At the heart of our investigation is an in-depth analysis of how unforeseen changes affect individual well-being and career outcomes. We emphasize the crucial role of personal characteristics and resources in navigating these shocks, with adaptability as a central element in our analytical framework.

Initially, our research explored the impact of individual traits, extending beyond the Big Five personality dimensions, on the capacity to adapt to abrupt changes. We focused specifically on the contributions of self-monitoring and self-efficacy to adaptability, aiming to expand the existing discourse on personal adaptability in the face of change.

The study then narrows its scope to assess the effects of career shocks on individual well-being, particularly highlighting the context of an economic-financial crisis in the banking sector. This section elucidates career shocks' positive and negative impacts, further examining how personal characteristics moderate the effect on well-being.

In the final phase, our investigation deepened to assess the effect of negative career shocks on specific career outcomes, such as engagement and the experience of regret. This study transitioned the focus from individual adaptability to career adaptability, endeavoring to elucidate the mediating function of career adaptability in the interplay between career shocks and the respective career outcomes.

Conclusively, our thesis sought to illuminate career development in times of instability, proposing strategies for individuals confronted with career shocks and adapting to evolving contexts. It underscored the practical significance for both practitioners and scholars, delineating

methods to foster adaptability and engagement amidst career shocks, thereby making a substantial contribution to the domains of organizational and career studies.

Samenvatting

(Dutch Summary)

Ons proefschrift verdiepte zich in het complexe landschap van loopbaanveranderingen en introduceerde het “Career Shock”-concept. Deze term verwijst naar belangrijke, onverwachte gebeurtenissen die worden veroorzaakt door externe factoren en die individuen ertoe aanzetten hun loopbaantrajecten opnieuw te evalueren. De kern van ons onderzoek is een diepgaande analyse van hoe onvoorziene veranderingen het individuele welzijn en de loopbaanresultaten beïnvloeden. We benadrukken de cruciale rol van persoonlijke kenmerken en hulpbronnen bij het omgaan met deze schokken, waarbij aanpassingsvermogen een centraal element is in ons analytisch raamwerk.

In eerste instantie onderzochten we de impact van individuele eigenschappen, die verder reiken dan de Big Five-persoonlijkheidsdimensies, op het vermogen om zich aan abrupte veranderingen aan te passen. We richtten ons daarbij specifiek op de rol van zelfcontrole en zelfeffectiviteit in het aanpassingsvermogen, met als doel een bijdrage te leveren aan het onderzoek naar het belang van persoonlijk aanpassingsvermogen bij veranderingen.

In een volgende stap gingen we dieper in op de effecten van loopbaanschokken op het individuele welzijn, en dit binnen de context van een economisch-financiële crisis in de banksector . In dit deel worden de positieve en negatieve gevolgen van loopbaanschokken toegelicht, waarbij verder wordt onderzocht hoe persoonlijke kenmerken het effect op het welzijn modereren.

In de laatste fase bestudeerden we het effect van negatieve loopbaanschokken op specifieke loopbaanresultaten, met name loopbaanengagement en de ervaring van loopbaanspijt. In deze studie verlegden we de focus van individueel aanpassingsvermogen naar loopbaanaanpassingsvermogen, waarbij werd getracht de mediërende rol van loopbaanaanpassingsvermogen in de wisselwerking tussen loopbaanschokken en de respectieve loopbaanresultaten op te helderen.

Samenvattend, belicht voorliggend proefschrift loopbaanontwikkeling in tijden van instabiliteit, door strategieën voor te stellen voor individuen die met loopbaanschokken worden geconfronteerd om zich aan te passen aan veranderende contexten. Onze bevindingen zijn relevant voor zowel de managementpraktijk als academisch onderzoek. Ze bieden inzicht in het belang van aanpassingsvermogen en betrokkenheid in een context gekenmerkt door loopbaanshocks . Op die manier leveren we een substantiële bijdrage aan de domeinen van organisatie- en loopbaanstudies.

1.

Introduction

Charting Uncharted Waters

Organizational change has been a longstanding and dynamic focal point in management research (Bommer et al., 2005). In today's workplaces, the prevalence of organizational change is a critical feature, intricately linked to factors such as business expansion, innovation, globalization, complex regulatory frameworks, and intense competitive pressures (Cullen et al., 2014). These transformations have been further accelerated by various catalysts, including global pandemics (Akkermans et al., 2020; Choflet et al., 2021), economic downturns (Sarkar & Osiyevskyy, 2018), unstable economic conditions (Gölgeci et al., 2020), and political instability in specific regions. Consequently, organizations consistently launch change initiatives, resulting in ongoing adjustments in job expectations and increased employee demands (M. A. Griffin et al., 2007; Oreg, 2018).

This sustained and growing academic interest in the subject falls within the domain of social sciences, primarily driven by the challenges organizations face as they endeavor to adapt to relentless external forces instigating change (Parent & Lovelace, 2018b; Rafferty et al., 2013).

One of the paramount challenges organizations face is their workforce's reaction to organizational changes (Amarantou et al., 2018). This necessitates organizations to strengthen their capacity to gain increased employee support and acceptance toward their change initiatives (M. Choi, 2011). Therefore, to enhance the effectiveness of organizational change efforts, there is a heightened emphasis on examining individuals' roles and experiences throughout the change process (Van Den Heuvel et al., 2014).

It is important to note that these challenges not only significantly impact organizations but also profoundly affect the individuals engaged in collaborative efforts within these organizations. Consequently, this research primarily focuses on individuals and seeks to elucidate the substantial consequences of these changes for those involved.

The overarching objective of this doctoral thesis is to advance our comprehension of the influence of change on individuals' well-being and its role in shaping their career outcomes. This exploration begins with a comprehensive examination of the concept of change in the first study, gradually narrowing its focus to investigate unanticipated changes beyond individuals' control, leading to reevaluations of their career trajectories. Notably, the concept of "career shock", which is characterized as recurrent disruptive events originating from external factors beyond individuals' influence (Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Seibert et al., 2013), takes center stage in the second and third studies of this thesis. Within these sections, we seek to assess the impact of career shocks on individuals' overall well-being, career engagement, and the experience of career regret.

Another aim of this research is to investigate how individual characteristics contribute to shaping responses to change and moderating the consequences of unexpected events, such as career shocks.

Among these individual characteristics, adaptability emerges as a central theme. It underscores the significance of adaptability, encompassing both an individual's adaptability as defined by Ployhart and Bliese (2006), a mixture of abilities, skills, dispositions, and motivation to adapt and respond to diverse task, social, and environmental factors, and career adaptability, which pertains to an individual's capacity to effectively navigate professional challenges, changes, and difficulties as delineated by Savickas (2002).

The subsequent sections will provide a brief outline of the forthcoming content.

Organizational Change: The Evolving Role of Change Recipients

The domain of organizational change has traditionally revolved around the central role of change agents and their involvement in the planning, execution, and response to organizational

change efforts (Bommer et al., 2005; Oreg, 2006; Oreg et al., 2011c). However, a notable shift has occurred, placing increased emphasis on the significance of change recipients and their subjective experiences during these change processes (Oreg, 2018). Scholars argue that neglecting individuals' pivotal roles in the change process can contribute to the failure of change initiatives (M. Choi, 2011).

Oreg et al. (2011), in their review of "Change Recipients' Reactions to Organizational Change", asserted that the success of a change initiative often hinges on how these recipients respond to it. Among these responses, employee resistance consistently emerges as one of the most prevalent factors contributing to the challenges faced by change initiatives (Oreg, 2018).

Furthermore, there is a growing acknowledgment of the substantial influence of change recipients' characteristics on their reactions to workplace changes (M. Choi, 2011; Cullen et al., 2014). It is crucial to recognize that recipients' characteristics significantly shape their responses to such changes (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). Among these characteristics, adaptability stands out as a critical factor, holding importance not only for organizations but also for individual growth and development, as highlighted by various studies (Baard et al., 2014; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2014; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020b; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2013). In organizational change literature, the individual adaptability of change recipients exerts a substantial influence on the acceptance and success of change initiatives (Rafferty et al., 2013; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020).

Changes in the Labor Market and Traditional Career Paths

In the context of substantial socio-economic and political shifts, a recurring pattern of organizational change is reshaping the employment landscape (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022b). This rapid evolution within the labor market has given rise to a noticeable increase in job insecurity and a rising occurrence of non-traditional career paths (Maggiori et al., 2013).

It is essential to recognize that careers are profoundly shaped by similar contextual factors and labor market conditions (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022b). Accordingly, the current career and employment landscape is characterized by persistent unpredictability, growing instability, and an increasing demand for adaptability on a global scale (Maggiori et al., 2013).

In conclusion, organizational change and shifts in the labor market hold significant consequences for employees. Hence, employees are tasked with managing changes within their organizations and adapting to the evolving nature of their careers (Cullen et al., 2014). This dual challenge underscores individuals' need to navigate organizational and career transitions effectively in an environment of continual change and uncertainty.

Exploring Career Shocks: Rationale and Research Gap

Over the past two decades, there has been a notable shift in the career paradigm, with a growing emphasis on individual agency and adopting career self-management strategies (Seibert et al., 2013). This shift has placed a predominant responsibility on individuals for their career planning and necessitated the cultivation of networking skills to facilitate seamless career transitions (Akkermans et al., 2013b).

Among the various multifaceted changes impacting careers, our thesis focuses on a specific theoretical framework relevant to understanding the influence of external changes on individuals' career plans. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced in our research, which is centered on Lebanon, a nation in the Middle East. This framework, known as career shock, has gained prominence within extensive career literature. It encompasses recurring and disruptive events triggered by external forces beyond an individual's control (Seibert et al., 2013). Career shocks are events that compel individuals to contemplate potential alterations in their career trajectories (Seibert et al., 2013, p. 172).

Several compelling reasons substantiate the selection of career shocks as a central construct in our thesis. Firstly, our study's context has witnessed numerous career shocks over the past three years, which have furnished us with valuable empirical data from participants. Secondly, despite the significant attention that career shocks have garnered in the realm of career research (Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Seibert et al., 2013), a substantial knowledge gap remains that merits thorough consideration, as outlined below. One of the pressing knowledge gaps pertains to the comprehensive understanding of the various consequences of career shocks, as highlighted by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018) and Akkermans, Collings, et al. (2021). Furthermore, it is worth noting that the influence of career shocks may be contingent on individual variables and agency, as discussed by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018). However, the current scholarly literature has not thoroughly explored this dimension, which is somewhat unexpected given the central role that individual agency plays in enhancing performance in the modern professional landscape, as well as its importance in shaping an individual's broader career path and achievements (Converse et al., 2012; Seibert et al., 2001).

Additionally, the existing literature underscores the presence of various domains warranting more comprehensive examination, with particular attention drawn to the imperative for closer investigation of employee well-being (Akkermans et al., 2021b). Moreover, while initial research has explored the impact of career shocks on career outcomes, a noticeable research void remains (Akkermans, Collings, et al., 2021; Akkermans, Lee, et al., 2021; Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al., 2021b). Addressing this gap can provide invaluable insights into how individuals manage their careers in the face of unforeseen events and adversities, thereby enriching our understanding of career dynamics when confronted with such disruptions. Finally, our study of career shocks in Lebanon, a nation in the Middle East, is pertinent due to its recurrent

and significant political, economic, and social changes. Lebanon's unique context, marked by these shocks' frequency, nature, and duration, makes it an ideal and insightful backdrop for our research.

The Thesis Storyline

The thesis consists of three interconnected studies, organized into three chapters, each contributing to our comprehension of the impacts of change on various facets of employees' lives, ranging from well-being to career outcomes. Table 1.1 provides an overview of the core components of these three studies, encompassing the diverse constructs under investigation.

Our inquiry commences in Chapter 2, where we begin a preliminary exploration of the concept of change. Subsequently, we examine how individual characteristics can facilitate responses to abrupt alterations in circumstances. Our overarching objective is to augment the existing body of knowledge by shedding light on the role of individual attributes, distinct from the widely recognized Big Five personality traits, in influencing responses to sudden changes. Our initial study discusses self-monitoring and self-efficacy, focusing on individual adaptability and how these characteristics can influence individuals' reactions toward change.

Following this, we transition to a more focused examination of specific instances of abrupt change, which lie beyond an individual's sphere of control and necessitate a reevaluation of their career trajectories. Within this thesis, particularly in the second and third studies, our central construct of interest is career shock, as it epitomizes the primary change event under investigation.

In the second study, Chapter 3 of our thesis, we delve into individual characteristics, specifically self-monitoring and individual adaptability, in shaping responses to such career shocks. Additionally, we aim to discern the consequences of these career shocks on the overall well-being of affected individuals. This study seeks to underscore the significance of well-being and elucidate how negative and positive career shocks can potentially impact it. Furthermore, we

investigate how individual characteristics may act as moderators, influencing the extent of this impact.

Extending our exploration into career shocks, the third study (Chapter 4) investigates how negative career shocks may influence various career outcomes, explicitly examining their impact on individual career engagement and the experience of career regret. Within this fourth chapter, we revisit the concept of adaptability, shifting our focus from individual adaptability to career adaptability. Our research aims to clarify the role of career adaptability as a mediator in the relationship between the occurrence of career shocks and subsequent career outcomes.

Table 1.1

Collection of Studies

	(Chapter 2) First Study	(Chapter 3) Second Study	(Chapter 4) Third Study
Title	**Leader's Personality, Adaptability, and Attitude Toward Change. A Study in the Middle East.**	**Career Shocks and Employee Well-Being. The Roles of Individual Adaptability and Self-Monitoring Among Lebanese Banking Employees.**	**Career Engagement or Career Regret: The Impact of Career Shocks Through Career Adaptability. A Longitudinal Study in the Lebanese Banking Sector.**
Research Question	What is the mediating role of a leader's adaptability in the relationship between their personality traits and their attitude toward change in a volatile environment like the Middle East?	What is the impact of career shocks on the well-being of banking sector employees in Lebanon during an economic crisis, and how can agency-related traits buffer this impact?	How do negative career shocks affect career outcomes, and what role does career adaptability play in mediating these effects in Lebanon's banking sector during periods of significant crisis?
Independent Variable	Self-Efficacy - SE Self-Monitoring - SM	Negative Career Shocks - NCS Positive Career Shocks - PCS	Negative Career Shocks - NCS
Dependent Variable	Attitude Toward Change - ATC	Employee Well-Being - EWB	Career Engagement - CE Career Regret - CR
Moderator		Individual Adaptability - IA Self-Monitoring - SM Frequency and Duration - F&D	
Mediator	Individual Adaptability - IA		Career Adaptability - CA
Level of Analysis	Individuals - Leaders in the Middle East	Individuals - Lebanese Banking Employees	Individuals - Lebanese Banking Employees
Design	Cross-sectional	Cross-sectional	Longitudinal (3 waves)
Approach	Quantitative-Positivist philosophical methodology from an ontological perspective		
Sample	170	450	388
Data Collected	July 2021	September 2022	January 2022 - June 2023
Literature	Change	Career	Career
Status	Published in Conference Proceedings	Published as a Working Paper at the University of Antwerp	Finalized

The Thesis Context

The first study focuses on participants working in organizations situated within the volatile Middle Eastern landscape. This region has experienced a disproportionate impact from heightened political and economic uncertainties, further exacerbated by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Middle East has been marked by a pronounced prevalence of violence, an escalation in the presence of armed non-state entities, and the reinforcement of authoritarian regimes (Assouad, 2023).

For the second and third studies, data collection was explicitly centered around a distinct sector and country within the Middle East, namely the Lebanese banking sector. Providing a brief contextual overview of these two studies is essential to underscore the relevance of career shocks within this particular context.

Lebanon, a nation in the Middle East, has grappled with enduring instability and uncertainty since the outbreak of the Civil War in 1975 (Ghosn & Khoury, 2011). These persistent challenges have resonated across various dimensions of Lebanese society and the economy, placing substantial pressure on local institutions and organizations.

The situation in Lebanon has been further exacerbated by a series of compounding disruptions, resulting in a profoundly devastating and multifaceted crisis, which stands as one of the most formidable challenges in the nation's contemporary history (World Bank, 2021). This crisis began in October 2019 and has been compounded by two significant economic shocks: the global COVID-19 pandemic and the catastrophic Port of Beirut explosion in August 2020 (World Bank, 2021). These events have collectively unleashed unparalleled turmoil upon the nation. Consequently, Lebanon is ensnared in a complex and interwoven web of crises spanning economic, financial, political, and social dimensions (Mawad et al., 2022).

The impact of these crises on the Lebanese population cannot be overstated; individuals in Lebanon are presently contending with uncertainty regarding their economic and financial prospects, unprecedented in recent memory (Mawad et al., 2022). The World Bank's most recent economic updates provide a sobering assessment of Lebanon's ongoing financial and economic crisis. According to their analysis, this crisis is on the precipice of earning a place among the top 10, and conceivably, even within the top three, of the most severe crisis episodes witnessed globally since the mid-nineteenth century (World Bank, 2021). This stark classification underscores the extraordinary gravity of the predicament faced by Lebanon, positioning it within the annals of historic economic crises on a global scale.

The impact of the crisis has been most pronounced within the banking sector, a crucial component of the nation's financial landscape. This sector has borne the burden of the crisis due to its substantial exposure to the government's fiscal challenges. To guide the country towards economic recovery, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has initiated stringent measures to restructure the banking sector. These measures necessitate actions such as mergers and downsizing. Within this context, the banking sector, from which our study's participant sample is derived, finds itself particularly susceptible to the government's financial difficulties. Consequently, the sector must undertake sweeping restructuring initiatives, including mergers and downsizing, which have far-reaching implications for employees. These disruptive events extend across various facets of their lives, impacting job security, income stability, overall health, and general well-being.

Structure of the Dissertation

Literature

Our study designs and hypotheses have been meticulously informed by an exhaustive academic literature review involving 450 relevant studies in our library throughout the Ph.D.

journey. The research has thoroughly examined articles about the core constructs underpinning the thesis. The body of literature primarily emanates from esteemed journals within Career, Change, Human Resources, and Psychology.

Our comprehensive literature review draws from esteemed publications, with a focus on the most frequently referenced journals, which include “The Career Development Quarterly”, “Journal of Career Development”, “Career Development International Behavior”, “Journal of Vocational Behavior”, and “Journal of Career Assessment”. Additionally, we have garnered valuable insights from respected sources such as “Human Resource Management Journal” and “Human Resource Development Review”. Furthermore, our study is enriched by further contributions sourced from prominent journals like “The Journal of Applied Psychology”, “The Journal of Managerial Psychology”, “Academy of Management Journal”, and “The Journal of Organizational Change Management”. This broad engagement with scholarly literature bolsters the theoretical foundation of our research, ensuring its academic rigor and integrity.

Central Focus

In this thesis, our central focus lies on an in-depth examination of the consequences of sudden external changes, referred to as career shocks. We mainly consider how these career shocks affect well-being and career outcomes. Our research highlights the crucial role that individual characteristics and personal resources play in this context, with adaptability standing out as a foundational attribute within our analytical framework.

This perspective aligns seamlessly with our primary objective: to reveal the intricate interplay among individual traits, responses to change, the occurrence of career shocks, and the subsequent impact on well-being and career outcomes. By delving into these dynamics, we aim to

provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex relationships that underlie individuals' experiences when faced with career shocks.

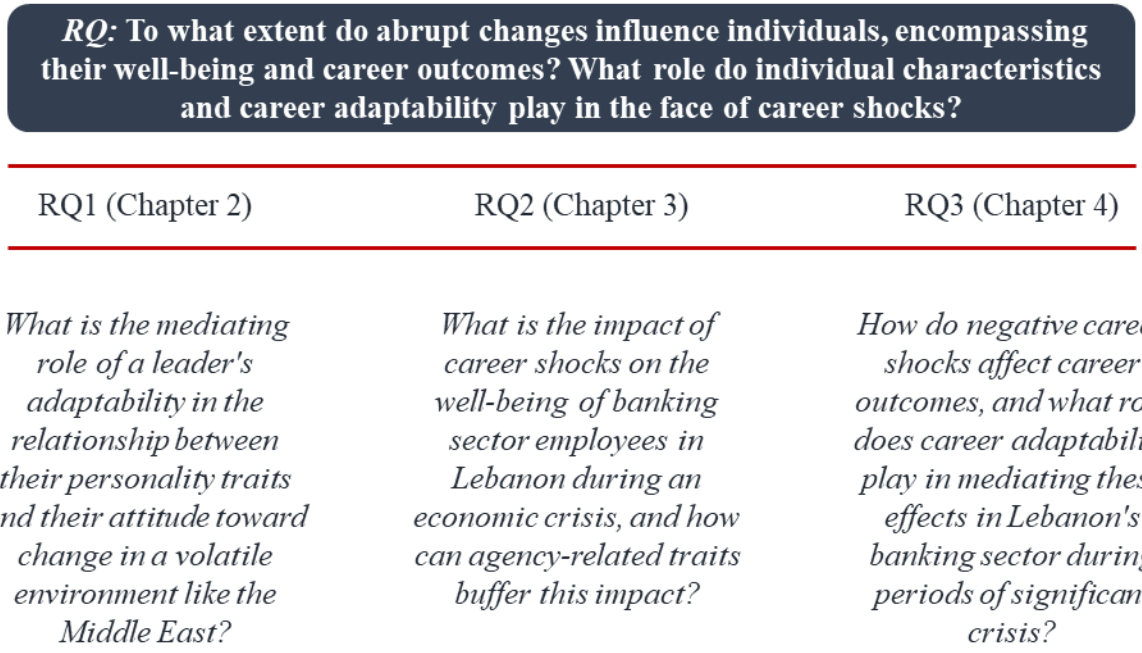
Research Questions

Thus, as explored across three distinct research studies within this thesis, our formulated hypotheses aim to address three pivotal research questions (see Figure 1.1). These inquiries collectively revolve around the overarching central research question of the thesis:

RQ: To what extent do abrupt changes influence individuals, encompassing their well-being and career outcomes? What role do individual characteristics and career adaptability play in the face of career shocks?

Figure 1.1

Central Research Question



The thesis begins with examining broad organizational changes and individuals' general responses to such changes while also considering the influence of personality traits and

adaptability. As the thesis progresses, the scope of change under investigation becomes more specific, with a heightened focus on its implications for individual well-being and career outcomes.

RQ1: What is the mediating role of a leader's adaptability in the relationship between their personality traits and their attitude toward change in a volatile environment like the Middle East?

Chapter 2 is dedicated to addressing the first research question. To do so, we conducted an empirical study titled "Leader's Personality, Adaptability, and Attitude Toward Change. A Study in the Middle East". This study delves into the connection between leaders' inherent personality traits and adaptability in unanticipated organizational change.

The primary focus of this study is to explore the roles of individual characteristics, specifically self-monitoring, self-efficacy, and individual adaptability, in influencing individuals' responses to continuously evolving changes. The study involved 170 leaders operating in a dynamic organizational environment characterized by ongoing volatility, particularly within the Middle Eastern context.

Rooted in the theoretical frameworks of the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and the I-ADAPT theory, this research generated six hypotheses (see Table 1.2). Subsequently, we subjected the data to rigorous analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to systematically investigate and assess the hypothesized relationships among the variables. To elucidate these complex relationships, we employed a mediator model, with individual adaptability as an intermediary construct mediating the connection between personality traits, namely self-monitoring and self-efficacy, and individuals' attitudes toward proposed changes.

By addressing the first research question, this study aims to contribute to our understanding of how individuals with high self-monitoring and self-efficacy demonstrate enhanced adaptability to change, subsequently leading to improved attitudes toward change.

Table 1.2

Research Approach for RQ1

What is the mediating role of a leader's adaptability in the relationship between their personality traits and their attitude toward change in a volatile environment like the Middle East?

Design	Aim	Theory
Quantitative Cross-Sectional Survey 170 Participants 57% Lebanon & 43% MEA SEM-AMOS	*H1*: Self-monitoring is positively correlated with adaptability. *H2*: Self-monitoring is negatively correlated with attitude toward change. *H3*: Self-efficacy is positively correlated with adaptability. *H4*: Self-efficacy is negatively correlated with attitude toward change. *H5*: Adaptability negatively affects the attitude toward change. *H6*: Adaptability mediates the relationship between *(a)* self-monitoring and *(b)* self-efficacy and attitude toward change.	Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) Hobfoll (1989) I-ADAPT Theory Ployhart & Bliese (2006)

Transitioning to a more specific realm of change, the second study explores career shocks, those unanticipated, jarring events triggered by external factors that lie beyond an employee's control.

RQ2: What is the impact of career shocks on the well-being of banking sector employees in Lebanon during an economic crisis, and how can agency-related traits buffer this impact?

In Chapter 3, we delve into the second research question (see Table 1.3) through a quantitative empirical study entitled "Career Shocks and Employee Well-Being. The Roles of Individual Adaptability and Self-Monitoring Among Lebanese Banking Employees". This study employs a double-moderate model and draws six hypotheses from the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) and Conservation of Resources (COR) theoretical frameworks. It explores the intricate interplay among individual factors, encompassing both positive and negative career shocks and the well-being of employees amidst Lebanon's economic crisis.

During this study, we systematically examine the moderating roles of individual adaptability (IA) and self-monitoring (SM) concerning the relationship between positive and negative career shocks and their effects on employee well-being. Furthermore, we explore the intricate interactions of these attributes with other moderating factors, specifically the frequency and duration of the shocks. Data collection for this study concluded in September 2022, involving a sample of 450 individuals employed in the Lebanese banking sector.

In addressing the second research question, this study aims to contribute to our comprehension of how positive and negative career shocks impact employees within the banking sector, especially during economic crises. It underscores the pivotal role of individual factors in shaping employee well-being outcomes.

Table 1.3

Research Approach for RQ2

What is the impact of career shocks on the well-being of banking sector employees in Lebanon during an economic crisis, and how can agency-related traits buffer this impact?

Design	Aim	Theory
Quantitative Cross-Sectional Survey 450 Participants Lebanese Banking Employees SEM-AMOS	*H1*: Positive career shocks are positively related to employee's *(a)* life well-being, *(b)* psychological well-being, and *(c)* workplace well-being. *H2*: Negative career shocks are negatively related to employee's *(a)* life well-being, *(b)* psychological well-being, and *(c)* workplace well-being. *H3*: Individual adaptability moderates the negative impact of negative career shocks on employee well-being. *H4*: Self-monitoring moderates the negative impact of negative career shocks on employee well-being.	Job Demands-Resources Theory (JD-R) Bakker & Demerouti (2007) Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) Hobfoll (1989)

RQ3: How do negative career shocks affect career outcomes, and what role does career adaptability play in mediating these effects in Lebanon's banking sector during periods of significant crisis?

The third study, "Career Engagement or Career Regret: The Impact of Career Shocks Through Career Adaptability. A Longitudinal Study in the Lebanese Banking Sector", answers the

third research question (see Table 1.4) and assumes a pivotal role within this dissertation for several compelling reasons.

Firstly, this study delves more profoundly into exploring the construct of career shocks and their consequential impacts on individuals' career outcomes over time. In this study, our focus narrows to the perception of specifically negative shocks and their potential to yield positive or negative career outcomes. Furthermore, this study goes beyond the confines of individual adaptability, broadening its investigative scope to encompass the broader concept of career adaptability within the context of career shocks. This expansion of inquiry aims to uncover the extent to which these adaptability attributes manifest themselves during career shocks, how these negative shocks can potentially influence them, and consequently, how these attributes may influence subsequent career outcomes. This study contributes valuable insights to examining the relationship among negative career shocks, career adaptability as a mediator, and their collective impact on career outcomes.

Grounded within the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and Career Construction Theory (CCT), we proposed four hypotheses (see Table 1.4). Our research elucidates how individuals respond to and strategize in challenging career events, ultimately enhancing our comprehension of how career shocks influence career engagement and regret.

Additionally, this study transitions from a cross-sectional research design employed in the initial two studies to a longitudinal approach. Data collection occurred at three distinct time points across three waves, commencing at the onset of the crisis and continuing over 18 months. It is essential to highlight that, as of the present, a definitive conclusion regarding the crisis cannot be asserted. Nevertheless, over these 18 months, we observed diverse reactions within the population.

These variations can be attributed to differences in individuals' adaptability skills and their consideration of potential impacts on their career outcomes.

This study provides a more authentic reflection of participants' responses within this context. The six-month intervals between each survey enabled the examination of evolving reactions and responses in a dynamic environment. This approach ultimately yields a more nuanced and realistic portrayal of how individuals adapted and coped with the ongoing crisis.

Table 1.4

Research Approach for RQ3

How do negative career shocks affect career outcomes, and what role does career adaptability play in mediating these effects in Lebanon's banking sector during periods of significant crisis?

Design	Aim	Theory
Quantitative Survey Longitudinal (3 waves) 388 Participants Lebanese Banking Employees PLS-SEM	*H1*: Experiencing a negative career shock will be negatively related to career engagement. *H2*: Experiencing a negative career shock will be positively related to career regret. *H3*: Experiencing a negative career shock will be negatively related to career adaptability. *H4*: Career adaptability mediates the relationship between *(a)* negative career shocks and career engagement and *(b)* negative career shocks and career regret.	Job Demands-Resources Theory (JD-R) Bakker & Demerouti (2007) Career Construction Theory (CCT) Savickas & Porfeli (2002)

Methodology

This section describes the methods used during this thesis and the reasons behind our choice. The methodological framework adopted throughout the studies adheres to a positivist philosophical approach underpinning a specific ontological perspective. The data acquisition process exclusively relied on primary data sources, as it involved collecting information through structured and anonymous questionnaires distributed to the study participants.

To ensure the questionnaires' validity and reliability in all three studies, we employed instruments retrieved from existing literature, all of which had undergone rigorous validation processes (see Table 1.5).

Table 1.5

Measurement Table

Construct	Adopted from	Number of Questions
Career Adaptability	Maggiori et al. (2017)	12
Career Shocks	Ali et al. (2020); Seibert (2013;2016)	8
Career Engagement	Hirschi et al. (2014)	9
Career Regret	Wrzesniewski et al. (2006)	9
Employee Well-Being	Zheng et al. (2015)	18
Attitude Toward Change	Oreg (2006)	15
Individual Adaptability	Ployhart and Bliese's (2006)	15
Self-Monitoring	Lennox and Wolfe (1984)	7
Self-Efficacy	Schwarzer et al. (1997)	10

A quantitative approach was consistently employed across all three studies in our research endeavors. This methodological choice was deliberate, motivated by the inherent advantages of quantitative studies, particularly in generalizability and replicability (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The rationale behind this selection is rooted in the distinct nature of our investigations, which revolve around a unique and pertinent context, namely, a nation located in the Middle East. This region has witnessed profound political, economic, and social transformations, making it an ideal setting for our inquiries. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that the contextual factors specific to Lebanon may limit the extent to which our findings can be extrapolated to a broader global context. Utilizing a quantitative research approach has several advantages, including enhancing the search findings' rigor and reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). By adopting this methodology, we aim to bolster the credibility of our research outcomes and facilitate their potential applicability beyond the confines of the unique context in which they were derived.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that quantitative research approaches have gained widespread recognition and utilization, particularly within career studies (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022a). This prevalence extends to the examination of topics specifically linked to career shocks. A notable body of contemporary research has demonstrated a growing preference for quantitative approaches in the study of career shocks, with numerous scholars recognizing the effectiveness of these methods, as Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018), Seibert et al. (2013), Kraimer et al. (2019), Blokker et al. (2019), Hofer et al. (2020), Mansur and Felix (2020) and Ali and Mehreen (2021) and many more.

We adopted a cross-sectional design in the initial two studies within this central quantitative framework. In contrast, the third study utilized a longitudinal approach, spanning three distinct waves of data collection. This methodological alignment enabled us to comprehensively explore

the phenomena under investigation, leveraging the strengths of both cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this doctoral thesis investigates how employees respond to abrupt changes that can impact them across multiple dimensions, including their well-being, current work roles, and future career development. The primary objective of this thesis is to shed light on the significant implications of such changes, referred to as career shocks, and their profound effects on individual well-being and future careers. Conducting three studies in a volatile environment and beyond contributing to the existing body of knowledge, this thesis endeavors to raise awareness and draw the attention of practitioners in this region to the persistent challenges posed by career shocks. This dissemination aims to guide in navigating the ongoing volatility that individuals in the workforce face, thereby contributing to organizational resilience and success.

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2.

Leader's Personality, Adaptability, and Attitude Toward Change.

A Study in the Middle East.

Sailing the Stormy Seas of Change

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Abstract

Purpose: This research investigates how individual attributes, particularly self-monitoring, self-efficacy, and individual adaptability, influence attitudes toward change among leaders in the turbulent Middle East, which has been greatly impacted by political and economic uncertainties worsened by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Design / Methodology: Based on the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and the Individual Adaptability (I-ADAPT) theory as theoretical frameworks, this research employs a cross-sectional design to gather primary data from leaders operating within Middle Eastern organizations. The data collected is subjected to Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to meticulously analyze and evaluate the proposed relationships between individual factors, individual adaptability, and attitudes toward change.

Findings: The research findings highlight a significant relationship between specific individual characteristics, namely high self-monitoring and high self-efficacy, and increased adaptability and receptiveness to change, perceived as opportunities rather than threats. Leaders with elevated self-monitoring and self-efficacy levels tend to demonstrate greater adaptability and reduced resistance to change, supported by existing empirical studies and deductive reasoning from the literature.

The study also examines the predictive role of self-monitoring in a leader's adaptability and attitude toward change, alongside the intermediary role of self-efficacy in shaping a leader's attitude toward change through the lens of adaptability.

Originality / Value*:* This study addresses the need for further exploration beyond traditional predictors of attitude toward change (ATC), such as personality traits and individual adaptability. It contributes by investigating the predictive significance of individual traits like self-monitoring and self-efficacy concerning attitude toward change. The research introduces a novel dimension

by examining how individual adaptability mediates the connection between these traits and attitude toward change, expanding our understanding in this area.

Additionally, most prior studies on this subject have focused on Western contexts. This research, however, shifts the focus to the Middle East, a region profoundly impacted by successive waves of disruptive change. It aims to elucidate the mediating role of a leader's adaptability in the complex relationship between their personality traits and attitude toward change, offering valuable insights into the Middle Eastern perspective on this critical issue.

Conclusion: This study broadens the scope by examining lesser-explored individual traits beyond the Big Five and their predictive value for attitude toward change (ATC). It also investigates how these traits influence individual adaptability in dynamic organizational contexts, focusing on the mediating role of individual adaptability in shaping attitudes toward change. Our research addresses a crucial gap, enhancing our understanding of individual responses to organizational change and providing practical insights for managing these challenges.

Keywords: self-monitoring, self-efficacy, individual adaptability, attitude toward change

Introduction

Research on organizational change has grown in importance due to the rapid pace of change and increased competition in recent decades. Organizations, in their pursuit of maintaining competitiveness, engage in various transformations like restructuring, downsizing, technological advancements, mergers, or acquisitions (Parent & Lovelace, 2018a). These changes lead to increased job responsibilities for the workforce (Cullen et al., 2014; Rafferty et al., 2013) and are often triggered by events such as global pandemics (Akkermans et al., 2020; Choflet et al., 2021), economic crises (Sarkar & Osiyevskyy, 2018), and volatile economic conditions in specific regions (Gölgeci et al., 2020). Consequently, organizations continuously initiate change initiatives, resulting in ongoing adjustments to job requirements and additional employee demands (M. A. Griffin et al., 2007; Oreg, 2018).

Traditionally, the focus in the field of organizational change was on change agents and their influence, but there has been a significant shift toward emphasizing change recipients and their experiences (Oreg, 2018). Within the organizational change literature, it is increasingly recognized that the attributes of change recipients significantly impact their responses to workplace changes (Cullen et al., 2014). Many researchers argue that change initiatives often fail due to an underestimation of the essential role individuals play in the change process (Choi, 2011b).

Employee resistance is a widely acknowledged contributor to the failure of change initiatives (Amarantou et al., 2018). However, there is a limited understanding of the underlying causes of this resistance in the workplace (Amarantou et al., 2018). Employee attitude toward change (ATC) encompasses behaviors and inclinations in response to change (Oreg, 2006).

Recent research emphasizes the perspectives of change recipients, highlighting the collective efforts of organization members in driving sustainable change (Choi, 2011b). Organizations are increasingly pressured to secure employee support for change initiatives, leading researchers to examine various attitudinal constructs reflecting employees' perspectives on change (Choi, 2011b).

The rapid pace of societal transformation has heightened the demand for organizational agility and efficiency. This increased work intensity highlights the importance of employees' adaptability (Baard et al., 2014; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020a). Successful organizational change management requires employees to invest cognitive and emotional resources in adaptation (Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020).

In the organizational change literature, the individual adaptability of change recipients is a crucial factor influencing the acceptance and success of change efforts (Rafferty et al., 2013). Leaders face significant challenges in managing their own and their employees' adaptability, especially in the face of environmental volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.

The specific contextual factors of a change initiative play a significant role in shaping employees' attitudes toward change, which may evolve with experience in the change context. Therefore, it is advisable to consider predictors as dynamic states rather than static personality traits (Choi, 2011a).

To address the dynamic nature of this phenomenon, our inquiry will focus on individual attributes recognized for their inherent dynamism. Our inquiry focuses on individual attributes, specifically self-efficacy (belief in one's capacity to achieve tasks) and self-monitoring as predictors of employees' attitudes toward change (Bandura, 2010; Gangestad & Snyder, 2000).

We also consider individual adaptability, which measures the ability to adjust to changing circumstances (Ployhart & Bliese, 2006a), as a mediating factor.

Organizational change, aimed at improving performance, can create uncertainty and resource depletion among employees (Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020a). To understand how individuals strategically allocate and utilize resources in response to change and resource depletion, including adaptability, self-monitoring, and self-efficacy, we apply the foundational principles of the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Hofer et al., 2020).

In the Middle East, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the region's political and economic instability. Research has examined leadership styles and attitudes toward change (Eisenbach et al., 1999; Gill, 2002; Julie Battilana, 2010). However, there is a gap in the literature regarding leaders' characteristics, such as adaptability and attitudes toward change, despite their significant influence during organizational change processes (Denison et al., 1995; Lavine, 2014). This study explores a leader's self-monitoring and self-efficacy in the context of change, considering their adaptability and attitudes toward change.

Despite considerable practitioner interest, there is a research gap concerning the interplay between adaptability (Cullen et al., 2014), individual characteristics (Amarantou et al., 2018), and their collective impact on attitudes toward organizational change. Our study investigates the influence of individual characteristics, distinct from personality traits, on shaping responses to change through individual adaptability.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

We base our proposed hypotheses on the Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2011), which we present in the following sections, and apply the fundamental aspects of the theory used in our investigative model.

Conservation of Resources Theory

The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, developed by Hobfoll (1989), offers a valuable framework for understanding individual responses to stress, emphasizing the prioritization of avoiding resource losses over gaining additional resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018b; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020a).

Within organizational change contexts, employees may initially perceive potential resource losses, leading to negative reactions (Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020a). The COR theory underscores the crucial role of resources in managing stress and encompasses tangible and intangible elements such as personal attributes, circumstances, and energy (Hobfoll et al., 2018a). These personal resources include qualities like self-efficacy, self-monitoring, and individual adaptability (Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al., 2021a; Hobfoll et al., 2018b; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2014).

One core principle of COR theory is that individuals with higher resources are less vulnerable to losses and better equipped to acquire additional resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018b). Within the context of organizational change, this suggests that employees possessing valuable resources like individual adaptability, self-monitoring, and self-efficacy are more likely to successfully adapt and benefit from changes (Hobfoll et al., 2018b; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020b).

While COR theory presents promise in examining how employees adapt to changes, a limited body of research exists in this area (Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020a). COR theory's

fundamental tenets apply to various organizational change scenarios (Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2010). In our present study, we specifically concentrate on the safeguarding and potential association of valued resources, such as individual adaptability and dynamic personal attributes, with subsequent adaptive performance for a more positive reaction to change.

I-ADAPT Theory

In 2006, Ployhart and Bliese introduced the I-ADAPT theory, a conceptual framework that emphasizes individual differences in adaptability. This theory defines adaptability as "an individual's ability, skill, disposition, willingness, and motivation to change or fit different tasks, social, and environmental features" (Ployhart & Bliese, 2006, p. 13). This framework underscores the idea that individuals tend to adjust proactively to new tasks and environments (Cullen et al., 2014; Hua et al., 2019).

The I-ADAPT theory definition highlights a few core principles: a) It represents a consistent individual trait, profoundly influencing cognitive and behavioral responses to new situations such that adaptable individuals often see situations as opportunities, not stressors; b) The essence of I-ADAPT theory lies in self-adjustment, with a focus on personal transformation over external factors; c) There is an innate motivation in individuals to adapt, especially in challenging scenarios, as demonstrated by proactive employees (Cullen et al., 2014; Hua et al., 2019; Ployhart & Bliese, 2006).

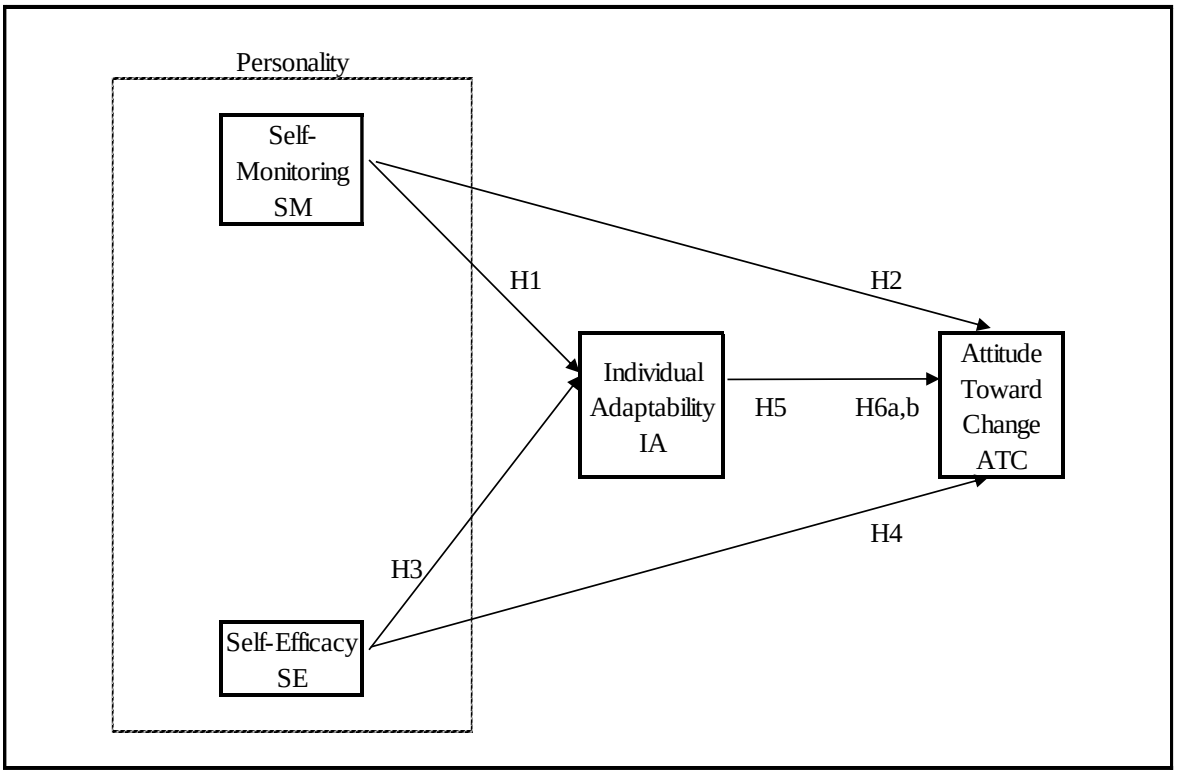
It is important to note that Ployhart and Bliese (2006) carefully distinguished adaptability from related constructs such as coping, adaptive performance, and self-monitoring (Cullen et al., 2014; Hua et al., 2019).

In our study, we empirically examined the I-ADAPT theory, proposing that individual attributes beyond personality traits are predictors of an individual's adaptability. Furthermore, we explored how these attributes contribute to more favorable responses when confronted with change.

Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and the Individual Adaptability (I-ADAPT) framework offer a foundational theoretical perspective that informs the model under examination in this study. We propose a hypothesis suggesting that individual characteristics, such as self-efficacy and self-monitoring, serve as antecedents to individual adaptability and attitude toward change. Moreover, individual adaptability (IA) is posited to mediate the relationship between personality traits and attitudes toward change (ATC) (see Figure 2.1). In the subsequent section, a more comprehensive elaboration on the formulation of the hypotheses is presented.

Figure 2.1

Proposed Framework of the Study



Hypotheses Development

Attitude Toward Change

In the extensive literature on organizational change, the sentiments and responses of change recipients are often incorporated, yet the predominant concentration is on the broader organizational context (Oreg et al., 2011a). However, building upon the emerging agreement on the pivotal significance of change recipients' responses in gauging the likely success of change (Oreg et al., 2011a), a wave of contemporary research in organizational change underscores the importance of these recipients' perceptions of change in comprehending the dynamics of organizational transformation (Fugate et al., 2008; Oreg, 2006; Oreg et al., 2011a; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006).

Over the past several decades, resistance to change (RTC) has garnered sustained interest from scholarly and professional communities (Amarantou et al., 2018).

In scholarly discourse, resistance to change (RTC) is frequently identified as a cause of unsuccessful change initiatives (Amarantou et al., 2018).

According to Oreg (2006), resistance is conceptualized as a response to change encompassing three distinct components. These components delineate three varied manifestations of individual appraisal of an object or circumstance (Amarantou et al., 2018).

In their research on resistance to organizational change, Oreg (2006) delineates resistance as a tridimensional attitude with a negative inclination toward change, encapsulating affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions (Oreg et al., 2011a).

The affective dimension encapsulates an individual's emotional reactions to change, manifesting as anger or anxiety. This facet is also articulated as disposition toward change (DTC) in Amarantou et al. (2018). On the other hand, the cognitive dimension covers an individual's

evaluative deliberations about the change, querying its indispensability or potential advantages. This is paralleled by the anticipated impact of change (AIC), as delineated by Amarantou et al. (2018).

Simultaneously, the behavioral dimension concentrates on tangible or anticipated reactions to alterations, ranging from articulating concerns to advocating against perceived negative aspects of the change, as denoted by Oreg (2006). This perspective is congruent with the notion of attitude toward change (ATC) (Amarantou et al., 2018). In this framework, ATC represents employees' confrontational predispositions and adverse responses when faced with organizational changes.

In their research on resistance to change and its antecedents, Amarantou et al. (2018) revealed a pronounced direct relationship between attitude toward change and resistance to change (RTC). This discovery aligns with prior academic contentions suggesting that contentious behaviors intensify RTC. This assertion resonates with earlier studies, which have indicated that unfavorable attitudes toward change are associated with negative emotional dispositions and have a marked propensity to predict withdrawal behaviors (Fugate et al., 2008; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020). In our study, attitude toward change, pertains to the argumentative behaviors exhibited by employees and their adverse responses to alterations within organizational contexts (Amarantou et al., 2018).

In academic circles, consensus on the antecedents of resistance to change (RTC) is missing (Amarantou et al., 2018). Despite its significance, understanding the triggering factors in organizational settings remains incomplete (Amarantou et al., 2018; Oreg et al., 2011a).

Delving into this domain, Amarantou et al. (2018) emphasized the prominence of individual resistance attributes. Their investigation highlighted a significant association between personality traits and ATC, indicating that these traits play a cardinal role in shaping attitudes

toward change (Amarantou et al., 2018). This insight not only accentuates the central role of individual characteristics in the context of resistance but also suggests avenues for further exploration into the influence of diverse personal attributes on ATC.

Addressing the existing knowledge gap, our research examines the influence of individual characteristics, specifically self-monitoring and self-efficacy, on ATC. Furthermore, in this relationship, we will probe into the potential mediating role of individual adaptability, encompassing traits that propel individuals to adapt to evolving circumstances.

Self-Monitoring

Research in industrial and organizational psychology has predominantly concentrated on the Five-Factor model of personality, often overlooking the potential significance of traits such as self-monitoring (Day & Schleicher, 2006). Snyder (1974) pioneered the exploration of this trait, introducing and conceptualizing the construct of self-monitoring to enhance our understanding of individual behavior. Central to this theory is the concept of expressive control (Day & Schleicher, 2006). This dimension delves into an individual's ability to regulate their actions, behaviors, and public expressions, as further detailed by Gangestad and Snyder (2000).

Individuals with a high degree of self-monitoring possess control and are proficient in modifying their public behaviors. They aim to project a desired social image and attain significant social acceptance (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). This concept was further explored by Day et al. (2002) in their meta-analysis. They built upon Snyder's (1974) initial work, defining it as the capacity of individuals to adapt their self-presentation and demeanor to align more harmoniously with their immediate social environment.

The hybrid nature of self-monitoring has been a point of contention, with scholars debating its categorization as a skill, a trait, or a combination of both (Day et al., 2002). In this review, self-

monitoring will be assessed as a personality trait. Notably, neither belongs to the Big Five personality traits as indicated by Day et al. (2002) nor serves as a replacement for any of them (Barrick et al., 2005). Research by Kudret et al. (2019) found a significant correlation between self-monitoring and the traits of extraversion and openness to experience (Barrick et al., 2005; Day & Schleicher, 2006). Given that individuals with high self-monitoring can modulate and adjust their behaviors based on specific objectives, their inclination to adapt may overshadow inherent personality traits defined by the Five-Factor Model (FFM) (Day et al., 2002).

While no recent empirical studies directly link self-monitoring with individual adaptability, the characteristics associated with self-monitoring suggest potential correlations. Individuals with pronounced self-monitoring excel in controlling, observing, modifying, and tailoring their behavior to align with and realize specific objectives (Day & Schleicher, 2006; Snyder, 1979). Given these capabilities, we posit that those with elevated levels of this trait are optimally equipped for adaptation. Prior empirical research indicates a positive correlation between high self-monitoring and pronounced traits of extraversion and openness to experience (Barrick et al., 2005; Day & Schleicher, 2006; Day et al., 2002). Building on this, several studies have established a positive relationship between these personality traits and levels of adaptability (Huang et al., 2014).

Moreover, another study conducted by Inzlicht et al. (2006) empirically showed that self-monitoring is a beneficial trait that allows an adaptive mechanism when faced with demanding contexts, further corroborated by Tolentino et al. (2019). Extending from this foundational understanding, the present research posits that self-monitoring is a salient predictor for adaptability, consequently attenuating adverse responses to alterations.

Drawing from the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, individuals are motivated to safeguard their valued resources from potential threats, a behavior primarily instigated by their response to stress (Hobfoll et al., 2018). In this context, personal resources such as self-monitoring are leveraged to enhance adaptability, a critical trait for navigating challenges and mitigating negative repercussions.

Hence, we can propose:

H1: Self-monitoring is positively correlated with adaptability.

Since self-monitored people have the ability and the willingness to accommodate their behavior to gain social acceptance, when change is in their favor, they are willing to manipulate their attitude and cooperate positively with the change. Hence, we can propose:

H2: Self-monitoring is negatively correlated with attitude toward change.

Self-Efficacy

Albert Bandura pioneered the inclusion of the self-efficacy construct as a pivotal variable within the social cognitive theory. Stemming from Bandura and Adams (1977), self-efficacy is conceptualized as individuals' beliefs and assessments about their ability to successfully complete a task or performance.

Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability rather than their actual knowledge of the level of possessed skills (Bandura, 1984; Bandura & Adams, 1977). It is related to the perception of one's ability to alter and modify the needed skills and behavior depending on the challenges emerging from new events or changes (B. Griffin & Hesketh, 2003; Pulakos et al., 2000). According to Bandura, self-efficacy is a motivational concept related to a specific objective rather than a general trait (Griffin & Hesketh, 2003). Individuals possessing elevated self-efficacy

anticipate positive results from their endeavors, perceiving challenges as opportunities for mastery through sustained effort and resilience (Bradley et al., 2017; Lyons & Bandura, 2019).

Research consistently identifies self-efficacy as a pivotal predictor of adaptability (B. Griffin & Hesketh, 2003; Park & Park, 2019; Pulakos et al., 2000; Şahin & Gürbüz, 2014). Central to this perspective is the assertion that before individuals can effectively navigate novel situations, they must possess a robust conviction in their intrinsic abilities to adapt and modify behaviors in response to emerging challenges. Consequently, those with elevated self-efficacy have confidence in their competencies and are motivated to tackle new challenges and align with evolving environmental demands. This propels them toward more adaptive performances (Bandura, 1984; Park & Park, 2019; Şahin & Gürbüz, 2014).

Numerous scholars posit that self-efficacy is crucial in predicting adaptability (Griffin & Hesketh, 2003; Park & Park, 2019; Pulakos et al., 2000; Şahin & Gürbüz, 2014). This foundational belief stems from the understanding that, when confronting unfamiliar situations, an individual's confidence in their ability to navigate and modify behaviors adeptly is paramount. As such, those with pronounced self-efficacy exhibit greater assurance in their competencies. This confidence, in turn, fuels their motivation, driving them to engage more deeply with challenges and skillfully address evolving environmental demands. This heightened commitment positions them for more adaptive responses and outcomes (Bandura, 1984; Park & Park, 2019; Şahin & Gürbüz, 2014).

Also aligned with COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) individuals are driven to protect their essential resources from threats, a disposition triggered mainly by their reactions to stressors. Within this framework, personal traits like self-efficay become instrumental in sustaining adaptability, an essential trait for effectively addressing obstacles and reducing adverse outcomes.

H3: Self-efficacy is positively correlated with adaptability.

According to M. Choi (2011), variance in resistance levels can be attributed to individual differences among those receiving change, underscoring that reactions differ across individuals (Oreg et al., 2011a; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2014). Notably, those with elevated self-efficacy tend to exhibit diminished resistance. The underlying rationale is that individuals imbued with the confidence to tackle forthcoming challenges are more predisposed to embracing change positively (Bandura, 2010; Oreg, 2006; Oreg et al., 2011a).

H4: Self-efficacy is negatively correlated with attitude toward change.

Individual Adaptability

In organizations that are continuously subject to change and uncertainty, individuals are frequently confronted with evolving occupational demands (Ingusci et al., 2019). Some of these demands are viewed positively, and others can be deleterious (Ingusci et al., 2019).

Accordingly, there is an escalating demand for employees to exhibit resilience and proficiency in responding to foreseeable and unforeseen changes (Baard et al., 2014; Huang et al., 2014; Ployhart & Bliese, 2006). Moreover, there is an increasing emphasis on workers demonstrating proactivity and pioneering innovative approaches to task completion, irrespective of the job's inherent autonomy and complexity (Ingusci et al., 2019). Therefore, the capacity of employees to acclimate to new circumstances in the professional environment and exhibit enhanced performance is arguably of paramount significance in the contemporary era (Huang et al., 2014).

Consequently, adaptability emerges as an imperative competency for workers, as it empowers them to proficiently assimilate into and navigate the shifting paradigms of their professional setting (Jundt et al., 2015; Ployhart & Bliese, 2006; Van Dam & Meulders, 2020). Expounding on this concept, Ployhart and Bliese (2006, p. 13), in their I-ADAPT theory, articulate

adaptability as encompassing an individual's capacity, proficiency, temperament, propensity, and enthusiasm to recalibrate and transform in correlation with diverse task-oriented, social, and ecological parameters. Also, Van Dam and Meulders (2020) described adaptability through three interconnected perspectives: cognitive, affective, and behavioral.

As an inherent attribute, individual adaptability markedly impacts the discernment and reaction to evolving occurrences (Hua et al., 2019; Jundt et al., 2015), facilitating efficacious mitigation and acclimatization to persistent organizational shifts. Those who exhibit adaptability consistently demonstrate proactive and robust attributes, engaging with arduous situations through a receptive perspective and proficiently maneuvering through ambiguous professional contexts (Hua et al., 2019; Ployhart & Bliese, 2006a; Van Dam & Meulders, 2020). Such individuals are intrinsically motivated to flourish amidst novel scenarios engendered by transformative events (Hua et al., 2019; Ployhart & Bliese, 2006a).

Furthermore, employees with elevated adaptability tend to interpret substantial alterations as opportunities for challenges rather than as mere stress-inducing occurrences (Cullen et al., 2014). Within the framework of organizational transformation, this suggests that individual adaptability plays a pivotal role in molding employees' discernments and reactions to unfavorable shifts (Van Den Heuvel et al., 2020a). Those who are adaptable may serve as a mitigating factor against the detrimental impacts of such negative alterations on their disposition toward change, given their capability to recalibrate their attitudes and conduct in the face of demanding scenarios. Accordingly, adaptability, which constitutes a set of characteristics that drive individuals to accommodate changing situations (Jundt et al., 2015; Ployhart & Bliese, 2006; Van Dam & Meulders, 2020), can play an essential buffering role in a changing environment. Therefore, we propose that.

H5: Adaptability negatively affects the attitude toward change.

Building upon our earlier proposition, we contend that a relationship exists between self-monitoring, self-efficacy, and individual adaptability. Further, we suggest a negative association between these personality traits and attitude toward change. We also advance the notion that individual adaptability inversely correlates with ATC. Consequently, our hypothesis postulates that individual adaptability is a mediator in the relationship between the personality constructs above (self-monitoring and self-efficacy) and the outcomes concerning attitude toward change.

H6: Adaptability mediates the relationship between *(a)* self-monitoring and *(b)* self-efficacy and attitude toward change.

Methodology

The current research is based on the positivist philosophical methodology from an ontological perspective.

The data collected during the survey was only primary since it was directly gathered through structured anonymous questionnaires addressed to leaders working in Middle Eastern organizations. A cross-sectional design was adopted through a quantitative research approach. Descriptive statistical techniques were used to test hypotheses.

Since the conceptual research model has several connected linear relations, a multivariate statistical tool was used to assess the framework. To predict and estimate the relationships while testing the suggested hypotheses, a "structural equation modelling" technique was adopted. Furthermore, the survey questions were extracted from the existing literature to ensure the best reliability and validity standards.

Participants and Procedure

In our research, we initially sourced the data of potential participants from LinkedIn platform. During this interaction, we explained the study's objectives and sought their consent to participate. Once consent was obtained via LinkedIn, the participants were administered a questionnaire through the Qualtrics platform. These participants, all leaders in Middle Eastern companies, voluntarily committed to engaging in an online survey. We employed a non-probability sampling technique for this study and targeted 450 regional leaders.

Between February and March 2021, we disseminated surveys utilizing the Qualtrics online platform. From the initial responses, we garnered 250 completed surveys from leaders, reflecting a 56% response rate. After meticulous data screening to eliminate missing or invalid information entries, we were left with a definitive sample of 170 leaders.

Measures

Items within the code scale were utilized such that elevated scores indicated an increased presence of the targeted construct, with exceptions for inverse questions. Constructs were gauged using a 5-point Likert scale, anchored from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). Questions for the survey were meticulously adapted from established literature to ensure optimal reliability and validity. Since English is a requisite language skill for professionals in Lebanon and other Middle Eastern companies and functions as a secondary language, administering the questionnaires in English posed no challenges.

Attitude Toward Change

For assessing the attitude toward change (ATC), we employed the scale formulated by Oreg (2006). This fifteen-item scale includes items such as "I was apprehensive about the change", "I perceived the transition as unfavorable", and "I believed the change would complicate my job

responsibilities". The scale demonstrated a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.82.

Self-Monitoring

For self-monitoring, we used the scale developed by Lennox and Wolfe (1984). This scale encompasses two sub-dimensions. Specifically, we focused on the sub-dimension most closely aligned with our research: the ability to modify self-presentation. To measure self-monitoring, we utilized a set of seven items that specifically pertained to this sub-dimension. The questions used are like "I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them. When I feel that the image I am portraying isn't working, I can readily change to something that does". The scale demonstrated a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70.

Self-Efficacy

We used a ten-item scale Schwarzer et al. (1997) developed to measure self-efficacy. Questions like "I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events" and "I can find several solutions when I am confronted with a problem". The scale demonstrated a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.84.

Individual Adaptability

To assess individual adaptability (IA), many scholars have relied on the scale introduced by Ployhart and Bliese (2006). While this comprehensive scale consists of 55 items spanning eight sub-dimensions, we opted for a more concise fifteen-item scale curated by Van Dam and Meulders (2020). This decision was informed by our consideration of the participants' time constraints. The selected scale focuses on three facets of adaptability: affective, cognitive, and behavioral, aligning seamlessly with the three subcategories of attitude toward change. Sample items from this scale

include: “I always like it when the situation changes”, “I am confident that I can handle every challenge”, and “I can quickly adapt to changes”. The scale has high reliability, with a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0.85.

Analyses and Results

In our final sample, the geographical distribution revealed that 57% of these leaders were based in Lebanon, while the remaining 43% hailed from other Middle Eastern nations (Jordan, KSA, UAE, Qatar, and Kuwait). Regarding gender representation, males constituted 68%, and females constituted 32%. Hierarchically, 36% occupied top management positions such as CEO, CFO, and COO, 55% held roles in middle management, and a smaller proportion of 9% were situated in junior management positions.

Measurement Model

Table 2.1 details the means, standard deviations, and correlations among the control and the study variables.

The measurement model in this study is designed to encompass four constructs, namely, self-efficacy (SE), self-monitoring (SM), individual adaptability (IA), and attitude toward change (ATC). A total of 47 indicators operationalize these constructs.

Table 2.1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variables	M	SD	CR	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Position	1.21	0.56							
2. Gender	2.8	0.91		-0.14					
3. Individual adaptability	5.250	0.941	0.704	0.430	0.213	**0.764**			
5. Self-efficacy	4.410	0.671	0.823	0.070	0.052	0.428	**0.812**		
6. Self-monitoring	3.840	0.514	0.744	0.090	-0.067	0.318	0.551	**0.721**	
4. Attitude toward change	3.010	0.986	0.888	-0.070	-0.031	-0.308	-0.266	-0.141	**0.832**

Note. Two-tailed tests. N = 170.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted on the initial model. During this process, 24 indicators out of 47 were systematically removed due to weak loadings and cross-loadings by established criteria. These indicators were deemed irrelevant to the measurement model and were consequently excluded from further analysis.

In line with the recommendations of Schreiber (2017) and Marsh et al. (2020), several indices were employed to evaluate the model's goodness of fit. These indices include the chi-square per degree of freedom (χ^2/df), goodness of fit index (GFI), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). Schermelleh-Engel et al. (2003) emphasize the importance of assessing the fit of structural equation models by considering specific indices. Firstly, the χ^2/df ratio should be less than 3, and the goodness of fit index (GFI) should have values greater than 0.90. In addition, the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) should have values greater than 0.85. Moreover, the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) should have values greater than 0.95 to be considered an acceptable fit, and the comparative fit index (CFI) plays a crucial role in evaluating model fit. It ranges from zero to one, with higher values suggesting a better fit. Typically, a comparative fit index (CFI) value of 0.97 or higher indicates a good fit. Lastly, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) values should be ≤ 0.05 to be considered a good fit (Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003, pp. 34–36).

Typically, a CFI value of 0.97 or higher indicates a good fit. Our model comprises 30 manifests and exhibits χ^2/df of 2.142 with $p < 0.001$, a goodness of fit index (GFI) of 0.921, an adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) of 0.91, a Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) of 0.951, a comparative fit index (CFI) of 0.966, a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of 0.071 and a standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) of 0.0652 (see Table 2.3). These indices indicate

that the best-refined measurement model has excellent goodness of fit (Marsh et al., 2020; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003; Schreiber, 2017).

Further inspection of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results showed that the factors loadings of the 23 retained manifests are pretty strong for all, greater or equal to 0.600, $p < 0.001$. They are offering high-scale reliability (see Table 2.2). Furthermore, convergent validity is verified when all constructs' average variance extracted (AVE) values exceed 0.5 (Choi & Yu, 2017). Discriminant validity is also verified when the AVE of any given first-order construct is more significant than its correlation with any other first-order construct, as reported in Table 2.2 (Carter, 2016). The reliability of the measurement model is supported by the composite reliability (CR) coefficient being greater than 0.700 for all constructs (Boduszek et al., 2013).

To measure the part of the indicators' variance captured by their underlying construct, the average variance extracted (AVE) values were calculated. The average variance of each construct or sub-construct is above the minimum required of 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Because the average variance extracted (AVE) exceeded the 0.5 thresholds required, each construct accounted for more than 50% of its indicators' variance. Discriminant validity is supported when the average shared variance of a construct and its indicators exceed the shared variance with every other construct of the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This was the case in the model. The average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct was more significant than the squared correlation coefficient of that construct with every other construct of the model.

Table 2.2

Model Fit Convergent Validity and Reliability

Construct	Items	Loading (λ)	Cronbach Alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Individual adaptability	ADPCA1	0.853	0.847	0.704	0.765
	ADPBA1	0.853			
	ADPAA2	0.612			
	ADPAA4	0.747			
	ADPAA3	0.771			
Attitude toward change	ATCAR2	0.594	0.819	0.888	0.651
	ATCBR2	0.568			
	ATCCR2	0.753			
	ATCAR3	0.575			
	ATCAR4	0.749			
	ATCCR4	0.761			
	ATCAR5	0.59			
	ATCCR5	0.694			
Self-efficacy	SE4	0.561	0.84	0.823	0.623
	SE5	0.649			
	SE8	0.643			
	SE9	0.644			
	SE10	0.617			
Self-monitoring	SM2	0.568	0.704	0.744	0.685
	SM3	0.892			
	SM4	0.585			
	SM5	0.728			
	SM6	0.649			

Structural Model

We have adopted Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) because it represents a second-generation multivariate analysis technique specifically designed to address the limitations of the traditional Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method. Kline (2023), in their book Principles and Practice of Structural Equation Modeling, defined SEM as "a set of statistical techniques for estimating the magnitudes and directions of presumed causal effects in quantitative studies based on cross-sectional, longitudinal, experimental or other kinds of research designs." (Kline, 2023, p. 13). SEM is beneficial when investigating complex relationships among multiple variables in a linear framework. This study set the significance level at 5% to test the respective hypotheses, ensuring rigorous statistical inference. Standardized coefficients were employed to assess causality and parameter estimation, while the maximum likelihood estimation method was applied in the SEM analysis.

In Figure 2.2, we present a graphical representation of the structural model, elucidating the discernible causal relationships between the independent variables (IVs), denoted as SM and SE, and the dependent variable (DV), identified as ATC. Also, the mediator variable is denoted as IA. The directional causality from the IVs to the DV is graphically conveyed through arrows within the diagram. The impacts stemming from these relationships are quantified using standardized β coefficients. These coefficients serve as estimations of both the magnitude and direction of the effects encapsulated within the model.

Hypotheses Testing

Our research findings affirm our hypothesis of a positive association between self-monitoring and individual adaptability (*H1*, $\beta = 0.142$, $p < 0.01$). Accordingly, leaders exhibiting high levels of self-monitoring possess a heightened capacity for adaptability and adjustment.

Furthermore, this newfound empirical insight underscores that leaders characterized by elevated self-monitoring are better positioned to swiftly adapt and modify their behavior in pursuit of desired social status. Consequently, they tend to exhibit greater openness and a reduced resistance to change. Hence, our investigation confirms our proposition, showing a negative association between self-monitoring and attitude toward change, yielding a β coefficient of -0.186. Thereby confirming our second hypothesis. Our hypothesis *H2* receives support, further affirming the significance of self-monitoring in shaping leaders' responsiveness to and acceptance of change.

Hypothesis 3 postulated a positive correlation between self-efficacy and individual adaptability. Our empirical analysis aligns with this hypothesis, revealing a noteworthy and positive relationship between self-efficacy and individual adaptability, denoted by a substantial β coefficient of 0.395 at a significance level of $p < 0.05$. These findings underscore our third hypothesis's validity, signifying a robust positive link between self-efficacy and individual adaptability.

Furthermore, our fourth hypothesis also garners empirical support, as our findings indicate a negative association between self-efficacy and attitude toward change ($\beta = -0.217$, $p < 0.01$). This implies that leaders possessing high self-efficacy tend to perceive change as an opportunity driven by their confidence in their abilities. Consequently, they exhibit a more positive orientation toward change and excellent receptiveness to its challenges.

Hypothesis 5 postulated a negative relationship between individual adaptability and attitude toward change. Our empirical investigation substantiates this hypothesis, as evidenced by a significant negative association with a β coefficient of -0.524 at a significance level of $p < 0.01$. These results align with prior research conducted by Pulakos et al. (2000), Jundt et al. (2015), and

Van Den Heuvel et al. (2020a), reinforcing the robustness of our findings within the existing literature.

Table 2.3

Measurement Fitness Indexes

χ^2/df	RMSEA	SRMR	GFI	AGFI	CFI	TLI
2.142	0.071	0.0652	0.921	0.91	0.966	0.951

Hypothesis 6a and b proposed that career adaptability would mediate the relationship of self-monitoring and self-efficacy with attitude toward change.

Utilizing the mediation testing approach proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986), two distinct pathways to the dependent variable, attitude toward change, were delineated. Firstly, the independent variables, self-monitoring and self-efficacy, should significantly influence the dependent variable, attitude toward change. Secondly, the SM and SE must also significantly impact the proposed mediator, individual adaptability. To assess the mediation effect, we conducted separate regression analyses: 1) SM predicting ATC, 2) SE predicting ATC, 3) SM predicting IA, 4) SE predicting IA, 5) IA predicting ATC, 6) SM and IA predicting ATC, and 7) SE and IA predicting ATC.

Table 2.4

Hypotheses Test Results

Hypothesis	**Constructs**	**Standardized β**	***P*-value**	**Result on hypothesis**
H1	SM → IA	0.142	0.0043**	Supported
H2	SM → ATC	-0.186	0.006**	Supported
H3	SE → IA	0.395	0.049*	Supported
H4	SE → ATC	-0.217	0.007**	Supported
H5	IA → ATC	-0.524	0.003**	Supported
H6a	SM → IA → ATC	-0.191	0.002**	Supported
H6b	SE → IA → ATC	-0.109*	0.001**	Supported

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

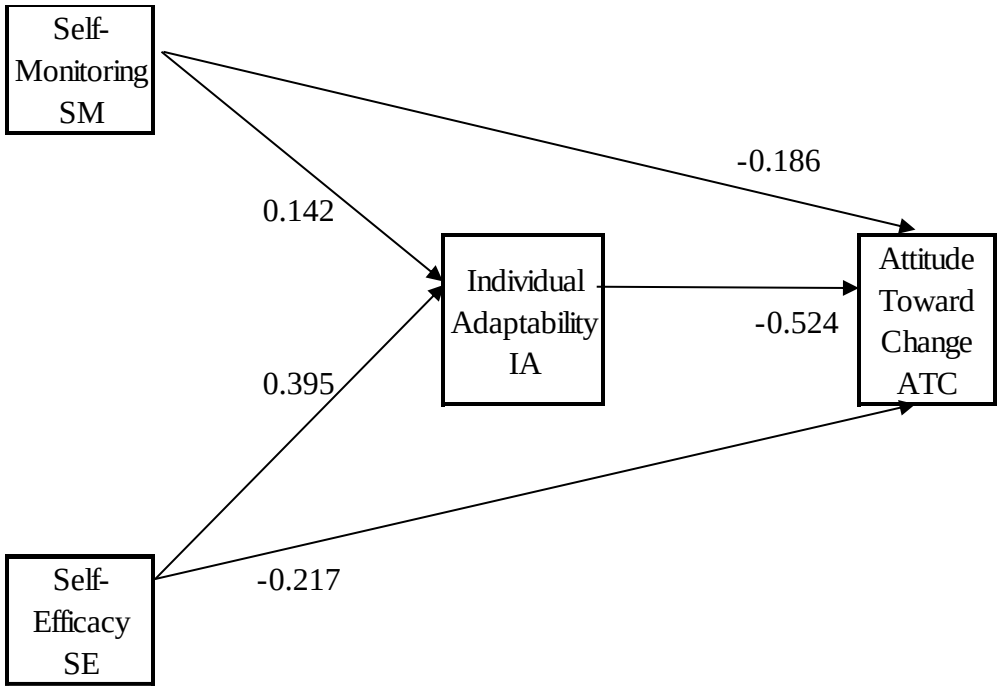
Initially, we examined the influence of IA on ATC. The analysis revealed a significant negative direct effect (β = -0.524, $p < 0.01$). Subsequently, we evaluated the indirect effect through bootstrapping to ascertain its significance. The findings substantiated a significant negative indirect association between SM and ATC, mediated by IA (β = -0.191, $p < 0.01$, 95% bootstrap CI = -0.102 to -0.021). This lends acceptance to Hypothesis 6a. Accordingly, our IA partially mediated the relationship between SM and ATC.

As for Hypothesis 6b, the results illustrated a significant direct effect of SE on ATC (β = -0.217, $p < 0.001$). Subsequently, we evaluated the indirect effect through bootstrapping to ascertain its significance. The findings substantiated a significant negative indirect association between SE and ATC, mediated by individual adaptability (β = -0.109, $p < 0.01$, 95% bootstrap CI = -0.141 to

-0.031). This lends acceptance to Hypothesis 6b. Accordingly, our IA partially mediated the relationship between SE and ATC.

Figure 2.2

Final Model (SEM)



Discussion

We were guided by two prominent theoretical frameworks, namely the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and the I-ADAPT theory by Ployhart and Bliese (2006). Our study aimed to advance upon the foundational work of prior scholars. We comprehensively examined the intricate relationships among leaders' characteristics, adaptability, and attitude toward change within the Middle East region.

Two primary objectives guided our study during a singular empirical investigation. Firstly, it sought to explore the predictive capacity of individual characteristics such as self-monitoring

and self-efficacy, extending beyond the traditional Big Five personality traits, and examine their influence on individual adaptability and attitude toward change. Secondly, we delved into the potential mediating role of individual adaptability in shaping the connection between leaders' characteristics and attitudes toward change.

Our study postulates that personality dimensions beyond the conventional Big Five traits and adaptability can be robust predictors of attitude toward change. These findings hold substantial practical significance, offering valuable recommendations for effectively navigating and managing the challenges presented by change, whether for organizations or individuals.

As anticipated, our research findings align with our initial hypotheses, indicating that individuals exhibiting elevated levels of adaptability possess a heightened ability to proficiently navigate and acclimate to various challenges and novel work environments. This adaptive prowess is strongly associated with maintaining optimistic attitudes toward change initiatives.

Additionally, it is essential to underscore the pivotal role of individual characteristics, specifically self-monitoring and self-efficacy, in shaping individuals' perceptions of change. These personal attributes act as significant preparatory factors, fostering a mindset that regards change as an opportunity rather than a threat. This psychological readiness contributes significantly to an individual's receptiveness and positive orientation toward organizational changes. Self-monitoring and self-efficacy are critical elements in fostering a change-friendly outlook, aligning with the broader themes of adaptability and positive attitude toward change in organizational settings.

Theoretical Implications

Our research employs a multidimensional framework that integrates pivotal variables to comprehensively explore the influence of individual characteristics, extending beyond the conventional Big Five traits, on individuals' attitudes toward change. This holistic approach

addresses a significant gap in existing literature and provides valuable insights for academic scholars and practitioners.

Our study holds relevance in the context of the Middle East, characterized by a volatile environment marked by recurrent, abrupt changes. These changes often transcend specific sectors or organizations and are deeply intertwined with economic and political circumstances. Therefore, our research serves as a timely contribution, shedding light on how individual characteristics can be harnessed to enhance individuals' attitudes toward change in such a dynamic and challenging context. By doing so, our study aids in fostering a better understanding of strategies and interventions that can help individuals and organizations thrive in the face of continuous and unpredictable changes.

Our research, building upon insights from Amarantou et al. (2018), responds to the need for further investigations into the factors influencing resistance to change, specifically focusing on attitude toward change. Our study enhances existing literature in three key ways.

Firstly, it expands our understanding by examining the multifaceted dimensions of resistance to change, considering individual characteristics beyond the conventional Big Five personality traits. This exploration sheds light on how less-explored individual attributes influence attitudes toward change.

Secondly, our research explores the predictive role of these individual characteristics in shaping individual adaptability, unraveling the intricate dynamics between personal traits and one's ability to adapt effectively in dynamic organizational contexts.

Lastly, our study investigates the mediating function of individual adaptability between these individual characteristics and attitude toward change, elucidating the underlying mechanisms through which personal attributes affect one's stance on change initiatives.

Our research bridges a critical gap, comprehensively analyzing the interplay among individual characteristics, individual adaptability, and attitude toward change. This advances our comprehension of how individuals navigate and respond to organizational change.

Our research findings underscore significant relationships between individual characteristics, namely self-efficacy and self-monitoring, and individual adaptability. Specifically, our results reveal a positive impact of self-efficacy on individual adaptability, a result that aligns with the findings of Griffin and Hesketh (2003) and Pulakos et al. (2000). Our study thus contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing further empirical support for the notion that a leader's self-efficacy positively influences their level of adaptability.

Moreover, we observe a positive relationship between self-monitoring and individual adaptability, a novel contribution to the I-ADAPT theory. This finding suggests that individuals with higher self-monitoring tendencies are more adaptable, marking a valuable addition to understanding individual adaptability in the context of leadership and organizational behavior.

Our study yielded compelling findings illuminating the relationship between a leader's adaptability and attitude toward change. Notably, our results reveal a negative impact of a leader's adaptability on their attitude toward change, aligning with the established literature that consistently associates adaptability with openness and acceptance of change (Van Den Heuvel et al., 2014; Wanberg & Banas, 2000; Oreg et al., 2011b). This finding reinforces that leaders who demonstrate greater adaptability are more inclined to embrace and welcome change initiatives within their organizations.

Furthermore, our research delved into the mediating role of individual adaptability in the relationship between self-efficacy and attitude toward change and between self-monitoring and attitude toward change. Our analysis revealed a partial mediation effect within these relationships,

shedding light on the intricate mechanisms through which self-efficacy and self-monitoring influence one's disposition toward change. These insights contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the factors that shape attitudes toward change in organizational contexts.

Practical Implications

In unstable countries, organizations must adopt proactive strategies to cultivate resilient and adaptable teams that can effectively function in such dynamic environments. Developing competent teams, focusing on individuals who exhibit traits like self-monitoring, self-efficacy, and individual adaptability, and recruiting individuals with positive attitudes and resilience are imperative for achieving success amidst ongoing uncertainties.

Human Resource (HR) managers assume a pivotal and multifaceted role in organizational dynamics, which is crucial for equipping leaders to navigate change in unstable environments proficiently. This multifaceted role encompasses a spectrum of vital responsibilities, including the identification, recruitment, training, preparation, and sustained coaching of leaders. These preparatory measures are undertaken before any change initiative to achieve predetermined outcomes. Given the substantial influence of leadership behavior on the success of change endeavors, organizations face the imperative task of meticulously evaluating candidate selection and deployment strategies to ensure the suitability of those entrusted with leading transformative processes.

The implications of HR's engagement extend beyond leadership preparation, encompassing the guidance and support of departmental leaders in their efforts to navigate challenges inherent to their roles effectively. Simultaneously, experienced managers shoulder the responsibility of providing invaluable assistance to employees in managing their emotional responses when confronting demanding circumstances. The synergy of these collaborative efforts

is indispensable, as it contributes to the cultivation of organizational resilience and empowers teams to adeptly traverse and adapt to the ever-fluid conditions prevailing within their respective operational landscapes.

Furthermore, our research findings yield practical insights that hold significant value for practitioners responsible for the intricacies of leadership selection processes and the design of training programs tailored to prepare leaders to implement change initiatives successfully. By leveraging these insights, organizations can augment their capacity to meticulously identify, train, and nurture leaders with the requisite competencies to effectively guide transformative efforts. Rooted in empirical evidence, this strategic approach enhances organizational performance and fosters improved outcomes within dynamic and uncertain contexts.

Limitations of the Study and Directions of Future Research

While this study has made valuable contributions, it is essential to acknowledge certain inherent limitations that warrant further investigation in future research endeavors. The distinctive nature of the data collection conducted within the Middle East is of primary concern. This region has been hardly explored, even though it has been strongly affected by multiple waves of disruptive political, economic, and social changes. The study's findings, therefore, may possess a unique contextual relevance closely tied to the specific factors and circumstances prevalent in the Middle East. As a result, it is crucial to recognize that the generalizability of the study's results may be constrained, primarily applicable to select regions worldwide.

The study's reliance on a cross-sectional design restricts the ability to draw causal conclusions from the observed results, particularly in examining leaders' behaviors and attitudes. A longitudinal research approach is necessary to understand attitude variation over time, especially

before, during, and after changes occur. Unfortunately, our current study is limited to a cross-sectional design.

Furthermore, our study concentrates on examining general organizational changes. However, there is potential for future research to delve deeper into exploring specific types of changes that may significantly influence employees' career development and overall well-being. In this regard, an emerging construct of particular interest is "career shock", which has been recently investigated by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018). This concept defines a career shock as a disruptive and extraordinary event, often triggered by factors beyond an individual's control, leading to a deliberate contemplation of one's career trajectory.

Exploring the implications of various changes, such as career shocks, on employees' professional journeys and well-being can provide valuable insights into the nuanced dynamics within organizational contexts. Further research in this direction may offer a deeper understanding of how specific changes impact individuals' careers and their subsequent implications for their overall life satisfaction and professional growth.

Furthermore, our study examined the impact of change within the broader context of the Middle East, characterized by its volatility. However, there is an opportunity for more in-depth exploration in specific countries, such as Lebanon, where frequent, abrupt changes are a consistent consequence of severe economic and political instability. These areas present a unique environment for investigation, where changes often originate from external factors and exhibit a high degree of unpredictability.

Conclusion

This study expands understanding by examining various dimensions of resistance to change, including less-explored individual traits beyond the Big Five. It also explores how these

traits predict individual adaptability in dynamic organizational contexts. Additionally, the study investigates the mediating role of individual adaptability between these traits and attitudes toward change. In summary, our research fills a critical gap, enhancing our comprehension of how individuals respond to organizational change.

In summary, the study substantially contributes to our comprehension of how individuals with high self-monitoring and self-efficacy exhibit greater adaptability to change, subsequently improving their attitudes toward change. These fresh results hold practical significance for leaders' recruitment, training, and coaching in contexts characterized by economic uncertainty. This research extends our understanding of organizational behavior, offering valuable insights for organizations and policymakers seeking effective strategies to prepare and assist leaders and individuals in navigating challenging economic circumstances, fostering resilience, and promoting more effective responses to adversity.

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3.

Career Shocks and Employee Well-Being.

The Roles of Individual Adaptability and Self-Monitoring

Among Lebanese Banking Employees.

Harnessing the Gale

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the well-being of banking sector employees facing career shocks in the midst of Lebanon's economic and financial crisis. The study examines how individual factors, specifically individual adaptability and self-monitoring, influence employees' coping strategies and subsequent well-being outcomes.

Design / Methodology: Drawing upon the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, the research adopts a cross-sectional design to collect primary data from 450 Lebanese banks' employees. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analyzes the data and tests the hypothesized relationships between individual factors, career shocks, and employee well-being.

Findings: The findings indicated that positive career shocks were positively related to employee well-being, while negative career shocks were negatively related.

Contrary to our initial hypotheses, the findings did not reveal a significant moderating effect of individual adaptability and self-monitoring in mitigating the negative consequences of negative career shocks on employee well-being.

Further post-hoc analyses revealed intriguing results regarding shock duration and frequency. Longer shock durations intensified the positive association between positive career shocks and workplace well-being. As well as increased shock frequency strengthened the positive relationship between positive career shocks and psychological well-being.

Furthermore, a noteworthy finding emerged when examining the moderating role of self-monitoring in interaction with duration of shocks. Self-monitoring demonstrated a significant moderating role when combined with shock duration, particularly in mitigating the negative relationship between negative career shocks and employee well-being.

***Originality / Value**:* This study extends earlier research addressing the direct effects of career shocks on employee well-being and examines the moderating impact of individual factors, namely individual adaptability and self-monitoring, on employees' coping strategies and subsequent well-being outcomes, thereby considering both positive and negative career shocks.

The study uncovers intriguing results related to shock duration and frequency. These findings shed light on the complex interplay between shock attributes, individual characteristics (individual adaptability and self-monitoring), and employee well-being outcomes, particularly within the unique context of Lebanon's economic crisis.

Conclusion: The research emphasizes the importance of considering personal characteristics to comprehend employees' responses to career shocks and their subsequent implications for well-being. The insights gained from this study contribute to the existing literature on career shocks and offer valuable implications for managing employee well-being during times of economic crisis in dynamic work environments.

Keywords: career shocks, self-monitoring, individual adaptability, employee well-being

Introduction

The escalating pressures in the workplace and broader society pose a growing risk to employee well-being (Guest, 2017). In the current era of global uncertainties and increasing demands for adaptability (Blokker et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2019), prioritizing employee well-being becomes ethically imperative (Guest, 2017). Investigating how changes in the work environment and its surroundings impact well-being is crucial for identifying strategies to safeguard work-related well-being.

However, practical organizational settings often fall short in prioritizing employee well-being (EWB). Recognizing the significance of EWB is vital, as empirical research highlights its strong positive correlation with organizational success (Yang et al., 2019). Therefore, emphasizing employees' pursuit of well-being within the workplace holds considerable importance (Guest, 2017; Yang et al., 2019).

The study takes place in Lebanon, a Middle Eastern nation plagued by persistent instability since the 1975 Civil War, profoundly impacting society and the economy. The 2019 Lebanese revolution, COVID-19, and the Port of Beirut Explosion in August 2020 exacerbated the crisis, leading to a severe economic and financial downturn. The banking sector, our research focus, is especially vulnerable due to government financial challenges, leading to restructuring, including mergers and downsizing, impacting employees' job security, income stability, and well-being.

The challenges faced by Lebanese banking employees are akin to recurrent disruptive events caused by external factors beyond individuals' control, which can be academically characterized as "career shocks" (Akkermans et al., 2018; Akkermans et al., 2021). A career shock can manifest with various valences, encompassing both positive and negative aspects, primarily

influenced by the subjective interpretation of individuals rather than objective characteristics (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Seibert et al., 2013).

Career shocks have garnered significant attention in career research (Akkermans et al., 2018; Seibert et al., 2013), however, a knowledge gap persists regarding their outcomes (Akkermans et al., 2018; Akkermans et al., 2021). While earlier studies have explored specific consequences of career shocks, such as career planning (Seibert et al., 2013), career success (Kraimer et al., 2019), perceived employability (Blokker et al., 2019), career optimism (Hofer et al., 2020), and thriving (Mansur & Felix, 2020), their potential impact on employee well-being (EWB) remains relatively unexplored (Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al., 2021a).

Seibert et al. (2016) highlight that both positive and negative career shocks prompt individuals to reflect on their career and life outcomes (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Seibert et al., 2013). Despite the significant divergence between the working environment and daily life, work profoundly influences individuals' lives and personal well-being (Zheng et al., 2015). However, the impact of career shocks on well-being within organizational contexts remains underexplored (Akkermans, Collings, et al., 2021).

Zheng et al. (2015) acknowledge the interconnectedness of dimensions encompassing employees' perceptions, feelings, and satisfaction levels regarding their work and personal lives, emphasizing three fundamental dimensions of EWB: life, work, and psychological needs. This interconnectedness underscores the importance of investigating the influence of career shocks on EWB across these dimensions within organizational settings.

Furthermore, Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018) highlighted the importance of agency-related traits and behaviors in navigating unforeseen circumstances. They proposed exploring individual immunization characteristics to mitigate the impact of negative career shocks. While

Seibert et al. (2016) delved into the central role of resilience in responding to career shocks, there remains a need for further exploration of additional individual characteristics that influence shock perception, as emphasized by Akkermans et al. (2021b), given the critical role of individual agency in professional performance and career success (Converse et al., 2012; Seibert et al., 2001).

In response to these research gaps, this study aims to introduce and explore two vital individual characteristics that significantly shape how individuals perceive and respond to changing events: individual adaptability and self-monitoring. Individual adaptability, characterized by proactive resilience, fosters open-mindedness when facing challenges and navigating uncertain work environments (Hua et al., 2019; Ployhart & Bliese, 2006). Individuals with high self-monitoring have the ability to adjust self-image to achieve goals, which leads to an effective adaptive strategy in challenging environments (Day et al., 2002; Gangestad & Snyder, 2000; Tolentino et al., 2019).

Literature Review

Career Shocks

The concept of career shocks has emerged as a valuable avenue for studying the various influences on individuals' careers, including factors like family, workplace, society, the economy, and the natural environment in which they operate (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Petrović et al., 2021). Extensive documentation by Seibert et al. (2016) highlights these factors as remarkable and influential occurrences that stimulate individuals to consider potential shifts in their career paths; described as "career shocks" the authors define them as "any event that triggers deliberation involving the prospect of a change in an essential career-related behavior such as seeking further education, changing occupations, or changing employment status" (Seibert et al., 2013, p. 172). Expanding on this foundation, Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018) provide a comprehensive

definition of career shocks that explicitly delineates their unique characteristics. They define career shocks as "a disruptive and extraordinary event that is, at least to some degree, caused by factors outside the focal individual's control and that triggers a deliberate thought process concerning one's career; the occurrence of a career shock can vary in terms of predictability and can be either positively or negatively valance" (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018, p. 4). Both studies contribute significantly to our comprehension of career shocks, highlighting their importance in prompting individuals to engage in purposeful reflections and consider potential changes in their career trajectories.

Career shocks result from a conjunction between external events and an individual's perception, underscoring the joint influence of both factors in generating these events (Akkermans et al., 2018; Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al., 2021). These shocks are characterized by their significant attributes: frequency, predictability, controllability, source, duration, and valence (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Wordsworth & Nilakant, 2021). These attributes, whether considered individually or in combination, have distinct implications at both individual and population levels, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of career shocks (Akkermans et al., 2018; Seibert et al., 2016; Wordsworth & Nilakant, 2021).

This study delves into the "main shock" of the Lebanese economic crisis, leading to extensive downsizing, restructuring, layoffs, and reduced employee compensation in the banking sector. This crisis, beyond individual control, profoundly affects bank employees and the entire Lebanese population, disrupting various aspects of their lives. Despite the crisis's negative implications, it has given rise to specific career shocks that some perceive as negative, yet others consider it a catalyst for positive career shocks. Our research investigates these career shocks among Lebanese banking sector employees facing restructuring and downsizing, which are

prevalent practices in organizations, representing visible manifestations of organizational change (Harney et al., 2018a). Therefore, our research examines the primary career shocks experienced by our participants, explicitly centering on downsizing and restructuring as substantial organizational changes that involve workforce reduction and mergers. These events have been widely employed as prominent measures for assessing the impact of career shocks, as evidenced by the scales developed by Seibert et al. (2013) and Seibert et al. (2016).

Employee Well-Being

The domain of employee well-being has received substantial attention and in-depth exploration within the field of organizational psychology (Bakker, 2015), emerging as a central area of research in the broader discipline of organizational studies due to its recognized strategic significance for both organizations and individuals (Inceoglu et al., 2018; Pradhan & Hati, 2019).

Scholarly investigations emphasize the critical importance of employee well-being for organizations (Guest, 2017), with extensive research showing its significant impact on organizational performance, sustainability, and related costs (Akkermans, Collings, et al., 2021; Harney et al., 2018a; Pradhan & Hati, 2019; Vos et al., 2020b). Despite potential shortcomings in organizational approaches to employee well-being, its importance remains paramount due to its positive impact on organizational outcomes (Yang et al., 2019).

Guest's (2017) study highlights that mounting pressures in work environments and society threaten employees' well-being, emphasizing the role of employees' perceptions in shaping their well-being (Shuck & Reio Jr, 2014). These findings underscore the ethical imperative of prioritizing employee well-being as mentioned by Guest (2017).

Furthermore, Akkermans, Collings, et al. (2021) suggest that exploring employee health and well-being is a promising avenue for further research in the field of career shock studies.

Scholars studying employee well-being (EWB) need more consensus on its precise definition (Zheng et al., 2015). Consequently, they often resort to proxies like psychological well-being (PWB), subjective well-being (SWB), or job satisfaction to gauge the overall well-being of employees in organizational contexts (Zheng et al., 2015).

In contemporary society, work plays a pivotal role in individuals' lives, significantly impacting their well-being (Zheng et al., 2015). It is crucial to distinguish between the working environment and the broader daily living context to fully grasp the distinct nature and implications of employee well-being (EWB) (Yang et al., 2019; Zheng et al., 2015).

Zheng et al. (2015) recognized the interconnectedness of family and work within organizational contexts and stressed the importance of a holistic approach to studying EWB. They identified three fundamental dimensions: life, work, and psychological needs, encompassing employees' perceptions, emotions, and satisfaction levels in both work and personal domains. Consequently, the authors proposed a three-dimensional conceptualization of EWB, encompassing life well-being (LWB), workplace well-being (WWB), and psychological well-being (PWB), which will serve as the framework for our study.

Theoretical Framework

We base our proposed hypotheses on the Job Demands-Resources theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001) and the Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989). In the following sections, we present and apply the fundamental aspects of the theories used in our investigative model.

Job Demands-Resources Theory

Our study adopts the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001, 2019) to examine the factors linked with job stress, distinguishing between

job demands and resources. According to the theory, job demands initiate a health impairment process leading to emotional exhaustion, while job resources drive a motivational process, enhancing employee well-being and motivation (Demerouti and Bakker, 2011; Bakker & Demerouti, 2014).

Job demands, defined as "physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs" (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, p. 312). On the other hand, job resources refer to physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that are functional in achieving work goals, reduce job demands and associated costs, and stimulate personal growth, learning, and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, p. 312). The expanded Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory further elucidates the dynamics of how organizations and employees manage crises and their impact on well-being (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023).

In the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, personal resources are conceptualized as cognitive-affective dimensions of an individual's personality, reflecting positive self-perceptions and worldviews that are instrumental in goal achievement and motivation (Vogt et al., 2016). These resources act as a buffer against job demands, aiding in the pursuit of goals (Van Den Heuvel et al., 2010; Vogt et al., 2016) and moderating the effects of job demands on personal growth and development. This expanded framework is deemed highly appropriate for analyzing the interplay between selected personal resources, both negative and positive career shocks, and their impact on employee well-being.

Schaufeli (2017) introduced the Energy Compass (EC), the first instrument grounded in the JD-R theory, with indicators of job demands, resources, outcomes, and personal resources

(Schaufeli, 2017, p. 123). Job demands include qualitative (emotional and mental demands), quantitative (work overload and pace of change), and organizational demands (negative change, role conflicts). Job resources encompass social, work, organizational, and developmental resources (Schaufeli, 2017, p. 123). The JD-R theory effectively explores "the wider contextual dimensions of an individual's job" (van den Broeck et al., 2013, p. 85).

Negative career shocks, including downsizing and mass layoffs, are identified as "Job demands" and specifically as "organizational demands" within Schaufeli's Energy Compass model (Schaufeli, 2017; Bauer et al., 2014b). Events like not receiving an anticipated job assignment or promotion, falls into the "lack of recognition" category of job demands (Bauer et al., 2014). Furthermore, involuntary and unforeseen job rotations, termed "unfavorable work shifts", and enforced transitions to new roles are recognized as negative organizational changes, reflecting the broader implications of job and organizational demands on career progression (Schaufeli, 2017; Bauer et al., 2014). Additionally, the enforced move to a new role represents a negative change at the job level, categorized under organizational demand (Schaufeli, 2017).

Bauer et al. (2014) describe job resources "as positively valued job aspects" (Bauer et al., 2014, p. 56) that facilitate goal achievement, mitigate job demands, or promote personal growth. Seibert et al. (2013) measure positive career shocks through achievements in challenging jobs or projects, highlighting their value in fostering success, learning, and development. Thus, positive career shocks are considered as job resources due to their beneficial impact on professional advancement.

Drawing upon the abovementioned discussion, the present study adopts a conceptual framework wherein negative career shocks are classified as job demands and positive career

shocks as job resources. Furthermore, individual adaptability and self-monitoring are considered personal resources and play the role of moderators within this framework (see Figure 3.1).

Conservation of Resources Theory

In our research, we integrated the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory to enhance understanding of resource dynamics, addressing the JD-R theory's limitations in detailing how resources are conserved, depleted, or augmented (Hobfoll et al., 2018a; Hofer et al., 2020).

The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory provides an insight into resource dynamics, highlighting mechanisms of loss and gain (Hobfoll, 1989). It posits that individuals are motivated to acquire, retain, and safeguard valuable resources. The theory is anchored in two principal concepts: the conservation of resources, aimed at preserving current resources, and the investment in resources, where resources are strategically used to gain more (Hobfoll, 1989). Bakker et al. (2023) describe COR theory as an encompassing framework for stress, emphasizing the accumulation and protection of resources to address environmental challenges.

In our study, we categorize negative career shocks, including organizational downsizing and mass layoffs, as job demands that threaten well-being. Consistent with the Principle of Resource Investment, employees deploy and invest personal resources, such as individual adaptability and self-monitoring, to navigate these demands, thereby protecting their well-being.

Demands from personal, occupational, and organizational life domains are interlinked, requiring individuals to manage and balance them effectively. This interconnectedness suggests that demands are not standalone challenges but are related to other simultaneous demands (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023). In our research, individuals facing negative career shocks encounter numerous job demands and utilize personal resources to avoid exhaustion and manage these

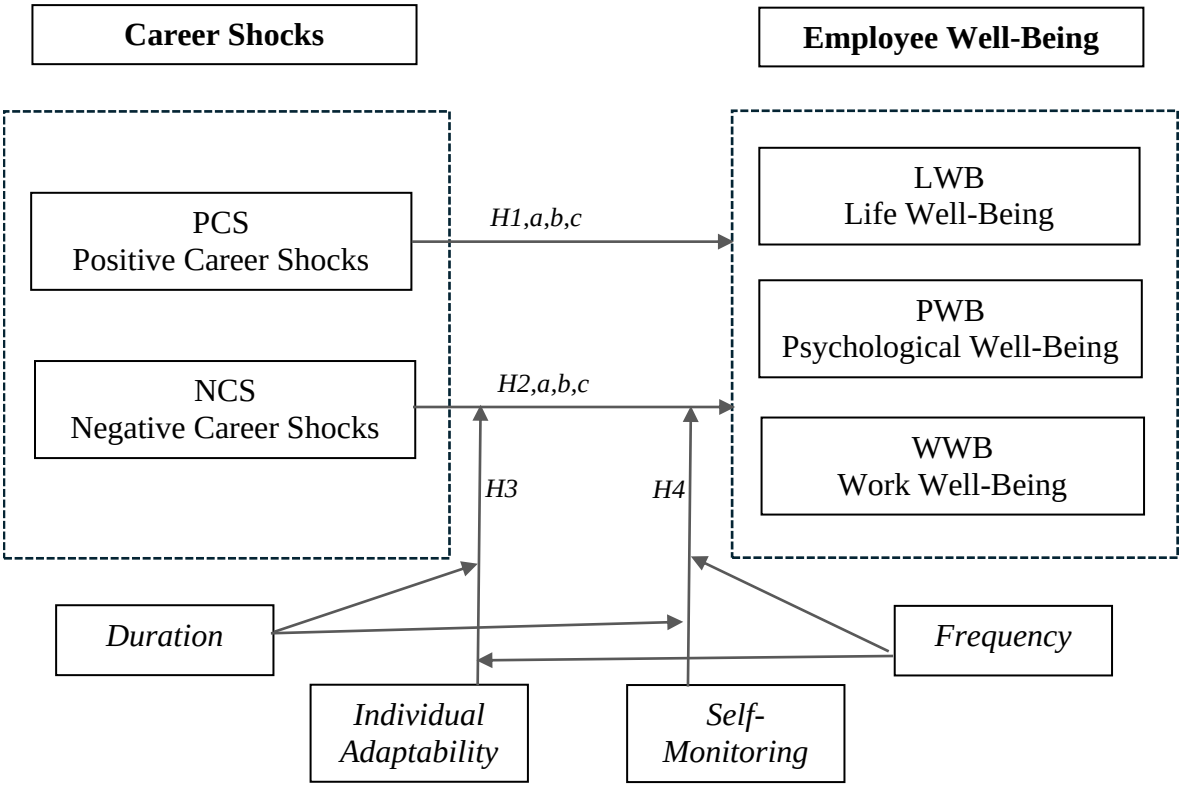
demands efficiently. This approach is supported by the Conservation of Resources theory, which suggests that high demands in one job aspect can deplete energy reserves needed for coping with other demands, potentially triggering a loss spiral (Hobfoll et al., 2018b; Demerouti & Bakker, 2023; van Woerkom et al., 2016).

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory acknowledges the impact of personal resources but Schaufeli (2017) points out the ambiguity in their role, especially in distinguishing between stable traits and adaptable characteristics. Halbesleben et al. (2014) suggest, via the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, that personal resources, shaped by individual experiences, offer resilience, control, and adaptability, surpassing the JD-R theory's contextual limitations. Wang (2019) advocates for integrating COR theory into the JD-R theory to enhance the conceptualization of personal resources. This proposed integration aims to recognize personal resources as critical for resilience and adaptation, vital in managing job demands and stress, thus providing a deeper understanding of coping mechanisms in line with COR theory (Vogt et al., 2016).

Therefore, the introduction of the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) as a complementary framework to the JD-R theory becomes imperative. As the JD-R theory emphasizes the interaction between job demands and resources, providing insights into the dynamics that influence employee well-being. Simultaneously, the COR theory focuses on the broader context of resource conservation and depletion, offering a lens through which to understand how individuals strategically allocate and protect their resources as personal characteristics, conditions, and energies that enable them to cope with job demands (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023, p. 219).

Figure 3.1

Proposed Conceptual Framework of the Study



Hypotheses Development

The study of career shocks and their impact on career trajectories is a growing field, shedding new light on contemporary careers (Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Petrović et al., 2021). Influential scholars have explored career shocks' effects on various career outcomes, including chance events (Hirschi, 2010), mediating roles in career competencies and employability (Blokker et al., 2019), influence on academic career success (Kraimer et al., 2019), relationship with career optimism (Hofer et al., 2020), impact on employee thriving (Mansur & Felix, 2020), and their effects on career sustainability by Pak et al. (2020).

Collectively, these studies contribute to understanding the implications of career shocks for employees' career development, primarily observed in Western countries. However, there is a need for further investigation into the impact of these shocks on employee well-being (Akkermans, Collings, et al., 2021).

Restructuring and downsizing are prevalent organizational practices, denoting significant organizational change (Harney et al., 2018a). In our study, we consider restructuring and downsizing as noteworthy career shocks experienced by our participants.

These changes, including restructuring and downsizing, have been recognized for their substantial impact on employees' well-being, as evidenced in Snorradóttir et al.'s (2015) study on bankers' health and well-being post-downsizing, highlighting its importance (Archibald, 2009).

Despite this recognition, there is a relative scarcity of research in this area, indicating the need for further investigation (Snorradóttir et al., 2015). Our study aims to fill this research gap by examining the effects of career shocks within Lebanon's economic crisis on the well-being of Lebanese banking employees.

Impact of Career Shocks on Employee Well-Being

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, developed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007), establishes a strong link between employees' well-being and their work environment composition. This work environment comprises stable elements and flexible factors influencing employees' well-being (Bakker, 2015). Schaufeli (2012) underscores the importance of examining specific workplace climate components that enhance employee engagement and well-being (Shuck & Reio Jr, 2014).

Drawing from Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, individuals are motivated to acquire, safeguard, and preserve resources. Stress emerges when resources are

threatened or when anticipated returns on resource investments are not achieved. Consequently, the role of resources is crucial within this theory (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009).

In line with the COR theory, the JD-R theory posits that when individuals face high job demands alongside limited resources, it increases strain and reduces well-being (Bakker, 2015; Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). Conversely, when sufficient resources accompany high job demands, it can facilitate more favorable outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2014, 2017; Harney et al., 2018a). This highlights the importance of maintaining a balance between job demands and resources to promote well-being and optimize work-related results (Bakker, 2015; Harney et al., 2018b).

Snorradóttir et al. (2015) advanced our understanding of the relationship between workplace transformations and the well-being of individuals who experienced downsizing, particularly in the banking industry during an economic crisis. They highlighted the substantial stressors associated with downsizing, its impact on employee health, the uncertainty of employment continuity throughout careers, and its profound effect on well-being (Snorradóttir et al., 2015).

Downsizing-induced stress has been extensively studied across various disciplines (Harney et al., 2018; Snorradóttir et al., 2015). This stress can arise from perceived job insecurity, increased physical demands, reduced job control, challenges securing new employment, and the loss of non-material aspects like social status. Numerous studies consistently confirm the detrimental effects of this stress on individuals' health and well-being, supporting Snorradóttir et al.'s (2015) findings.

Given the significance of downsizing and its impact on employee well-being, Harney et al. (2018a) emphasize that work intensity serves as a pathway through which the adverse

consequences of restructuring and downsizing are transmitted, ultimately leading to negative effects on well-being.

In our study, we propose that restructuring and downsizing should be recognized as significant career shocks experienced by participants, emphasizing the relevance of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory as a systematic framework for understanding the impact of these shocks on employee well-being. This perspective builds on Harney et al.'s (2018) research, which explored the applicability of the JD-R theory in the context of organizational restructuring and downsizing, aligning our study with their work to further elucidate the role of the JD-R theory in investigating these effects.

Additionally, following the principles of the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018), negative career shocks can be seen as a threat to a critical resource, employee well-being. These shocks risk well-being by potentially depleting essential resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018b). Since career shocks can have both positive and negative aspects, their impact on resource conservation and accumulation can vary, leading to positive or negative outcomes (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018). This highlights the importance of considering the diverse nature of career shocks and their potential implications for resource dynamics, aligning with the core principles of COR theory.

H1: Positive career shocks are positively related to employee well-being.

H1a: Positive career shocks are positively related to life well-being.

H1b: Positive career shocks are positively related to psychological well-being.

H1c: Positive career shocks are positively related to workplace well-being.

H2: Negative career shocks are negatively related to employee well-being.

H2a: Negative career shocks are negatively related to life well-being.

H2b: Negative career shocks are negatively related to psychological well-being.

H2c: Negative career shocks are negatively related to workplace well-being.

Moderating Roles of Individual Adaptability and Self-Monitoring

The research conducted by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018) highlights the importance of investigating whether specific individuals are more susceptible to experiencing adverse reactions when faced with unexpected events. Furthermore, the authors suggest the exploration of potential immunization or protective measures to mitigate the impact of negative career shocks (Akkermans et al., 2018). Building upon this, Akkermans et al. (2018) shed light on the significant role of agency-related traits and behaviors in enhancing individuals' ability to navigate unforeseen circumstances effectively.

Expanding the scope of inquiry to address the key challenges and potential strategies in dealing with career shocks, Akkermans et al. (2021b) emphasize the critical influence of contextual and individual characteristics in triggering these shocks (Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al., 2021). In line with this, Seibert et al. (2016) conducted a study examining the crucial role of resilience and how individuals with varying levels of resilience respond to career shocks. Thus, there is a potential need for future research to delve into individual characteristics and their influence on shock perception (Akkermans et al., 2021b).

Employees' cultivation of well-being within the workplace holds significant importance (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Yang et al., 2019). Consequently, individuals are expected to develop diverse competencies, including regulation skills, adaptability, and self-awareness (Yang et al., 2019; Zheng et al., 2015).

Moreover, Snorradóttir et al. (2015) have emphasized the significant role that individual factors play in shaping the downsizing experience. This finding is consistent with previous

scholarly investigations that have identified a notable gap in considering the comprehensive integration of well-being and its underlying factors, including individual characteristics and environmental influences (Yang et al., 2019). By acknowledging the importance of individual factors in understanding downsizing experiences, researchers can address the need for a holistic approach to well-being that incorporates both individual and contextual elements (Snorradóttir et al., 2015; Yang et al., 2019).

In light of these observations, this study addresses these research gaps by introducing individual adaptability and self-monitoring as crucial individual characteristics. It is posited that these characteristics can assist employees in effectively managing and mitigating the detrimental effects of downsizing and other negative career shocks on their overall well-being.

The Role of Individual Adaptability

In dynamic and ever-changing organizational environments, employees face significant pressure to adapt and respond effectively to ongoing and unforeseen changes (Baard et al., 2014; Huang et al., 2014; Ployhart & Bliese, 2006). Adaptability, therefore, becomes crucial for employees, enabling them to navigate and integrate successfully within the evolving dynamics of the workplace (Ployhart & Bliese, 2006). In their I-ADAPT theory, Ployhart and Bliese (2006, p. 13) provide a comprehensive definition of adaptability, highlighting it as an individual's ability, skill, disposition, willingness, and motivation to adjust and change in response to various task, social, and environmental features.

As a stable trait, individual adaptability significantly influences perception and response to changing events (Hua et al., 2019), enabling effective coping and adjustment to ongoing workplace changes.

Adaptable individuals exhibit proactive and resilient characteristics, approaching challenging events with an open-minded attitude and navigating uncertain work environments (Hua et al., 2019; Ployhart & Bliese, 2006a; Van Dam & Meulders, 2020). They are internally motivated to thrive in new circumstances brought about by changes (Hua et al., 2019; Ployhart & Bliese, 2006a).

Employees with higher levels of adaptability are more inclined to perceive significant changes as challenging rather than merely stressful events (Cullen et al., 2014). Applied to career shocks, this means individual adaptability is likely to shape employees' perceptions and responses to negative career shocks. Adaptable employees may effectively buffer the adverse effects of such shocks on their well-being by being able to adjust their attitudes and behaviors in challenging situations. Therefore, we propose that individual adaptability is a protective factor, mitigating the potential negative consequences of career shocks on employee well-being.

H3: Individual adaptability moderates the negative impact of negative career shocks on employee well-being.

The Role of Self-Monitoring

Self-monitoring refers to individuals' ability to regulate their actions and expressions in public settings, projecting a specific social image and gaining social acceptance (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). Individuals with high self-monitoring can adapt and alter their self-presentation to align with their immediate social environment, achieving their desired objectives (Day et al., 2002; Gangestad & Snyder, 2000).

Self-monitors demonstrate ability to modify public behavior, aligning with the social environment (Day et al., 2002; Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). Day et al. (2002) expanded on

Snyder's work, describing self-monitoring as the ability to adapt self-image to achieve desired objectives (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000).

High self-monitors, often described as socially oriented chameleons, can adjust their attitudes and behaviors to conform to others' expectations, even if they contradict their true selves (Day & Schleicher, 2006). They seek to elevate their social status and adapt to their target audience by modifying their outward appearances (Day et al., 2002; Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). In contrast, individuals low in self-monitoring prioritize their authentic identity and maintain their integrity in the face of work demands (Barrick et al., 2005; Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). They are characterized by genuineness and consistency, guided by personal authenticity rather than seeking status enhancement (Barrick et al., 2005). Low self-monitors do not manipulate their genuine emotions to impress others or gain acceptance (Day & Schleicher, 2006).

Building upon this premise, our study suggests that self-monitoring functions as a vital protective mechanism among banking employees, enabling them to mitigate the detrimental repercussions of adverse career setbacks on their overall well-being.

The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, proposed by Hobfoll (2011), focuses on individuals' motivation to preserve valued resources when facing threats, shedding light on their response to stressful events (Hite & McDonald, 2020). The theory highlights the importance of well-being as a highly valued resource, contributing to individuals' overall well-being over time ((Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Hobfoll et al., 2018a). To effectively navigate the challenging career environment and cope with shocks that impact them, individuals utilize other personal resources, such as individual adaptability and self-monitoring (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Hobfoll et al., 2018a).

Moreover, the JD-R theory emphasizes the significance of understanding the interaction between job demands and resources about job strain and motivation. Within this framework, job resources play a crucial role in protecting against the adverse consequences of job strain, significantly when job demands are intensified (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Harney et al., 2018a, 2018b). This recognition further highlights the importance of job resources in mitigating the impact of job demands on strain (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011, p. 2).

The JD-R theory encompasses personal resources, as Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) emphasized, providing insights into the moderating factors that can alleviate the adverse effects of career shocks. When employees face heightened detrimental demands resulting from shocks, such as increased work intensity, stress, and uncertainty, various resources come into play to reduce the magnitude of negative outcomes (Harney et al., 2018a).

These personal resources act as protective factors, aiding individuals in coping with adversity and enhancing their well-being, thereby deepening our understanding of managing and responding to career shocks effectively. Within the JD-R theory, individual adaptability and self-monitoring are recognized resources crucial in handling stressful environments and acting as buffers against the detrimental effects on well-being (Hofer et al., 2020). Moreover, these resources can mitigate the negative consequences of demands, aligning with the principles of the COR theory (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Hobfoll et al., 2018).

H4: Self-monitoring moderates the negative impact of negative career shocks on employee well-being.

The COR theory and the JD-R theory support the interconnectedness of personal resources, career shocks, and well-being. The motivation of individuals to safeguard their resources when facing threats aligns with the principles of the COR theory. Leveraging personal resources, such

as individual adaptability and self-monitoring, enables better adaptation and coping in the challenging career environment. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamic relationship between personal resources, career shocks, and well-being (Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018; Akkermans et al., 2013b; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018).

Therefore, within the scope of this study, we propose that individual adaptability and self-monitoring play pivotal roles as protective buffers against the detrimental impact of negative career shocks on well-being. These resources may facilitate individuals' ability to navigate and respond effectively to career shocks, safeguarding their overall well-being in adversity.

Methodology

We collected our data by administering questionnaires to banking sector employees with at least three years of work experience.

Participants and Procedure

Lebanon faces an unprecedented financial crisis, leading to substantial economic losses across sectors, notably impacting the influential banking sector. Consequently, Lebanese banks are implementing downsizing measures and pursuing mergers to adapt and survive. In light of these developments, our research sought to recruit individuals who were engaged in full-time employment within Lebanese banks. By focusing on this specific group, we aimed to gain insights into the unique challenges and experiences faced by employees within the Lebanese banking sector during this critical period.

Initially opting for random sampling, we aimed to survey the entire banking employee population. However, alternative solutions were sought due to challenges in obtaining full coverage consent due to ongoing negative events in the banking sector.

Participant information was initially gathered from the banks' official websites. Contact was then established through LinkedIn to explain the study objectives and seek consent. Alternative email addresses were collected, considering potential restrictions on receiving external emails. The questionnaire was administered through Qualtrics after obtaining consent via LinkedIn. Participants voluntarily took part in the online surveys facilitated by Qualtrics. Leading to a shift in our sample from random to non-probability sampling (convenience sampling).

Convenience sampling, acknowledged for its non-probability nature, involves a chosen rather than a random selection. This leads to unequal participation chances for banking employees and impacts study generalizability (Emerson, 2021). Despite this limitation, convenience sampling was deemed necessary due to situational constraints.

Furthermore, participants met specific criteria to qualify for inclusion in the study. Firstly, participants had to have been employed by a Lebanese bank before 2019, coinciding with the onset of the financial crisis. This criterion was set to ensure a comprehensive understanding of their experiences within the context of the crisis. Secondly, participants' ages were limited to 25 to 55 years, with a minimum age requirement of 22 at the time of recruitment and a mandatory prerequisite of at least three years of professional work experience. The upper age limit of 55 was established to guarantee that participants possessed at least ten additional years of work experience, enhancing their ability to provide insightful perspectives on future career prospects. Consequently, we distributed 1000 online surveys using a non-probability sampling technique. After filtering the collected data, we obtained 450 valid responses, resulting in a response rate of 45%. Our questionnaire was meticulously tailored to address the specific concerns and experiences of this particular subgroup of bank employees.

Table 3.1

Respondent Demographics

Question	Options	Frequency	%
Gender	Female	259	58%
	Male	184	42%
Position	Employees	310	70%
	Managers	133	30%
Frequency of the shock	One shock	93	21%
	Two shocks	67	15%
	Three shocks or more	283	64%
Duration of the shock impact	Days	91	21%
	Weeks	75	17%
	Months	118	27%
	Years	159	36%

Measures

Code-scale items were employed where a higher score denoted a greater extent of the focal construct, except for the reversed questions. We used a 5-point Likert scale to measure the constructs, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). The survey questions were carefully derived from existing literature to uphold the highest standards of reliability and validity. Since English is the second language in Lebanon and a mandatory requirement for banking employees, there were no complications in administering the questionnaires in English.

Career Shocks

We meticulously examined the validated questionnaires utilized in the literature on career shocks and carefully selected eight highly relevant items to Lebanon’s crisis and applicable in

other regions. These items were identified through an extensive review of scales used in previous studies, including the works of Seibert et al. (2013), Seibert et al. (2016), Blokker et al. (2019), Hofer et al. (2020), Mansur and Felix (2020), and Ghani et al. (2020).

Specifically, five items were used to assess the negative career shocks (NCS) construct, while three items were employed to measure the positive career shocks (PCS) construct, e.g., "Your organization went through a significant negative event such as a reduction-in-workforce, bankruptcy, or major ethical scandal" and personal setbacks, e.g., "I was overlooked for promotion" / "failure to receive an expected job assignment or promotion". The scale demonstrated a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.72.

In addition, we also asked respondents to indicate the frequency with which they had experienced a career shock over the past the last three years (with response options: None, One shock, Two shocks or Three shocks and more) as well as the duration of experienced shocks (response options: Days, Weeks, Months, Years).

Employee Well-Being

The 18-item employee well-being (EWB) scale, developed and validated by Zheng et al. (2015), was employed in our study. EWB is a multidimensional concept encompassing three distinct dimensions. Thus, we allocated six items to each sub-construct to effectively measure life well-being (LWB), psychological well-being (PWB), and workplace well-being (WWB), like "I feel satisfied with my life", "I feel basically satisfied with my work achievements in my current job". The scale demonstrated a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.8.

Individual Adaptability

We employed the scale developed by Ployhart and Bliese (2006) to measure individual adaptability. However, this scale encompasses a comprehensive set of 55 items, covering eight

sub-dimensions: Crisis, Creativity, Cultural, Interpersonal, Learning, Physical, Work Stress, and Uncertainty. Considering the importance of time efficiency for our participants, we focused on the sub-dimensions most relevant to our study. Specifically, we selected nine items associated with measuring individual adaptability under uncertainty (IAU), e.g., "I easily respond to changing conditions; I perform well in uncertain situations", and six for measuring individual adaptability under crisis (IAC) like "I usually step up and take action during a crisis; I am able to be objective during emergencies". This streamlined approach enabled us to capture the essential aspects of individual adaptability within the context of our research while minimizing participant burden. The scale demonstrated a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.826.

Self-Monitoring

The self-monitoring scale, initially developed by Lennox and Wolfe (1984), was employed in our study. This scale encompasses two sub-dimensions. We focused on the sub-dimension most closely aligned with our research: the "ability to modify self-presentation". To measure self-monitoring, we utilized a set of seven items that specifically pertained to this sub-dimension. The questions used "I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them; When I feel that the image I am portraying is not working, I can readily change to something that does". The scale demonstrated a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.78.

Analyses and Results

In our final sample, we observed a gender distribution with 58% women and 42% men, with 70% of the participants being employees and 30% occupying managerial positions. Notably, the characteristics of our sample shed light on the frequency and duration of the shocks experienced.

Intriguingly, a significant proportion of our participants (64%) reported encountering three or more shocks, indicating the recurring nature of these disruptive events. Furthermore, a substantial portion (36%) experienced the impacts of these shocks for a duration exceeding one year. These findings emphasize the prolonged and consequential effects of the shocks under investigation (Table 3.1).

Table 3.2 details the means, standard deviations, and correlations among the control and the study variables. Consistent with hypotheses *H1a, b,* and *c,* a significant positive correlation emerged between positive career shocks and LWB, PWB, and WWB with (r = +0.214, +0.127 and +0.391; $p < 0.01$). Moreover, there was a negative correlation between negative career shocks and LWB, PWB, and WWB with (r = -0.100, -0.021, and -0.101; $p < 0.01$), which supports the second set of hypotheses *H2 a, b,* and *c*.

Measurement Model

The measurement model in this study is designed to encompass eight distinct first-order constructs, namely, positive career shocks (PCS), negative career shocks (NCS), life well-being (LWB), psychological well-being (PWB), workplace well-being (WWB), individual adaptability-crisis (IAC), individual adaptability-uncertainty (IAU), and self-monitoring (SM). A total of 48 indicators operationalizes these constructs. Furthermore, two second-order constructs are established: employee well-being (EWB), which is based on the first-order ones, i.e., LWB, PWB, and WWB, and individual adaptability (IA), which is based on IAC and IAU.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted on the initial model through 23 consecutive iterations to obtain the optimal fit model. During this process, 24 indicators out of 48 were systematically removed due to weak loadings and cross-loadings by established criteria. These indicators were deemed irrelevant to the measurement model and were consequently

excluded from further analysis. In line with the recommendations of Schreiber (2017) and Marsh et al. (2020), several indices were employed to evaluate the model's goodness of fit. These indices include the chi-square per degree of freedom (χ2/df), goodness of fit index (GFI), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). Schermelleh-Engel et al. (2003) emphasize the importance of assessing the fit of structural equation models by considering specific indices. Firstly, the χ2/df ratio should be less than three, and the goodness of fit index (GFI) should have values greater than .90; In addition, the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) should have values greater than .85. Moreover, the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) should have values greater than .95 to be considered an acceptable fit, and the comparative fit index (CFI) plays a crucial role in evaluating model fit. It ranges from zero to one, with higher values suggesting a better fit. Typically, a CFI value of .97 or higher indicates a good fit. Lastly, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) values should be ≤ .05 to be considered a good fit (Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003, pp. 34–36).

Our model comprises 24 manifests and exhibits a normed χ^2 of 1.925 with $p < 0.001$, a goodness of fit index (GFI) of 0.923, an adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) of 0.901, a Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) of 0.943, a comparative fit index (CFI) of 0.952, a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of 0.046, and a standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) of 0.0613. These indices indicate that the best-refined measurement model has excellent goodness of fit (Marsh et al., 2020; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003; Schreiber, 2017).

Further inspection of the CFA results showed that the factors loadings of the 24 retained manifests are pretty strong for all, being greater than 0.600, $p < 0.001$, offering high-scale reliability (Table 3.3). Furthermore, convergent validity is verified when all constructs' average

variance extracted (AVE) values are greater than 0.5 (C. H. Choi & You, 2017). Discriminant validity is also verified when the AVE of any given first-order construct is greater than its correlation with any other first-order construct, as reported in Table 3.3 (Carter, 2016). The reliability of the measurement model is supported by the composite reliability (CR) coefficient being greater than 0.700 for all constructs (Boduszek et al., 2013). On another note, Table 3.3 indicates that the normality of distribution is met for all manifest variables as far as their skewness and kurtosis are between ±2 (Ryu, 2011).

Table 3.2.1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variables	**M**	**SD**
1. Gender	1.58	0.49
2. Age	36.36	8.06
3. Position	1.30	0.46
4. Frequency	2.27	0.86
5. Duration	2.32	1.16
6. Negative Career Shocks	2.94	1.39
7. Positive Career Shocks	2.02	1.25
8. Life Well-Being	3.41	0.86
9. Psychological Well-Being	4.09	0.75
10. Workplace Well-Being	3.33	1.06
11. Individual adaptability crisis	4.17	0.71
12. Individual adaptability uncertainty	4.12	0.68
13. Self-monitoring	3.97	0.70

Table 3.2.2 *Descriptive Statistics and Correlations*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Gender	1.000												
2. Age	-0.205**	1.000											
3. Position	-0.199**	0.619**	1.000										
4. Frequency	-0.004	0.145**	0.112*	1.000									
5. Duration	0.083	0.058	0.084	0.219**	1.000								
6. Negative Career Shocks	-0.064	0.072	0.073	0.561**	0.191**	1.000							
7. Positive Career Shocks	0.058	-0.080	0.028	0.008	0.030	0.041	1.000						
8. Life Well-Being	-0.015	0.058	0.084	-0.142**	-0.179**	-0.100*	0.214**	1.000					
9. Psychological Well-Being	0.031	0.055	0.078	-0.016	-0.051	0.021	0.127**	0.291**	1.000				
10. Workplace Well-Being	-0.035	0.077	0.114*	-0.100*	-0.062	-0.101*	0.391**	0.326**	0.188**	1.000			
11. Individual adaptability crisis	-0.171**	0.135**	0.169**	-0.021	-0.180**	-0.045	0.050	0.261**	0.371**	0.133**	1.000		
12. Individual adaptability uncertainty	-0.092	-0.006	0.047	-0.011	-0.089	0.036	0.008	0.222**	0.325**	0.102*	0.592**	1.000	
13. Self-monitoring	-0.026	-0.024	-0.027	0.032	-0.017	0.067	0.031	0.177**	0.316**	0.072	0.358**	0.493**	1.000

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 3.3

Model Fit Convergent Validity and Reliability

Construct	Manifest	Loading (λ)	Skewness	Kurtosis	AVE	CR
Positive career shocks (PCS)	PCS2	0.713***	1.341	0.396	0.599	0.748
	PCS3	0.830***	0.814	-0.829		
Negative career shocks (NCS)	NCS3	0.716***	0.064	-1.577	0.582	0.735
	NCS4	0.807***	0.201	-1.577		
Life well-being (LWB)	LWB1	0.812***	-0.824	-0.061	0.580	0.872
	LWB2	0.754***	-0.336	-0.677		
	LWB3	0.844***	-0.620	-0.157		
	LWB4	0.742***	-0.669	-0.199		
	LWB5	0.639***	-0.330	-0.487		
Workplace well-being (WWB)	WWB1	0.823***	-0.486	-0.663	0.574	0.728
	WWB6	0.686***	-0.603	-0.927		
Psychological well-being (PWB)	PWB4	0.777***	-0.949	0.983	0.564	0.729
	PWB5	0.724***	-1.250	1.899		
Individual adaptability crisis (IAC)	IAC2	0.784***	-1.256	1.560	0.661	0.906
	IAC3	0.856***	-0.976	1.000		
	IAC4	0.848***	-1.059	1.164		
	IAC5	0.868***	-0.959	0.970		
	IAC6	0.696***	-0.577	0.045		
Individual adaptability uncertainty (IAU)	IAU7	0.735***	-0.809	0.736	0.630	0.836
	IAU8	0.832***	-0.854	1.001		
	IAU9	0.811***	-0.806	1.326		
Self-monitoring (SM)	SM4	0.751***	-0.886	1.529	0.564	0.794
	SM5	0.835***	-0.899	1.590		
	SM6	0.657***	-0.855	0.883		

*** $p < 0.001$

To measure the part of the indicators' variance captured by their underlying construct, the average variance extracted (AVE) values were calculated. The average variance of each construct or sub-construct is above the minimum required of 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Because AVE exceeded the 0.5 thresholds required, each construct accounted for more than 50% of its indicators' variance.

Structural Model

We have adopted Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) because it represents a second-generation multivariate analysis technique specifically designed to address the limitations of traditional Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) methods. Kline (2023), in their book Principles and Practice of Structural Equation Modeling, defined SEM as "a set of statistical techniques for estimating the magnitudes and directions of presumed causal effects in quantitative studies based on cross-sectional, longitudinal, experimental or other kinds of research designs" (Kline, 2023, p. 13). SEM is beneficial when investigating complex relationships among multiple variables in a linear framework. This study set the significance level at 5% to test the respective hypotheses, ensuring rigorous statistical inference. Standardized coefficients were employed to assess causality and parameter estimation, while the maximum likelihood estimation method was applied in the SEM analysis.

Figure 3.2 illustrates the structural model, which visually represents the directional causality between the independent variables (IVs), namely PCS and NCS, and the dependent variables (DVs), namely EWB, LWB, PWB, and WWB. The diagram's arrows depict the causality flow from the IVs to the DVs. The effects of these relationships are quantified by the standardized β coefficients. These coefficients provide estimates of the magnitude and direction of the effects in the model.

Examining moderating effects is also incorporated into the analysis by considering the interactions of IA and SM with NCS. These interactions are denoted by arrows connecting IA_x_NCS and SM_x_NCS to EWB. Furthermore, the coefficients of multiple correlation *R2* are presented on the upper right-hand side of the dependent variables (DVs). These coefficients indicate the proportion of variability in the DVs that can be accounted for by the independent variables (IVs). Specifically, the *R2* values are reported as 13.4% for LWB, 11.9% for PWB, 29.9% for WWB, and 74.9% for EWB.

Hypotheses Testing

Our research findings demonstrate a significant and positive association between positive career shocks and employee life well-being (LWB) (*H1a*, $\beta = 0.337$, $p < 0.001$). These shocks impact employees' lives, including heightened life satisfaction, increased happiness, and greater enjoyment. Positive career shocks can thus be considered catalysts for fostering life well-being among employees.

Similarly, our findings reveal a substantial correlation between positive career shocks and employee psychological well-being (PWB) (*H1b*, $\beta = 0.341$, $p < 0.001$). Employees who experience positive career shocks exhibit enhanced psychological well-being in multiple areas. They demonstrate a heightened ability to handle daily affairs and effectively manage their professional responsibilities, leading to increased confidence and overall psychological well-being. Additionally, they report a greater sense of self-worth and positive self-regard, contributing to a more fulfilling and satisfying psychological state (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4

Hypotheses Test Results

Hypothesis	Constructs	Standardized β	Results on hypotheses
H1	PCS → EWB	0.567***	Supported
H1a	PCS → LWB	0.337***	Supported
H1b	PCS → PWB	0.341***	Supported
H1c	PCS → WWB	0.511***	Supported
H2	NCS → EWB	-0.524**	Supported
H2a	NCS → LWB	-0.191***	Supported
H2b	NCS → PWB	-0.109*	Supported
H2c	NCS → WWB	-0.269***	Supported
H3	IAxNCS → EWB	0.193	Not supported
H4	SMxNCS → EWB	-0.004	Not supported

*$p < 0.05$. **$p < 0.01$. *** $p < 0.001$.

Furthermore, our research provides compelling evidence of a robust correlation between positive career shocks and employee workplace well-being (WWB) (*H1c*, β = 0.511, $p < 0.001$). Employees who experience positive career shocks report higher satisfaction with their responsibilities, perceiving their work as more enjoyable, engaging, and rewarding. This perception imbues their work with a more profound sense of purpose and meaning, ultimately enhancing their overall workplace well-being.

Support is also found for Hypothesis 2, specifying a negative association between negative career shocks and well-being (Table 3.4). Our findings demonstrate a significant and negative association between negative career shocks and employee life well-being (LWB) (*H2a*, β = -0.191,

$p < 0.001$), psychological well-being (PWB) (*H2b*, $\beta = -0.109$, $p < 0.05$), and workplace well-being (WWB) (*H2c*, $\beta = -0.269$, $p < 0.001$).

In our study, we posited that two individual characteristics, namely individual adaptability and self-monitoring, would act as moderators, mitigating the negative impact of negative career shocks on employee well-being. However, our analysis did not support hypotheses *H3* and *H4* (Table 3.4).

Hypothesis *H3* suggested that individual adaptability would buffer the adverse effects of negative career shocks on employees' well-being. However, our findings did not reveal a significant moderating effect of individual adaptability in attenuating the negative impact ($\beta = 0.193$). Despite the expectation that individuals high in adaptability would demonstrate greater resilience and ability to navigate the challenges posed by negative career shocks, our results did not support this hypothesis. Similarly, hypothesis *H4* proposed that self-monitoring would serve as a protective factor, mitigating the detrimental consequences of negative career shocks on employee well-being. However, our analysis did not uncover a significant moderating effect of self-monitoring ($\beta = -0.004$). Contrary to expectations, individuals high in self-monitoring, who are typically attentive to social cues and adaptable in their behavior, did not exhibit a mitigating influence on the negative impact of negative career shocks.

Additional Analysis

The Role of Shock Attributes: Duration and Frequency

The examination of shock attributes, specifically duration and frequency, adopted a two-tiered approach. Initially, each attribute underwent scrutiny as a primary moderator, followed by a subsequent examination as a secondary moderator. Our methodology encompassed the

systematic conduct of moderation analyses for each shock attribute across all hypotheses, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of their impact.

Each shock attribute, (a) duration and (b) frequency, was examined as a categorical variable, serving as a first moderator in assessing the association between positive career shocks and negative career shocks and the three sub-constructs of employee well-being (EWB): life well-being (LWB), workplace well-being (WWB), and psychological well-being (PWB).

Subsequently, the moderator moderation role of each shock attribute (a) duration and (b) frequency was further investigated as a categorical variable, functioning as the second moderator. In this context, individual adaptability and self-monitoring were identified as the primary moderators, assessing the relationship between negative career shocks and employee well-being. This structured approach ensures a coherent and concise exploration of the moderating roles of shock attributes in the context of employee well-being.

Table 3.5

Moderating Role of Duration

Hypothesis	Duration	Standardized β	$\Delta\chi^2$	p-value	Decision
H1: PCS → EWB	Days	0.654***	8.510	0.037*	The positive impact of PCS on EWB is higher when the duration is in days, followed by years, months, then weeks.
	Weeks	0.532***			
	Months	0.540***			
	Years	0.582***			
H1a: PCS → LWB	Days	0.360***	2.559	0.465	The positive impact of PCS on LWB is duration invariant.
	Weeks	0.334***			
	Months	0.351***			
	Years	0.346***			
H1b: PCS → PWB	Days	0.339***	1.082	0.781	The positive impact of PCS on PWB is duration invariant.
	Weeks	0.314***			
	Months	0.324***			
	Years	0.385***			
H1c: PCS → WWB	Days	0.524***	7.107	0.069†	The positive impact of PCS on WWB is higher when the duration is in days, followed by years, months, then weeks.
	Weeks	0.479***			
	Months	0.519***			
	Years	0.522***			
H2: NCS → EWB	Days	-0.386†	5.514	0.138	The negative impact of NCS on EWB is duration invariant.
	Weeks	-0.317†			
	Months	0.315†			
	Years	-0.368†			
H2a: NCS → LWB	Days	-0.181***	2.826	0.419	The negative impact of NCS on LWB is duration invariant.
	Weeks	-0.158***			
	Months	-0.164***			
	Years	-0.176***			
H2b: NCS → PWB	Days	-0.098*	1.058	0.787	The negative impact of NCS on PWB is duration invariant.
	Weeks	-0.085*			
	Months	-0.089*			
	Years	-0.112*			
H2c: NCS → WWB	Days	-0.260***	3.551	0.314	The negative impact of NCS on WWB is duration invariant.
	Weeks	-0.258***			
	Months	-0.239***			
	Years	-0.267***			
H3: IA_x_NCS → EWB	Days	0.383	0.777	0.855	*H3* is not supported.
	Weeks	0.307			
	Months	0.323			
	Years	0.346			
H4: SM_x_NCS → EWB	Days	-0.691	6.927	0.074†	SM moderates the negative impact of NCS on EWB when the duration is in months. SM strengthens the negative relationship between NCS and EWB.
	Weeks	0.387			
	Months	-0.219†			
	Years	0.734			

†$p < 0.1$. *$p < 0.05$. **$p < 0.01$. *** $p < 0.001$.

Shock Duration. Respondents were also surveyed regarding the duration of their career shocks, and the results indicate a varied distribution. Among the respondents, 36% reported experiencing shocks that lasted for years, 27% reported shocks lasting for months, 20% reported shocks lasting for days, and 17% reported shocks lasting for weeks. The moderating role of duration was examined, and the results are presented in Table 3.5. Notably, only hypotheses *H1*, *H1c*, and *H4* exhibited significant moderation effects concerning shock duration.

When considering the role of shock duration, our findings reveal that duration intensifies the relationship between positive career shocks and employee well-being, specifically workplace well-being, thereby strengthening the positive association.

An intriguing finding emerges when considering the duration of shocks in relation to the moderating role of self-monitoring. While self-monitoring (SM) alone did not exhibit a moderation effect, it demonstrated a significant moderating role when combined with shock duration. Specifically, when the duration of negative career shocks (NCS) lasted for months, self-monitoring was found to moderate the negative impact on employee well-being (EWB), strengthening the negative relationship between NCS and EWB.

Table 3.6

Moderating Role of Frequency

Hypothesis	Frequency	Standardized β	$\Delta\chi^2$	p-value	Decision
H1: PCS → EWB	One Two Three or more	0.583*** 0.529*** 0.575***	0.673	0.714	The positive impact of PCS on EWB is frequency invariant.
H1a: PCS → LWB	One Two Three or more	0.328*** 0.410*** 0.310***	0.533	0.766	The positive impact of PCS on LWB is frequency invariant.
H1b: PCS → PWB	One Two Three or more	0.336*** 0.330*** 0.341***	4.843	0.089†	The positive impact of PCS on PWB is higher when the frequency is three or more, followed by ones, then two.
H1c: PCS → WWB	One Two Three or more	0.504*** 0.580*** 0.495***	2.208	0.332	The positive impact of PCS on WWB is frequency invariant.
H2: NCS → EWB	One Two Three or more	-0.517*** -0.479*** -0.600***	1.872	0.392	The negative impact of NCS on EWB is frequency invariant.
H2a: NCS → LWB	One Two Three or more	-0.127** -0.156** -0.139**	2.619	0.270	The negative impact of NCS on LWB is frequency invariant.
H2b: NCS → PWB	One Two Three or more	-0.096* -0.089* -0.114*	0.072	0.965	The negative impact of NCS on PWB is frequency invariant.
H2c: NCS→ WWB	One Two Three or more	-0.213*** -0.253*** -0.259***	0.327	0.849	The negative impact of NCS on WWB is frequency invariant.
H3: IA_x_NCS → EWB	One Two Three or more	-0.221 -0.217 -0.266	3.510	0.173	*H3* is not supported.
H4: SM_x_NCS → EWB	One Two Three or more	0.259 0.517** -0.153	7.994	0.018*	SM moderates the negative impact of NCS on EWB when the frequency is two. SM dampens the negative relationship between NCS and EWB.

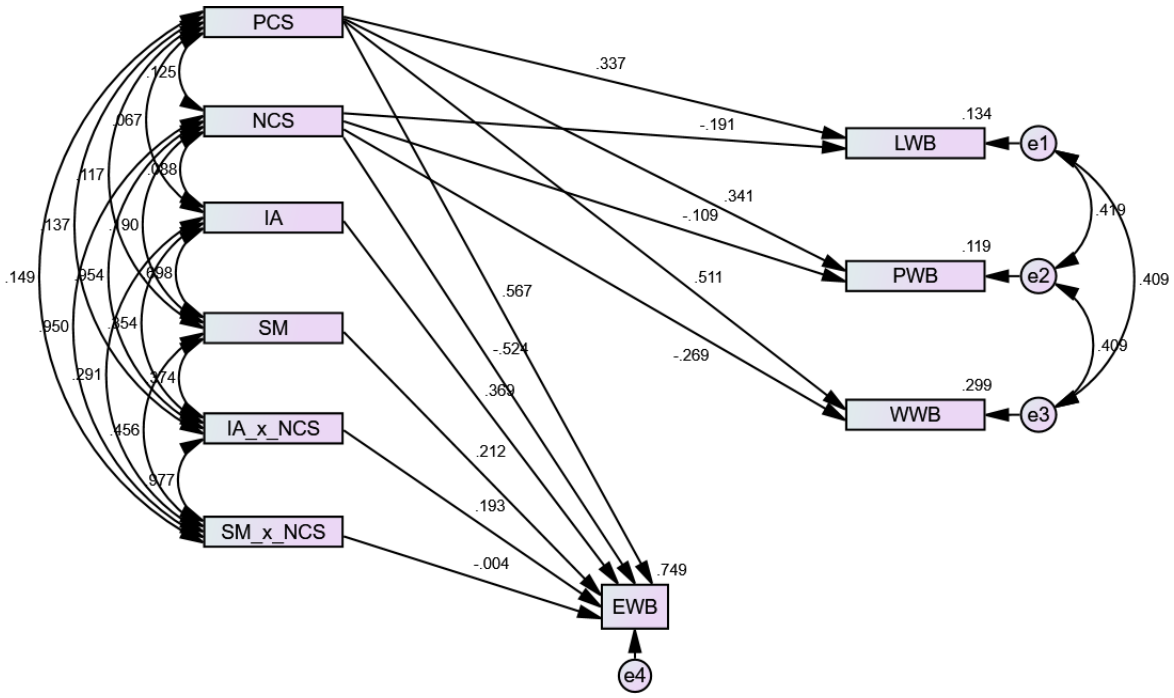
†$p < 0.1$. *$p < 0.05$. **$p < 0.01$. *** $p < 0.001$.

Shock Frequency. Respondents were also surveyed regarding the frequency of experienced career shocks, and the results revealed diverse patterns. Among the respondents, 64% reported experiencing three or more career shocks, 21% reported experiencing one shock, and 15% reported experiencing two shocks. The moderating role of frequency was examined, and the results are presented in Table 3.6. Notably, hypotheses *H1b* and *H4* exhibited significant moderation effects in relation to frequency.

The relationship between positive career shocks (PCS) and psychological well-being (PWB) is intensified by shock frequency, strengthening the positive association. Notably, our results demonstrate an interesting pattern: the positive impact of PCS on PWB is most pronounced when the frequency of shocks is three or more, followed by one shock and then two shocks. Another interesting finding arises when examining the frequency of shocks in relation to the moderating role of self-monitoring. While self-monitoring (SM) alone did not display a significant moderation effect, a notable result emerged when SM was considered in conjunction with shock frequency. Specifically, self-monitoring demonstrated a significant moderating role in mitigating the negative impact of negative career shocks (NCS) on employee well-being (EWB) when the frequency of shocks was two. In this context, self-monitoring acted as a buffer, attenuating the adverse relationship between NCS and EWB.

Figure 3.2

Structural Model



Discussion

This study represents a pioneering effort in the field, aiming to comprehensively examine the relationships between career shocks, individual characteristics, and employee well-being. By conducting a single empirical investigation, our research offers valuable insights into the mechanisms influencing employee well-being when faced with career shocks. The findings contribute to practical recommendations for effectively managing these challenges for organizations and individuals.

Guided by two prominent theoretical frameworks, the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory proposed by Hobfoll (2011) and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2014), our research explores the interplay between career shocks, individual characteristics, and employee well-being. The study had two primary objectives. Firstly, it

investigated the impact of positive and negative career shocks on employee well-being, aiming to understand their influence comprehensively. Additionally, we examined the potential moderating role of individual characteristics, specifically individual adaptability (IA) and self-monitoring (SM), in buffering the impact of various shocks on employee well-being.

Addressing these objectives, our research sheds light on the complex dynamics between career shocks, individual characteristics, and employee well-being. It provides valuable insights for developing organizational and individual well-being strategies. Through this multifaceted approach, our study significantly contributes to the existing literature. It enhances our understanding of how employees can effectively cope with career shocks and maintain well-being in the workplace.

Furthermore, our study findings offer compelling evidence substantiating our initial prediction and supporting hypothesis *H2*. The calculated path coefficient of -0.524 reveals a statistically significant negative relationship between negative career shocks, such as organizational downsizing or restructuring, and employee well-being. This coefficient underscores the magnitude of these negative shocks' impact on employees' overall well-being. The obtained *p*-value, which is less than 0.001, signifies a high statistical significance level, further bolstering the credibility of our findings.

Based on these results, we can assert that negative career shocks have a detrimental influence on employee well-being. Organizational downsizing or restructuring negatively affects various aspects of employees' lives, leading to decreased well-being and potentially compromising their physical and psychological health.

Employees who encounter negative career shocks exhibit a decline in psychological well-being across multiple dimensions. They demonstrate a diminished capacity to effectively handle

daily affairs and manage their professional responsibilities, resulting in reduced confidence and overall psychological well-being. Additionally, they report decreased self-worth and positive self-regard, contributing to a less fulfilling and satisfying psychological state.

These findings highlight the detrimental effects of negative career shocks on various dimensions of employee well-being. The observed associations between negative career shocks and decreased well-being emphasize the importance of addressing and mitigating the adverse impacts of these shocks in the workplace.

Theoretical Implications

Our study adopts a multidimensional approach, incorporating key variables to understand the impact of career shocks on employee well-being comprehensively. This research fills a notable gap and offers valuable insights for scholars and practitioners, facilitating the enhancement of employee well-being and resilience in response to unexpected career events.

Building on the significance emphasized by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018) and Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al. (2021a), our study responds to the call for further research regarding shock attributes. It contributes to the current literature by investigating the following dimensions: (1) the impacts of both positive and negative career shocks (valence); (2) the role of shock duration and frequency, including their combined effects; and (3) the source of the shock, with a specific focus on economic crises leading to downsizing and restructuring.

Through this comprehensive examination, we advance our understanding of the multi-faceted nature of career shocks and their implications for employees' well-being and career trajectories, aligning with prior research by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018) and Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al. (2021a).

This research significantly contributes to the existing body of knowledge by emphasizing the importance of valence, building on Akkermans, Collings, et al.'s (2021) work. Specifically, the study sheds light on the favorable effects of positive career shocks on employee well-being, particularly during economic crises. Our analysis observed that all participants unequivocally acknowledged experiencing positive shocks, each varying in frequency and duration. Notably, this phenomenon persisted despite concurrent encounters with adverse shocks during the crisis. Such positive shocks notably impact employees' psychological well-being and work-life balance, leading to increased happiness, self-confidence, and improved self-esteem. Consequently, employees perceive their work as more enjoyable, fostering greater fulfillment and alignment with personal goals. This underscores the significance of recognizing and understanding the favorable outcomes associated with positive career shocks during periods of economic uncertainty.

Moreover, this research adds to the existing literature on the impact of negative shocks on employee well-being, explicitly focusing on organizational downsizing and restructuring. The study reveals a negative association between negative career shocks and life well-being, indicating that employees experiencing such shocks have reduced satisfaction with life. These shocks are linked to a decline in happiness levels, leaving employees feeling less fulfilled and content in both personal and professional domains. This provides valuable insights into the detrimental effects of negative career shocks on employee well-being, particularly in organizational upheaval.

Our research addresses the call for future investigations by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018) to examine the traits and behaviors of individuals experiencing career shocks. Contrary to the theoretical rationale and previous research suggesting the potential protective effects of individual adaptability (IA) and self-monitoring (SM) as individual characteristics, our findings indicate that neither IA nor SM played a significant role in mitigating the adverse effects of

negative career shocks on employee well-being. However, our analysis revealed intriguing results, showing that while IA and SM may not significantly moderate the relationship between career shocks and employee well-being, they exert an influence when considering specific shock attributes, such as frequency and duration. These insightful findings illuminate the intricate dynamics among career shocks, individual characteristics, and shock attributes, providing a comprehensive understanding of their combined impact on employee well-being. It is essential to recognize that the duration of these shocks may interact with specific factors, influencing both the intensity and persistence of their effects on employee well-being. These contributions to the existing literature shed light on the nuanced relationship between shock duration and specific hypotheses, aligning with future recommendations proposed by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018). Moreover, this study highlights the interactive influence of self-monitoring and shock duration on the relationship between negative career shocks and employee well-being. It suggests that the effects of self-monitoring become more pronounced when individuals experience negative career shocks for an extended period. In this specific scenario, self-monitoring acts as an intensifier, exacerbating the adverse consequences of negative career shocks on employee well-being. This finding provides valuable insights into the complex interplay between individual characteristics and the temporal aspects of career shocks in shaping employee well-being.

Furthermore, understanding the moderating role of frequency adds depth to our comprehension of the intricate dynamics surrounding career shocks and their effects on employees' well-being. These findings make a valuable contribution to the existing literature by illuminating the nuanced relationship between frequency and specific hypotheses, addressing the gap highlighted by Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al. (2021b). Specifically, this research highlights the interactive influence of self-monitoring and shock frequency on the relationship between negative

career shocks and employee well-being. It reveals that the effects of self-monitoring become more apparent and beneficial when individuals experience negative career shocks with a frequency of two. In such cases, self-monitoring acts as a protective mechanism, mitigating the detrimental consequences of negative career shocks on employee well-being. Our findings also underscore the importance of considering the frequency of career shocks in understanding their impact on employee well-being. The varying frequencies of shocks experienced by individuals can result in distinct psychological and emotional responses. Recognizing this, it becomes crucial to acknowledge that the frequency of career shocks may interact with specific factors, influencing the intensity and persistence of their effects on employee well-being.

Practical Implications

Our study has practical implications for various stakeholders in the context of recurrent disruptive events, offering valuable insights for organizations navigating challenges in such environments. It also equips employees and managers with valuable insights to address the demands of volatile contexts. Policymakers seeking to support employee well-being during uncertain times can benefit from the study's guidance. The exposure of banking sector employees to economic crises and negative events has significant implications for their well-being, emphasizing the need for organizations to recognize and address the potential negative consequences of career shocks. Strategies supporting employees' well-being during these challenging times, such as counseling services and career transition support, are crucial.

Investigating duration as a moderator provides valuable insights into the implications of career shocks on employee well-being, helping organizations design targeted interventions and support systems to cater to employees' needs based on the temporal aspects of career shocks.

In volatile countries, organizations must take proactive measures to build resilient and adaptive teams capable of performing efficiently. Cultivating well-equipped teams, particularly individuals high in self-monitoring, and recruiting those with positive attitudes and resilience are essential for thriving amidst uncertainties. Internal communication practices can mitigate the impact of career shocks by informing employees about potential consequences, providing guidelines, and prioritizing transparency. HR managers are critical in guiding department heads to manage job demands effectively, while experienced managers support employees in managing emotions during challenging circumstances.

In conclusion, our study offers valuable guidance for organizations, employees, and policymakers to navigate uncertainties and support well-being during challenging times. HR managers and experienced leaders are pivotal in fostering a conducive work environment and ensuring employee effectiveness and well-being in adversity.

Limitations of the Study and Directions of Future Research

Despite its contributions, several potential constraints inherent in this study warrant further exploration through subsequent research. Foremost among these is the notable significance of this study's data collection efforts within Lebanon, an underexplored nation in the Middle East that substantial political, economic, and social transformations have profoundly impacted. Nonetheless, it is imperative to recognize that the study's findings may be circumscribed in their applicability to other global regions owing to the distinctive contextual factors and prevailing circumstances specific to Lebanon. Consequently, it is essential to acknowledge that the generalizability of the study's results may be readily applicable only to select regions across the globe.

Our convenience sampling method involved participants agreeing before receiving the survey, potentially impacting external validity and generalizability. Excluding non-respondents or refusals may lead to underrepresentation or overrepresentation, further limiting external validity. This lack of generalizability is common in convenience sampling, resulting in biased estimates (Jager et al., 2017, p. 16).

Therefore, we recommend future research consider non-random sampling techniques for improved generalizability. However, when constrained to convenience sampling, adopting homogeneous convenience samples is suggested as a viable alternative (Jager et al., 2017, p. 13).

Secondly, one of the objectives of this study was to investigate the impact of career shocks on the well-being of employees in the banking sector, considering the notable effects experienced by this industry during the crisis. However, it is essential to recognize that divergent findings may emerge when examining other sectors. Each sector exhibits unique dynamics, challenges, and responses to the crisis, which can lead to heterogeneous outcomes and implications. Consequently, caution is warranted when extrapolating the study's findings to other sectors, as the intricacies and nuances specific to banking employees may not align with those prevalent in different professional domains. Future research should comprehensively explore and analyze the experiences and perspectives of employees from various sectors to understand the crisis's overall impact.

Thirdly, using a cross-sectional design in this study prohibits making any assertions about causality based on the obtained outcomes. Henceforth, it is imperative for future research endeavors to gather longitudinal data in order to comprehensively investigate the temporal evolution of shocks and their sustained impact on well-being over an extended period.

Fourthly, despite theoretical reasoning and prior research suggesting the potential protective influence of individual characteristics, our analysis did not yield supportive evidence in

this specific context. Our study findings indicate that neither individual adaptability (IA) nor self-monitoring (SM) significantly mitigated the adverse effects of negative career shocks when considered as stand-alone variables. However, gaining insight into the moderating role of shock duration and frequency enhances our understanding of the intricate dynamics related to career shocks and their inherent attributes. Moreover, it sheds light on the pivotal role that individual characteristics play and its implications for the well-being of employees.

Nevertheless, it is essential to acknowledge that these non-significant findings do not undermine the importance of individual characteristics in other situations (countries, sectors, events) or their potential relevance in different facets of employee well-being.

To gain deeper insights into the variations in the impact of negative career shocks on employee well-being, further research is warranted to explore alternative moderators. Understanding the factors that influence employees' responses to career shocks can facilitate the development of tailored interventions and support systems to address employees' distinct needs during organizational change and uncertainty. This aligns with Akkermans et al.'s (2021a) perspective on comprehending "the role of agency-related traits and behaviors" in effectively managing unforeseen events. Consequently, more research is needed to investigate contextual and individual characteristics within this realm (Akkermans et al., 2021a).

As a result, additional research is necessary to explore other factors that may interact with duration and illuminate the underlying mechanisms driving these effects. This holistic approach to understanding the moderating factors can inform evidence-based practices and promote more effective strategies to enhance employee well-being in the face of career disruptions. Hence, in forthcoming research endeavors, a more nuanced exploration of shocks can be pursued by giving due consideration to their specific attributes rather than solely examining shocks in a general sense.

Fifthly, in our Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), model optimization involved removing 24 manifest variables out of the original 48 due to identified issues with weak loadings and cross-loadings. Items with factor loadings below 0.6 were systematically eliminated, indicating their ineffectiveness in measuring the intended construct (Shrestha, 2021).

Removing a substantial number of items driven by low factor loadings may introduce biases in survey results. Recognizing and considering these biases in evaluating the validity and reliability of survey findings is imperative and should be acknowledged as a limitation in the context of our study.

Despite the validation of these scales in diverse contexts, including Western countries, and South and East Asian regions, it's crucial to note the absence of validation studies for these scales in the Middle East, particularly Lebanon. Lebanon's unique conditions, encompassing cultural disparities, economic intricacies, and distinct political dynamics, underscore the need for subsequent research in the region to verify whether the operationalization of the construct differs.

Lastly, in our survey, we operationalized the Positive and Negative Career Shocks (NCS) measurement by combining items from various sources. Expressly, we referred to the studies of Seibert, Kraimer, Holtom, and Pierotti (2013) and Seibert, Kraimer, and Heslin (2016), while an additional item was drawn from the work of Ali, Ghani, Islam, and Mehreen (2020).

Nevertheless, it is crucial to underscore that the absence of a consolidated and validated measurement instrument to assess the broad spectrum of career shocks is currently apparent. Therefore, we emphasize the necessity for future research to address this gap and devote efforts to developing a robust measurement tool that encompasses the diverse dimensions of career shocks. This recommendation is supported by multiple scholars, including Seibert (2013), Akkermans et al. (2021a), and Blocker et al. (2019).

Conclusion

In conclusion, based on the JD-R theory and COR theory, this research uncovers the intricate relationship between individual factors, positive and negative career shocks, and employee well-being during Lebanon's economic crisis. The study highlights the significance of considering personal characteristics, like individual adaptability and self-monitoring, in understanding individuals' responses to career shocks and their well-being implications.

Overall, the study significantly contributes to understanding how banking sector employees are affected by career shocks amid an economic crisis, emphasizing the importance of individual factors in shaping well-being outcomes. These novel findings have practical implications for effectively managing employee well-being in similar contexts of economic uncertainty. The research expands knowledge on organizational behavior, providing valuable insights for organizations and policymakers seeking strategies to support employees during challenging economic times, fostering resilience and enhancing overall well-being in the face of adversity.

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4.

Career Engagement or Career Regret:

The Impact of Career Shocks Through Career Adaptability.

A Longitudinal Study in the Lebanese Banking Sector.

Weathering Career Cloudbursts

Abstract

Purpose: This study explores the relationship between negative career shocks, career adaptability, and consequential career outcomes within the context of Lebanon's banking sector during times of economic turbulence. Specifically, it investigates the mediating role of career adaptability in the associations between negative career shocks and two critical career outcomes: career engagement and regret.

Design / Methodology: Employing the theoretical frameworks of Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 2002, 2005) and the Job Demands-Resources theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2014), this research adopts a longitudinal design. Primary data were collected from a sample of 388 bank employees over 18 months, starting in January 2022 and concluding in June 2023. The study employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze the data and test the hypothesized relationships.

Findings: The empirical findings robustly support the hypothesized mediation model, thereby confirming the presence of a contingent indirect effect.

The study reveals that negative career shocks significantly influence career outcomes and highlights the crucial role of career adaptability as a central mechanism in this process. Individuals experiencing negative career shocks tend to exhibit heightened regret and reduced career engagement. Moreover, individuals with higher career adaptability demonstrate increased resilience in facing adversities and generally maintain a more optimistic outlook regarding their future career prospects.

Originality / Value: This study aims to contribute to the understanding of how individuals respond to and overcome adverse career events, shedding light on the intricate interplay among negative career shocks, career adaptability, and their combined influence on career outcomes.

This study addresses a research gap by examining the effects of external career shocks in crisis-ridden contexts, thereby enhancing our understanding of career dynamics during periods of crisis. ***Conclusion:*** The following research aims to provide valuable insights into career development during instability, offering strategic guidance for individuals navigating career shocks and adjusting to evolving circumstances. This research holds practical significance for practitioners and scholars as it guides the development of strategies to promote adaptability in response to career challenges, ultimately contributing to organizational and career studies.

Keywords: career shocks, career adaptability, career engagement, career regret

Introduction

The study of careers began to take shape within the broader field of organizational studies during the mid-1970s (van der Heijden & Vos, 2015). With further development, Arthur et al. (1989) defined "career" as an evolving sequence of an individual's work experiences over time (Jiang et al., 2021). However, in recent days, the nature of work has undergone significant transformations (Barley et al., 2017), leading to substantial changes in the labor market driven by shifts in the economy, society, and technology. These shifts have resulted in heightened levels of uncertainty, increased competition, and a growing demand for more significant work flexibility (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022b). Consequently, job insecurity has surged, leading to unconventional career paths (Maggiori et al., 2017).

Career paradigms have also experienced notable transformations in response to these evolving dynamics. These changes strongly emphasize individual agency and the adoption of career self-management practices (Seibert et al., 2013). In this changing landscape, individuals are increasingly regarded as primarily responsible for their career planning. They are encouraged to develop networking skills to facilitate smooth career transitions (Akkermans et al., 2013a).

Within the realm of multifaceted career changes, a particular conceptual framework has emerged as a focal point, exerting a discernible impact on the paths of individual careers. This framework, called "career shock", is defined as recurring and disruptive occurrences instigated by external factors beyond an individual's control (Seibert et al., 2013). "Career shocks" are events that prompt individuals to contemplate potential adjustments in their career trajectories (Seibert et al., 2013, p. 172).

Recently, scholars have studied the impact of career shocks on individuals' career outcomes (Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Seibert et al.,

2013), with investigations focusing on various dimensions, such as career planning (Seibert et al., 2013), career success (Kraimer et al., 2019), perceived employability (Hofer et al., 2020), thriving (Mansur & Felix, 2020), and career sustainability (Vos et al., 2020a). These studies emphasize the interconnected nature of careers and highlight the significant role of unexpected events in shaping individuals' career development (Mansur & Felix, 2020). Nevertheless, a notable gap remains in understanding further career outcomes arising from such disruptions (Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al., 2021b; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Seibert et al., 2013).This situation is particularly evident in our study's focus on Lebanon, a country situated in the Middle East.

Lebanon has recently faced a series of significant and consecutive adverse events, leading to an extraordinarily severe economic and financial crisis that has gained international attention and recognition (World Bank, 2021). One of the sectors profoundly affected by this crisis is the banking industry, which has undergone substantial restructuring, downsizing, and the implementation of stringent measures. These developments have increased employees' job insecurity and heightened uncertainty regarding their future career prospects. As per Akkermans, these events can be categorized as career shocks because they primarily originate from external factors beyond individual control. These shocks have had varying impacts on the Lebanese population and have significantly shaped the career development trajectories of employees (Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al., 2021b; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018).

The present study examines the impact of negative career shocks within Lebanon's banking sector, occurring in the context of a severe economic crisis. Its primary objective is to investigate individuals' career attitudes and behaviors, namely engagement and regret, as they respond and adapt to demanding circumstances. Our choice for these two career related outcomes rise from the two perspectives. From an employee's viewpoint, exploring the factors that influence proactive

career behaviors is essential since these behaviors play a pivotal role in their career progression (Huo, 2021). Furthermore, career engagement, defined as an individual's proactive commitment and participation in career-related activities (Hirschi & Freund, 2014), provides an avenue for acquiring crucial skills indispensable for career advancement (Jiang et al., 2021).

Moreover, from an employer's perspective, promoting positive dispositions like career engagement is crucial while mitigating negative sentiments, notably career regret (Huo, 2021). This holds particular significance in the crisis that profoundly affected the banking sector.

In the current turbulent work environment, adaptability has emerged as an essential quality for thriving amid heightened complexity (Maggiori et al., 2017). This is crucial because employees encounter greater responsibilities in an ever-changing professional landscape. In light of these considerations, employees must take proactive steps to cultivate the essential resources and competencies to navigate their job responsibilities proficiently and strategically plan their career trajectories (Akkermans et al., 2013a). Career adaptability refers to an individual's ability to effectively address professional challenges, adapt to dynamic changes, and successfully traverse the obstacles encountered in their career journey (Savickas, 2013). Career adaptability is a central concept within Career Construction Theory (CCT) (Savickas, 2002), which conceives "adaptation" as achieving positive outcomes in response to changing situations, facilitated by possessing psychosocial resources for effective change management (Rudolph et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2019). Previous research demonstrates the impact of career adaptability on various aspects of adaptation, one of which is career engagement (Rossier et al., 2012; Rudolph et al., 2017). The second aim of this study is to investigate the mediating role of career adaptability in the relationship between career shocks and career outcomes.

This study contributes significantly to existing research by examining the consequences of career shocks within the theoretical frameworks of Career Construction Theory and the Job Demands-Resources theory. To achieve this, we conducted a longitudinal investigation spanning 18 months, specifically targeting employees in the Lebanese banking sector.

Literature Review

Career Shocks

Major life events, whether unforeseen or planned, can lead to unexpected consequences, causing individuals to reconsider their career and life paths (Mansur & Felix, 2020; Seibert et al., 2016). These events, referred to as "career shocks" by Seibert et al. (2013, p. 172), prompt individuals to reflect on their career goals and explore alternative strategies to achieve their professional objectives (Seibert et al., 2013, 2016).

A more detailed definition of career shocks is provided by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018), who describe them as disruptive events beyond an individual's control that trigger career contemplation. Career shocks can vary in predictability and valence, encompassing positive and negative experiences (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018, p. 4). While infrequent, they demand individuals' attention and thorough analysis (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018). It's important to note that shocks can originate from various sources, such as family-related, organizational, economic, or global factors, each with a unique impact (Akkermans, Collings, et al., 2021; Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Wordsworth & Nilakant, 2021).

Positive career shocks lead to favorable outcomes and negative career shocks associated with adverse consequences (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Blokker et al., 2019; Kraimer et al., 2019). Shock valence can also depend on individuals' subjective perceptions, influencing their

career outcomes (Seibert et al., 2013; Wordsworth & Nilakant, 2021). Some negative shocks may eventually lead to positive long-term outcomes, as demonstrated in studies by Wordsworth & Nilakant (2021).

This study focuses on recurrent negative career shocks in Lebanon's banking sector, which is currently undergoing significant restructuring and downsizing due to the Lebanese economic crisis. This crisis represents a substantial negative career shock with potential disruptions for banking employees and the wider population.

Theoretical Framework

Our theoretical reasoning underpinning the hypotheses is based on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) and on the Career Construction Theory (CCT) (Savickas, 2002).

Job Demands-Resources Theory

The JD-R theory, introduced by Bakker and Demerouti (2007), classifies job attributes into job demands and resources. Job resources enhance motivation, while job demands can lead to strain and emotional exhaustion due to the substantial effort required in the workplace (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2017).

Job demands are defined as "physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs" (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, p. 312). On the other hand, job resources refer to those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that are either/or: (1) functional in achieving work goals, (2) reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs, and (3) stimulate personal growth, learning, and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, p. 312).

According to the JD-R theory, job demands initiate a health impairment process, whereas job resources initiate a motivational process (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011).

Schaufeli (2017) introduced the Energy Compass (EC) as the first instrument explicitly grounded in the JD-R theory, encompassing a comprehensive range of robust and trustworthy indicators of job demands, job resources, outcomes, and personal resources. These indicators have been discerned through rigorous prior research endeavors and practical consultancy experiences (Schaufeli, 2017, p. 123). Job demands are classified into three subcategories: (a) qualitative demands (emotional and mental demands, …), (b) quantitative demands (work overload and pace of change, …), (c) organizational demands (negative change, role conflicts, ...), and four subcategories for job resources: (a) social, (b) work, (c) organizational, and (d) developmental resources (Schaufeli, 2017, p. 123).

In our study, negative career shocks, like downsizing and mass layoffs, are classified as "Job demands" (Bauer et al., 2014, p. 64) and are recognized as "organizational demands" in Schaufeli (2017, p. 123) Energy Compass model. The "Failure to receive an expected job assignment or promotion" (Seibert et al., 2016) prompts reflection on future career progression and, categorized as a hindrance demand, can impede progress towards future career goals. The absence of an anticipated promotion is placed under the "lack of recognition" category, identified as a job demand (Bauer et al., 2014). Similarly, "unforeseen compelled job rotation", involving a mandatory and unpredictable work shift without consent, is considered an "unfavorable work shift" within the job demands category (Bauer et al., 2014). Furthermore, the enforced move to a new role is a negative change at the job level, categorized as an organizational demand (Schaufeli, 2017). Accordingly, negative career shocks are constructed in our study as job demands, aligning with the same reasoning by Kraimer et al. (2019).

Within the JD-R theory framework (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), personal resources, defined as cognitive-affective aspects of an individual's personality with positive beliefs, play a protective role against job demands. Similar to job resources, personal resources initiate a motivational process, facilitating goal achievement (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Van Den Heuvel et al., 2010; Vogt et al., 2016), thereby buffering the impact of job demands on growth and development. These resources are crucial as they can mitigate potential adverse impacts of health impairment processes and enhance the positive effects of motivational processes (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018, p. 3).

Recent research highlights the importance of career adaptability as a crucial personal resource (Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018; Maggiori et al., 2013). Career adaptability empowers individuals to manage career challenges and adapt to changing environments, leading to desirable outcomes (Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018). It is a valuable resource for navigating challenges arising from negative career shocks.

This perspective aligns with the Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 2002), which provides insights into how individuals respond to career shocks (Maggiori et al., 2017; Mansur & Felix, 2020; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012a). The theory emphasizes career adaptability as a psychosocial capacity for handling career challenges and pressures (Chong & Leong, 2017; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012a), including tasks, transitions, and traumas (Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012a).

Career Construction Theory

The Career Construction Theory involves an active process where individuals utilize career resources to effectively shape their careers (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012a; Tolentino et al., 2014), emphasizing the interplay between the individual's environment and career resources (Blokker et

al., 2019). Central to this framework is the concept of career adaptability, which explains how individuals navigate various career-related circumstances, including tasks, transitions, and traumas (Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012a).

Career adaptability, defined by Savickas and Porfeli (2012a) as "individual's resources for coping with current and anticipated tasks, transitions and traumas in their occupational roles that, to some degree large or small, alter their social integration" (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012b, p. 662).

The Career Construction Theory posits that individuals' career development is influenced by the integration of personal needs and societal expectations and their ability to adapt to the environment (Savickas, 2002, 2005). Variations in adaptivity or adaptive readiness among individuals reflect their willingness to address evolving environmental conditions (Blokker et al., 2019; Hirschi & Valero, 2015).

Moreover, individuals possess adaptability resources, representing their capacity to develop beliefs and behaviors aligning with changing conditions. These factors collectively contribute to achieving positive integration and alignment with their work role, resulting in adaptation outcomes (Hirschi & Valero, 2015; Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas, 2013).

The career construction model suggests that individuals' adaptivity positively influences their career adaptability, impacting their adapting responses and leading to favorable adaptation outcomes (Hirschi & Valero, 2015; Savickas, 2013; Tolentino et al., 2014). Furthermore, the theory highlights the role of the individual's environment in influencing this active process through interaction with their career resources (Blokker et al., 2019). Despite the significance of person-environment interactions in CCT, limited understanding exists regarding the impact of major career events, such as career shocks, on individuals' career-shaping endeavors (Akkermans,

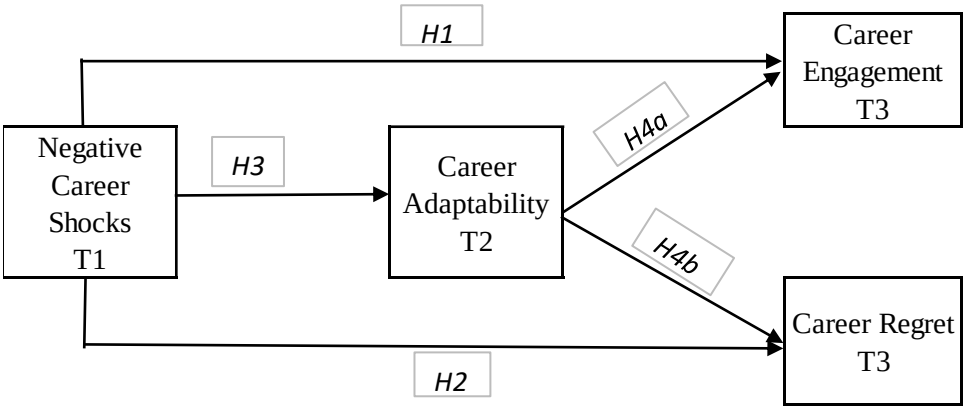
Paradniké, et al., 2018; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Blokker et al., 2019; Seibert et al., 2013).

Accordingly, this research aims to address this knowledge gap by examining the implications of career shocks within the framework of Career Construction Theory.

Drawing from Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory and Career Construction Theory (CCT), we suggest that career shocks are precursors to career adaptability, influencing outcomes like engagement and regret. Figure 4.1 illustrates our research model, which we will further expound upon in the following sections.

Figure 4.1

Proposed Mediation Model



Hypotheses Development

Impact of Negative Career Shocks on Career Engagement

In recent years, the evolving nature of careers has shifted the responsibility for managing one's career trajectory onto individuals (Yan et al., 2002). Consequently, proactive career behaviors have gained significance in achieving both objective and subjective career success (Hirschi et al., 2014). Career engagement, as conceptualized by Hirschi and Freund (2014), encompasses an individual's proactive commitment to advancing their career through career planning, exploring options, investigating the work environment, networking, skill development, and strategic positioning (p. 577). This concept aligns with the contemporary emphasis on proactive career behaviors and distinguishes itself from related constructs like work engagement, career adaptability, and career management (Savickas, 2005; Schaufeli et al., 2002). Hirschi's notion of career engagement emphasizes the individual's proactive commitment that contribute to professional growth, focusing on concrete actions rather than relying solely on mental state, identity, readiness, or self-management strategies (Hirschi & Freund, 2014).

Negative career shocks can significantly harm one's career, leading to adverse career outcomes (Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Seibert et al., 2016; Seibert et al., 2013). Kraimer et al. (2019) found that such shocks impede career progress and reduce work engagement. Akkermans et al. (2018) explore the cumulative and long-term consequences of career shocks, an area with limited research (Wordsworth & Nilakant, 2021). They highlight the role of shock frequency, intensity, and duration in shaping their effects, particularly in the context of prolonged external events triggering related occurrences (Wordsworth & Nilakant, 2021).

Employees experiencing negative career shocks engage in cognitive processes about their future careers, leading to negative attitudes toward career expectations (Akkermans et al., 2018; Hofer et al., 2020), reducing positive career outcomes like career engagement. Therefore, based on the effects of detrimental demands on outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Demerouti et al., 2001), our research will focus on examining the long-term repercussions on careers, as previous studies have primarily concentrated on immediate work-related outcomes. Our emphasis lies in elucidating the enduring effects on one's career trajectory over time. Consequently, we propose that negative career shocks are likely to have a negative impact on career engagement.

H1: Experiencing a negative career shock will be negatively related to career engagement.

Impact of Negative Career Shocks on Career Regret

Amid downsizing, technological advancements, globalization, and workforce mobility, the study of career regrets has gained prominence (Budjanovcanin et al., 2019; Sullivan et al., 2007). While literature extensively examines factors contributing to career success, there is a research gap regarding career-related regrets individuals may encounter (Budjanovcanin et al., 2019; Sullivan et al., 2007).

Regret has been studied across various disciplines, but limited research exists in work and organizational studies (Budjanovcanin et al., 2019). Our study focuses on occupational regret, defined as a persistent state of wishing for a different career choice (Wrzesniewski et al., 2006, p. 3). This enduring regret persists over time, influencing career outcomes as an individual's career unfolds (Budjanovcanin et al., 2019).

While existing research on career-related regret has focused on its antecedents, such as neglecting networking, time investment in work, and career inaction (Sullivan et al., 2007; Verbruggen and De Vos, 2020; Huo et al., 2022), gaps in understanding career regret persist. One

area needing further exploration is the potential contextual determinants of career regret, such as negative career shocks (Budjanovcanin et al., 2019, 2022).

Negative career shocks trigger cognitive deliberations about employees' future career advancement, resulting in negative cognitive-attitudinal reactions regarding career expectations (Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Hofer et al., 2020).

Employees perceive hindrance demands as obstacles to personal development, learning, and goal achievement due to their energy-draining nature and the effort required (Crawford & Nahmias, 2010; Huo et al., 2022; Kraimer et al., 2019). As hindrance demands increase, employee motivation to tackle challenges decreases, leading to a higher likelihood of passive and disengaged coping strategies, including career regret (Huo et al., 2022, p. 305).

H2: Experiencing a negative career shock will be positively related to career regret.

Mediating Role of Career Adaptability

Career adaptability, a central concept in Career Construction Theory (CCT) (Savickas, 2002), signifies an individual's capacity to effectively address professional challenges and changes. It involves using strengths and self-regulation to handle complex problems and traumatic experiences, influencing social integration in vocational tasks and transitions (Maggiori et al., 2017; Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012a).

Career adaptability provides individuals with crucial resources and skills to navigate diverse career situations and make informed decisions (Mansur & Felix, 2020; Seibert et al., 2016; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012; Zacher, 2014). Its components are valuable resources that enable individuals to adjust their behaviors in specific environments (Rossier et al., 2012; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). This multidimensional concept encompasses psychological and social aspects, fostering career preparation, exploration, and problem-solving abilities (Savickas, 2013; Zacher,

2014). It plays a significant role in handling developmental tasks and challenges in the career decision-making process (Mansur & Felix, 2020; Marcionetti & Rossier, 2021; Nilforooshan, 2020; Rossier et al., 2012).

Career adaptability encompasses four key "adapt-abilities" (CAAS): career concern (coping behaviors and career planning awareness), belief in control (responsibility for career construction and self-regulation), curiosity (exploration and engagement with the environment), and confidence (persistence in overcoming career challenges and achieving goals). The integration of these abilities facilitates effective career adaptation, successful work environment integration, and seamless career transitions (Hirschi & Valero, 2015; Marcionetti & Rossier, 2021; Savickas, 2013; Tolentino et al., 2014).

Negative career shocks, being significant and disruptive events, lead individuals to reevaluate their career trajectories (Akkermans et al., 2018). Unpredictable and uncontrollable career shocks can reduce coping behavior (Akkermans et al., 2018; Seibert et al., 2016). These unexpected events can undermine an individual's self-control, hinder personal development, and subsequently affect confidence in career decision-making and the engagement to explore future career possibilities (Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al., 2021b; Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018).

Additionally, such shocks impede readiness for anticipated career changes, like downsizing or mandatory job rotation, further compromising career adaptability (Hofer et al., 2020). Job insecurity and strain also adversely affect career adaptability resources and responses (Johnston, 2018; Maggiori et al., 2013).

As a result, the four adapt-abilities crucial for planning and adjusting to career-related changes may be significantly impacted (Savickas, 2013; Tolentino et al., 2014). They also serve

as precursors to career development events, influencing individuals' career success (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Mansur & Felix, 2020).

Drawing upon Career Construction Theory (CCT) principles, Mansur and Felix (2020) hypothesized that negative career shocks could adversely affect career outcomes through decreased career adaptability. Their research findings indicated that these events also lead individuals to adopt a more pessimistic view of their career prospects. In line with this, Mansur and Felix's study empirically demonstrated the substantial influence of negative career shocks on an individual's adaptability in their career path.

H3: Experiencing a negative career shock will be negatively related to career adaptability.

Rudolph et al. (2017) examined adaptability within the career construction model, revealing that high career adaptability leads to practical responses and adaptations to career challenges, consistent with perspectives from Savickas (2013), Tolentino et al. (2014), and Zacher (2014). The literature supports a positive correlation between career adaptability resources and goal-pursuit constructs like career optimism (Delle & Searle, 2020), resulting in positive adjustment and effective coping (Johnston, 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017). Additionally, research links career adaptability to career success (Cai et al., 2015; Guan et al., 2015; Haenggli & Hirschi, 2020) and well-being (Maggiori et al., 2013). Career engagement involves proactive commitment and actions to enhance professional development and positively shape career trajectories (Hirschi et al., 2014). It is reasonable to expect a positive relationship between career adaptability and career engagement, indicating positive adaptation. This rationale aligns with a previous study that found a favorable correlation between career adaptability and career engagement (Nilforooshan & Salimi, 2016).

On the other hand, career regret, characterized as a negative emotional response to career decisions (Wrzesniewski et al., 2006), can be distressing, especially when linked to occupational choices (Budjanovcanin et al., 2019). Conversely, adaptability resources play a vital role in coping with economic stressors like job insecurity and unemployment (Klehe et al., 2012). Therefore, it is reasonable to propose an inverse relationship between career adaptability and negative career adaptation outcomes, as adaptability resources may alleviate the stress associated with career regret.

Based on these considerations, we suggest an inverse association between negative career shocks and an individual's career adaptability. Additionally, we posit a positive correlation between career adaptability and career engagement, signifying positive adaptation and a reduction in career regret, a negative career adaptation outcome. Given these observations, our proposition suggests that negative career shocks indirectly influence both career engagement and career regret, with career adaptability mediating this relationship.

H4: Career adaptability mediates the relationship between *(a)* negative career shocks and career engagement and *(b)* negative career shocks and career regret.

Methodology

Participants and Procedure

Lebanon's severe financial crisis has had a significant impact on various sectors, particularly the banking industry, which, in turn, has greatly influenced the country's GDP. Our research focused on full-time employees in Lebanese banks affected by downsizing and mergers resulting from this crisis. We sourced participant information from official banks' websites and reached out through LinkedIn to explain the study's objectives and obtain consent for a three way survey. To ensure communication, we also collected alternative email addresses due to some banks'

potential restrictions on external emails. Once consent was obtained on LinkedIn, we administered the questionnaire through Qualtrics, with participants voluntarily agreeing to participate in all three surveys.

Initially opting for random sampling, we aimed to survey the entire banking employee population. However, alternative solutions were sought due to challenges in obtaining full coverage consent due to ongoing negative events in the banking sector.

Participant information was initially gathered from the banks' official websites. Contact was then established through LinkedIn to explain the study objectives and seek consent. Alternative email addresses were collected, considering potential restrictions on receiving external emails. The questionnaire was administered through Qualtrics after obtaining consent via LinkedIn. Participants voluntarily took part in the online surveys facilitated by Qualtrics, leading to a shift in our sample from random to non-probability sampling (convenience sampling).

Convenience sampling, acknowledged for its non-probability nature, involves a chosen rather than a random selection. This leads to unequal participation chances for banking employees and impacts study generalizability (Emerson, 2021). Despite this limitation, convenience sampling was deemed necessary due to situational constraints.

Participants had to meet specific criteria for inclusion in the study, which were verified during the initial data collection wave. These criteria included being employed by a Lebanese bank before the financial crisis began in 2019, providing comprehensive insights into their experiences. Additionally, participants were required to be between 25 and 55 years old and a prerequisite of at least three years of work experience. The upper age limit of 55 was set to ensure participants had at least ten additional years of work experience, enabling them to offer informed perspectives on future career opportunities.

The data collection spanned 18 months, commencing in January 2022 and concluding in June 2023. The study encompassed three measurement points, denoted as T1 (March 2022), T2 (October 2022), and T3 (March 2023), each marking the completion of data collection of the respective wave, with six months between each assessment. Initially, 1200 employees were contacted, and 650 individuals responded to the questionnaire at T1, yielding a 54% response rate. At T2, 450 employees completed the survey, resulting in a 31% drop-out rate, likely attributed to ongoing layoffs in the banking sector. Finally, at T3, 388 participants completed the survey, indicating a 14% drop-out rate. The reduction in sample size over time primarily reflects the potential impact of continuous layoffs within banking institutions.

Following the principles of the planned missing data design outlined by Little and Rhemtulla (2013) and Graham et al. (2006), the data collection aimed to gather responses from approximately two-thirds of the T1 participants at the T2 phase (Hofer et al., 2020). Past studies, including those by Li et al. (2019), have noted that these response proportions are typical and recommended in time-lagged designs (Hofer et al., 2020).

This study's dataset consisted of participants who participated in all three time points, totaling 388 employees (N=388). These participants also met the specified data quality standards, following the guidelines proposed by DeSimone et al. (2015) and by Hofer et al. (2020).

Measures

Questionnaires were administered in English, as it serves as the primary working language in Lebanese banks, and all participants were proficient in English, eliminating the need for translation. The survey included scales selected from previous literature to ensure both content and face validity, aligning with established research practices.

The study introduced control variables at Time 1 (T1). Negative career shocks were assessed at Time 1 (T1), while career adaptability was measured at Time 2 (T2). Subsequently, specific career outcomes, namely career engagement and regret, were evaluated at Time 3 (T3).

The Cronbach's alpha values for the measurement items in our scale showed excellent internal consistency, ranging from 0.818 to 0.925, indicating high reliability.

Negative Career Shocks

Negative career shocks were assessed using a scale with four items from Seibert et al. (2013) and one item from Ali et al. (2020). Participants rated the impact of each career shock on their professional trajectory on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (no experience and no impact) to 5 (significant experience and substantial impact). The scale-covered negative organizational events, e.g., "Your organization went through a significant negative event such as a reduction-in-workforce, bankruptcy, or a major ethical scandal" and personal setbacks, e.g., "I was overlooked for a promotion" / "failure to receive an expected job assignment or promotion". The scale demonstrated high reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.818 at T1.

Career Adaptability

Career adaptability was assessed using the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale–Short Form, developed by Maggiori et al. (2017), comprising 12 items. The scale evaluates four dimensions of career adaptability resources: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence, with three items dedicated to each dimension. Participants rated the extent to which they have developed each ability on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not strong) to 5 (strongest). Sample items included "Thinking about what my future will be like" (concern), "Taking responsibility for my actions" (control), "Becoming curious about new opportunities" (curiosity), and "Working up to my

ability" (confidence). The scale demonstrated a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.925 at T2.

Career Engagement

Career engagement was assessed using the Career Engagement Scale developed by Hirschi et al. (2014). This scale comprises nine statements, with three offering a general overview of career management activities, e.g., "focused on developing your career" and the remaining six specifically addressing individual career management. Respondents rated their level of engagement in each of these activities using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not much) to 5 (a great deal), reflecting their involvement in each behavior over the past six months. In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha is 0.857 at T3.

Career Regret

Career regret was assessed using a nine-item scale adapted from Wrzesniewski et al. (2006). Participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). It's important to note that elevated scores indicated higher levels of regret. Positive items were reverse-scored to reflect sentiments of regret. The items focused on the occupation, and an example item is: "Back when I was starting my career, I wish I had selected a different occupation". The scale demonstrated a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.922 at T3.

Control variables: we used position, frequency, and duration as control variables.

Dropout Analysis

To check the potential attrition bias, a dropout analysis across waves took place through several independent t-tests, whereby those who participated only once or twice (=excluded from

the data analyses) did not differ from participants who participated at all three times (= included in data analyses).

Negative career shocks did not differ between included (M = 2.21, SD = 1.09) and excluded (M = 2.23, SD = 1.08) participants (t[774] = -0.256, p > 0.05). Career adaptability also did not differ between included (M = 3.83, SD = 0.84) and excluded (M = 3.80, SD = 0.85) participants (t[774] = 0.495, p > 0.05). Moreover, career engagement did not differ between included (M = 3.64, SD = 0.81) and excluded (M = 3.61, SD = 0.80) participants (t[774] = 0.514, p > 0.05).

Analyses and Results

We used SmartPLS in our analysis due to its ease of use and robust functionalities in handling structural equation modeling (SEM) and path modeling. SmartPLS employed the PLS-SEM method to statistically examine the parametric aspects of the proposed model (measurement model evaluation) and hypotheses (structural model evaluation). The study used PLS-SEM for several reasons. First, it is a technique used to model complex relationships among variables, especially suitable for smaller sample sizes and testing mediator model (Hair Jr et al., 2021; Mansur & Felix, 2020).

Second, the PLS-SEM methodology holds significant appeal among researchers (Hair Jr et al., 2021; Mansur & Felix, 2020), as it empowers them to estimate intricate models encompassing numerous constructs, indicator variables, and structural paths without the necessity of imposing distributional assumptions upon the dataset (Hair et al., 2019).

Moreover, within Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), there are pivotal concepts, namely convergent validity and reliability, which play a crucial role in evaluating the precision and consistency of measurements about latent constructs, also referred to as latent variables, in a research model (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

Table 4.1 details the means, standard deviations, and correlations among the control and the study variables. Consistent with hypothesis *H1*, a significant negative correlation emerged between negative career shocks and career engagement (r = -0.253, $p < 0.01$). Moreover, there was a substantial positive correlation between negative career shocks and career regret (r = 0.365, $p < 0.01$), which supports the second hypothesis. Furthermore, a robust negative correlation was identified between negative career shocks and career adaptability (r = -0.562, $p < 0.01$), which confirms hypothesis 3. Additionally, the results revealed a substantial positive correlation between career adaptability and career engagement (r = 0.304, $p < 0.01$) and a notable negative correlation between career adaptability and career regret (r = -0.375, $p < 0.01$).

Measurement Model

For our model, we assessed the convergent validity and reliability using an integrated analysis of factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). For internal reliability, we calculated the composite reliability (CR) score (Hair et al., 2017).

Moreover, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted on the initial model for several runs to reach the best-fit model. The latter was attained by removing 12 indicators out of 35 that were systematically removed due to weak loadings and cross-loadings by established criteria. These indicators were deemed irrelevant to the measurement model and were consequently excluded from further analysis.

Further inspection of the CFA results showed that the factors loadings of the 23 retained manifests are pretty strong for all, fell within the range of 0.688 to 0.897, meeting the required threshold, being more significant than 0.600, $p < 0.001$, which is offering high-scale reliability (Table 4.2). Likewise, Cronbach's alpha values for the scale measurement items ranged from 0.818

to 0.925, indicating good reliability. Furthermore, convergent validity is verified when all constructs' average variance extracted (AVE) values exceed 0.5 (C. H. Choi & You, 2017).

Discriminant validity is also verified when the AVE of any given first-order construct is more significant than its correlation with any other first-order construct, as reported in Table 4.2 (Carter, 2016). The reliability of the measurement model is supported by the composite reliability (CR) coefficient, which ranged from 0.892 to 0.939, being greater than 0.70 for all constructs (Boduszek et al., 2013).

To measure the part of the indicators' variance captured by their underlying construct, the average variance extracted (AVE) values were calculated. The average variance of each construct, AVE, which ranged from 0.584 to 0.733 (all greater than 0.50), is above the minimum required of 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Because AVE exceeded the 0.5 thresholds required, each construct accounted for more than 50% of its indicators' variance. Discriminant validity is supported when the average shared variance of a construct and its indicators exceed the shared variance with every other construct of the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This was the case in the model where the AVE for each construct was more significant than the squared correlation coefficient of that construct with every other construct of the model, as per Table 4.3.

Table 4.1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variables	M	SD	CR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Position	1.31	0.46								
2. Frequency	2.27	0.86		-0.090						
3. Duration	2.33	1.17		-0.067	0.209**					
4. Negative career shocks T1	2.21	1.09	0.892	0.128*	-0.307**	-0.123*	(0.856)			
5. Career adaptability T2	3.83	0.84	0.939	-0.138**	0.156**	0.020	-0.562**	(0.812)		
6. Career engagement T3	3.64	0.81	0.894	-0.080	0.035	0.003	-0.253**	0.304**	(0.764)	
7. Career regret T3	2.32	1.06	0.939	0.040	-0.152**	-0.036	0.365**	-0.375**	-0.055	(0.849)

Note. Two-tailed tests. N = 388. The square roots of AVE are shown on the diagonal.

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 4.2

Model Fit Convergent Validity and Reliability

	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Negative career shocks T1	NCS2.T1	0.830	0.818	0.892	0.733
	NCS3.T1	0.858			
	NCS4.T1	0.880			
Career adaptability T2	CA1.T2	0.789	0.925	0.939	0.659
	CA10.T2	0.875			
	CA12.T2	0.800			
	CA2.T2	0.718			
	CA4.T2	0.779			
	CA5.T2	0.832			
	CA7.T2	0.878			
	CA9.T2	0.810			
Career engagement T3	CE1.T3	0.772	0.857	0.894	0.584
	CE2.T3	0.811			
	CE3.T3	0.800			
	CE4.T3	0.804			
	CE8.T3	0.702			
	CE9.T3	0.688			
Career regret T3	CR1.T3	0.848	0.922	0.939	0.721
	CR4.T3	0.820			
	CR5.T3	0.815			
	CR6.T3	0.824			
	CR7.T3	0.897			
	CR9.T3	0.886			

Table 4.3

Fornell-Larcker Criterion for Discriminant Validity

	1	2	3	4
1. Career adaptability T2	0.812			
2. Career engagement T3	0.309	0.764		
3. Career regret T3	-0.375	-0.056	0.849	
4. Negative career shocks T1	-0.563	-0.263	0.362	0.856

The measurement model in this study is designed to encompass four distinct first-order constructs, namely, negative career shocks (NCS), career engagement (CE), career regret (CR), career adaptability (CA).

Structural Model

Before assessing the structural model, a thorough examination of the potential concern of collinearity was conducted. Furthermore, in line with the suggestions of Hair et al. (2014), the analysis yielded an average variance inflation factor (VIF) of 1.329, which was below the critical threshold of 3.3. This indicates no statistically significant evidence of collinearity among the latent variables.

Table 4.4 displays various goodness-of-fit metrics. According to Kock (2015), the model displayed a strong correspondence with the data, as evidenced by the significant p-values for both the average path coefficient (0.206) and the average R2 (0.211) at the 0.001 significance level.

The investigation employed a bootstrapping methodology involving 5,000 resamples to evaluate our proposed model's statistical significance, as Hair et al. (2017) detailed.

Table 4.4

Model Evaluation Overall Fit

Measure	**Value**	***P*-value / Cut-off values**
Average path coefficient (APC)	0.206	$p < 0.001$
Average R-squared (ARS)	0.211	$p < 0.001$
Average adjusted R-squared (AARS)	0.206	$p < 0.001$
Average block VIF (AVIF)	1.329	acceptable if <= 5, ideally <=3.3
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	1.435	acceptable if <= 5, ideally <=3.3
Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)	0.406	small >= 0.1, medium >= 0.25, large >=0.36
Simpson's paradox ratio (SPR)	0.875	acceptable if >= 0.7, ideally =1
R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)	0.967	acceptable if >= 0.9, ideally =1
Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)	1.000	acceptable if >=0.7
Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	1.000	acceptable if >=0.7

Hypotheses Testing

The outcomes of hypotheses testing are presented in Tables 4.5 and 4.6 and are visually represented in Figure 4.2. *H1* suggested a relationship between NCS and CE. Our results indicate that experiencing a NCS at T1 negatively influenced CE at T3 ($\beta = -0.131$, $p < 0.05$), thus *H1* was supported. Experiencing a NCS at T1 significantly and positively influenced CR at T3 ($\beta = 0.221$, $p < 0.01$), thereby confirming *H2* (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5

Path Coefficients for the Direct Effects of the Variables

	Original sample (O)	**Sample mean (M)**	**Standard deviation (STDEV)**	**T statistics (|O/STDEV|)**	***P*-values**
CA.T2 -> CE.T3	0.236	0.241	0.060	3.942	0.000**
CA.T2 -> CR.T3	-0.251	-0.252	0.058	4.339	0.000**
NCS.T1 -> CA.T2	-0.563	-0.565	0.037	15.095	0.000**
NCS.T1 -> CE.T3	-0.131	-0.132	0.063	2.067	0.039*
NCS.T1 -> CR.T3	0.221	0.221	0.061	3.625	0.000**

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

H3, which posited that experiencing NCS would lower CA, was also confirmed by our data. There was a significant negative association between NCS at T1 and CA at T2 ($\beta = -0.563$, $p < 0.01$).

H4 proposed that CA would act as a mediator between NCS and both CE and CR. Utilizing the mediation testing approach proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986), two distinct pathways to the dependent variables (CE and CR) were delineated. Firstly, the independent variable, NCS, should be significantly related to the dependent variables, i.e., CE and CR. Secondly, NCS must also significantly impact the proposed mediator, CA.

H4a predicted that CA mediated the effects of NCS on CE. First, we examined the influence of CA at T2 on CE at T3. The analysis revealed a significant positive direct effect ($\beta = 0.236$, $p < 0.01$). Subsequently, we evaluated the indirect effect of NCS at T1 upon CE at T3 through bootstrapping to ascertain its significance. The findings substantiated a significant

negative indirect association between NCS (T1) and CE (T3) via CA (T2) (β = -0.133, $p < 0.01$, 95%; bootstrap CI = -0.206 to -0.068), thus supporting *H4a*. CA partially mediates the relationship between NCS and CE.

Table 4.6

Path Coefficients for the Indirect Effects of the Variables

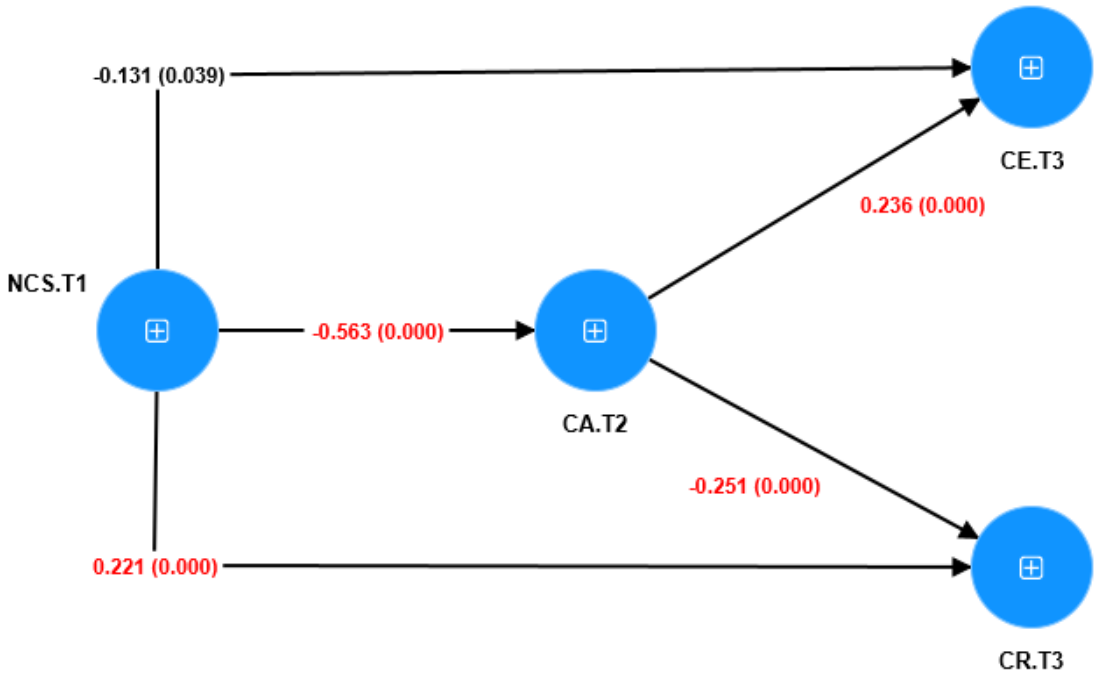
	Original sample (O)	**Sample mean (M)**	**Standard deviation (STDEV)**	**T statistics (|O/STDEV|)**	***P*-values**
NCS.T1 -> CE.T3	-0.133	-0.136	0.035	3.768	0.000**
NCS.T1 -> CR.T3	0.141	0.142	0.034	4.135	0.000**

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

For *H4b*, the results illustrated a significant direct positive effect of NCS (T1) on CR (T3) (β = 0.221, $p < 0.01$); also, CA (T2) negatively affects CR (β = -0.251, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, the results showed a significant positive indirect effect between NCS and CR through CA (β = 0.141, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, *H4b* is supported. Accordingly, CA partially mediates the relationship between NCS and CR.

Figure 4.2

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation



Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between negative career shocks and career outcomes, namely career engagement and career regret, over 18 months in a unique research context. Our participants experienced multiple, recurrent, and severe negative career shocks within three years, distinguishing our study from typical Western contexts. We sought to understand how career adaptability, as a crucial career resource, is affected by negative career shocks and how it mediates their impact on individuals' career engagement and regret. This research was guided by the Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 2002, 2005) and the Job Demands-Resources theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2014).

As anticipated, individuals exposed to negative career shocks exhibited lower engagement and higher regret, with career adaptability mediating this relationship.

In summary, this research provides valuable insights into the link between negative career shocks, career adaptability and career outcomes. By shedding light on how individuals respond to and overcome adverse career events, our study enhances our understanding of the effects of career shocks on career engagement and regret.

Theoretical Implications

This study is a pioneering effort that comprehensively investigates the interplay between career shocks, career adaptability, and career outcomes in a single empirical investigation. The findings align with previous research, both reinforcing and expanding the existing knowledge base.

Our study addresses the research gap concerning the consequences of "career shocks" on career outcomes (Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al., 2021a, p. 455). Despite existing studies like Seibert et al. (2013) and Kraimer et al. (2019), there has been insufficient attention to understanding the mechanisms behind the impact of career shocks on individual career outcomes. Building on this research, our study supports the notion that career shocks can negatively affect career outcomes by hindering the accessibility and utilization of career resources.

This study extends the current body of knowledge, based on Career Construction Theory (CCT), by empirically investigating the relationship between career shocks and career adaptability while incorporating two additional components, career engagement and career regret, within the career construction model (Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas, 2013). We explore how experiencing negative career shocks predicts individuals' career adaptability and assess their impact on career engagement and career regret as positive and negative adaptation indicators.

Drawing on Career Construction Theory (CCT), our findings establish a positive association between career adaptability and career engagement and a negative association with career regret. These results are consistent with previous research (Johnston, 2018; Rudolph et al.,

2017; Tolentino et al.), indicating that high career adaptability is linked to transactional competencies and psychosocial resources, ultimately leading to positive career outcomes and overall life satisfaction (Rudolph et al., 2017).

Our study's results also align with Zacher et al.'s (2015) research, which supports our findings of a negative relationship between career adaptability and regret. Zacher et al. emphasized that higher career adaptability resources are associated with lower levels of career entrenchment, indicating a greater willingness to explore alternative professional paths (Johnston, 2018; Zacher et al., 2015). Individuals with elevated career adaptability resources are better equipped to avoid stagnation and limited mobility, leading to reduced career regret. Our study contributes to the growing body of evidence highlighting the importance of career adaptability in mitigating career regret and promoting a more flexible approach to one's career.

Furthermore, our study contributes to the existing literature by further exploring the role of contextual factors as predictors of career adaptability resources. Specifically, our findings demonstrate a negative correlation between negative career shocks as contextual factors and career adaptability. These results align with the work of previous researchers, further supporting the relationship between contextual factors and career adaptability (Johnston, 2018). Scholars have explored the potential mediating role of adaptability resources, which are driven by their intrinsic self-regulatory nature (Johnston, 2018). Our findings support previous research by Mansur and Felix (2020), who investigated how career adaptability mediated between shocks and thriving and Rossier et al. (2012), who explored the mediating role of career adaptability in the linkage between personality traits and work engagement. Our results revealed that career adaptability fully mediates the relationship between negative career shocks and career engagement and partially mediates the relationship between negative career shocks and career regret.

Aligned with the JD-R theory (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018), our study extends beyond the conventional framework by incorporating further contextual demands, such as negative career shocks as described by Hofer et al. (2020), and specific personal resources, such as career adaptability. By doing so, we construct a more nuanced model that accounts for the role of these factors in attenuating the adverse effects of demands on various outcomes. In essence, we examine how career adaptability, as a psychological resource, mediates the negative impact of demands on career outcomes.

Furthermore, including a longitudinal approach in our study provides distinct advantages that augment the existing body of research. Notably, prior investigations, as underscored in Johnston's comprehensive systematic review of 2018, have predominantly relied on cross-sectional designs to examine the relationship between career adaptability resources and their positive effects on both individuals and organizations (Johnston, 2018). The findings from these cross-sectional studies have consistently revealed a significant correlation between career adaptability resources and favorable outcomes. However, our study's longitudinal nature confers unique strengths to address some limitations inherent in cross-sectional research.

Practical Implications

Our study has substantial practical implications for various stakeholders in volatile contexts like Lebanon, characterized by frequent disruptive events. The findings offer valuable insights for organizations dealing with the challenges of such contexts and for career counselors assisting individuals facing career-related uncertainties. Additionally, employees and managers can benefit from the study's implications, helping them comprehend and adeptly address volatile environments' distinctive demands and uncertainties. These practical implications contribute to

the resilience, adaptability, and overall positive career outcomes of individuals and organizations operating in such settings.

Our study's findings have substantial practical implications for organizations, particularly for Human Resource (HR) professionals responsible for various aspects of employee development. HR departments can play a pivotal role in facilitating smooth transitions and fostering individuals' long-term success and growth within their organizations by acknowledging and addressing the effects of career shocks.

Organizations must proactively build resilient and adaptive teams capable of performing effectively in challenging circumstances to establish a strong foundation in volatile countries. HR departments should prioritize recruiting individuals who exhibit positive attitudes, resilience, and enthusiasm, as these qualities are crucial for navigating and thriving amidst the uncertainties and demands of such environments.

Furthermore, organizations can provide comprehensive career development plans through their HR departments. HR managers and career counselors can utilize insights from this study to enhance employees' work experiences when faced with career shocks. These plans aim to equip individuals with the necessary skills and strategies to navigate negative career shocks effectively. Targeted training and workshops can enhance employees' ability to respond to challenging circumstances while maintaining a high level of engagement with their work and career.

In career development, it is crucial to encourage employees to cultivate their adaptive skills and continuously nurture their work engagement. This ongoing effort empowers individuals to handle recurring career shocks effectively. Organizations and individuals can proactively respond to and overcome challenges in volatile and unpredictable environments by prioritizing developing adaptive skills.

Furthermore, organizations should prioritize enhancing employee work engagement levels, especially during stressful periods. They must proactively manage job demands, invest in job resources, and support employee well-being and engagement. HR managers are crucial in guiding department heads in effectively managing job demands, ensuring reasonable workloads, clarifying responsibilities, and offering support to individuals facing emotionally demanding situations. Experienced managers also assist employees in effectively regulating their emotions in response to job-related circumstances, contributing to a positive work environment.

In addition to the strategies discussed earlier for responding to and adapting to career shocks, organizations should take proactive steps to prevent the detrimental effects of negative events on their employees. One practical approach involves the implementation of robust internal communication practices. This entails informing employees about the potential consequences of career shocks, articulating planned measures and guidelines for managing such shocks, and prioritizing transparency and honesty when sharing information about the impact of negative career shocks on both the organization and employees' future careers. By ensuring transparent and timely communication from top management, organizations can convey a clear message that reduces ambiguity, alleviates concerns, and mitigates the stress induced by the uncertainties associated with career shocks.

Limitations of the Study and Directions of Future Research

Several limitations should be noted for future research. Firstly, our study focused on a unique and contextually relevant setting, Lebanon, which has experienced significant political, economic, and social transformations. While this context provided valuable insights, it's important to recognize that the specific contextual factors in Lebanon may limit the generalizability of our findings to a broader global context. Therefore, the applicability of our study's outcomes may be

constrained and may primarily apply to specific regions worldwide. Future research should explore potential variations in results across diverse geographical and sociocultural contexts.

Furthermore, the study's primary objective was to collect data from the banking sector, considering its profound impact during the crisis. However, caution is needed when generalizing the findings to other sectors, as each industry may have unique dynamics and responses to the situation, leading to diverse outcomes and implications. Future research should explore and analyze employees' experiences in various sectors to understand the crisis's overall impact.

Our convenience sampling method involved participants agreeing before receiving the survey, potentially impacting external validity and generalizability. Excluding non-respondents or refusals may lead to underrepresentation or overrepresentation, further limiting external validity. This lack of generalizability is common in convenience sampling, resulting in biased estimates (Jager et al., 2017, p. 16).

Therefore, we recommend future research consider non-random sampling techniques for improved generalizability. However, when constrained to convenience sampling, adopting homogeneous convenience samples is suggested as a viable alternative (Jager et al., 2017, p. 13).

A significant challenge in this study is the complexity of disentangling the effects of various social and economic changes during a global pandemic. These changes are interconnected, making it challenging to attribute specific impacts definitively. The pandemic itself shapes how individuals perceive shocks and influences their outcomes. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the global pandemic, socio-economic changes, and their consequences necessitates a multifaceted analysis that considers the dynamic nature of this disruptive historical event.

A self-report survey for data collection may introduce common method bias, potentially inflating the observed relationships among measured variables. While a three-wave data collection approach with a 6-month time lag was used to mitigate this bias, future research should adopt additional strategies to minimize its consequences. One effective strategy is using different response formats to measure study variables, enhancing reliability and validity while attenuating the impact of common method bias.

Our study focused on the role of career adaptability in the relationship between career shocks and career outcomes, highlighting its importance in navigating such shocks. However, Akkermans et al. (2021a) emphasized the need to comprehend "the role of agency-related traits and behaviors" in effectively managing unforeseen events. Further research is required to investigate contextual and individual characteristics within this realm (Akkermans et al., 2021a). Understanding the impact of individual traits and behaviors is crucial for grasping individuals' perceptions and reactions to shocks and identifying resilient and adaptable individuals (Akkermans et al., 2021b). Thus, in-depth investigations into individual characteristics, including adaptability and self-monitoring, are imperative to comprehend how individuals perceive career shocks.

In our Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), model optimization entailed removing 12 items out of the original 35 due to issues with weak loadings and cross-loadings. Items with factor loadings below 0.6 were systematically eliminated, signifying their ineffectiveness in measuring the intended construct (Shrestha, 2021).

The substantial removal of items based on low factor loadings may introduce biases in survey results. Recognizing and considering these biases in evaluating survey findings' validity and reliability is imperative and should be acknowledged as a limitation in our study.

Although these scales are validated in diverse contexts, including Western countries, and South and East Asian regions, it's crucial to note the absence of validation studies for these scales in the Middle East, particularly Lebanon. The unique conditions in Lebanon, encompassing cultural disparities, economic intricacies, and distinct political dynamics, highlight the need for subsequent research in the region to verify whether the operationalization of the construct differs.

Finally, our survey utilized a measurement for negative career shocks (NCS) from various sources, with four items adapted from Seibert, Kraimer, Holtom, and Pierotti (2013) and Seibert, Kraimer, and Heslin (2016), along with one item from Ali, Ghani, Islam, and Mehreen (2020). However, it is crucial to note that a consolidated and validated measurement instrument for comprehensively assessing the wide range of career shocks is currently lacking. Thus, future research should focus on developing a robust measurement tool encompassing the various dimensions of career shocks, which has been recommended by scholars such as Seibert (2013), Akkermans et al. (2021a), and Blocker et al. (2019).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the intricate relationship between negative career shocks, career adaptability, and their collective impact on career outcomes, drawing from the theoretical frameworks of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory and Career Construction Theory (CCT). By shedding light on how individuals respond to and navigate challenging career events, our research enhances our comprehension of the effects of career shocks on both career engagement and career regret. These findings carry significant practical implications for organizations and career development interventions, as they aim to promote adaptive responses to career shocks and foster positive career outcomes for employees.

Recognizing the pivotal role played by career adaptability, organizations can devise interventions and support systems that empower individuals to cope with and surmount career shocks effectively. These initiatives can contribute to a more resilient and engaged workforce, better equipped to navigate the uncertainties and challenges of their career journey.

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5.

Conclusion

"There is only one kind of shock worse than the totally unexpected: the expected for which one has refused to prepare."
Mary Renault

In contemporary workplaces, organizational change is a significant challenge driven by business growth, innovation, globalization, regulations, and competitiveness (Cullen et al., 2014). Organizations must address how employees respond to these changes (Amarantou et al., 2018). This dynamic is further amplified by ongoing socio-economic and political shifts, reshaping the job market through organizational change, resulting in heightened job insecurity and the emergence of non-traditional career paths (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022b; Maggiori et al., 2013).

This transformation in the job market underscores the profound influence of contextual factors and labor market conditions on individuals' career trajectories (Baruch & Sullivan, 2022a). The contemporary career landscape is characterized by unpredictability, instability, and a global demand for adaptability (Maggiori et al., 2013). Consequently, employees are compelled to navigate these shifts effectively and adapt their careers (Cullen et al., 2014) in constant change and uncertainty.

Over the last two decades, there has been a shift towards emphasizing individual agency and self-management in careers (Seibert et al., 2013), making individuals more responsible for career planning and requiring them to develop networking skills for smoother career transitions (Akkermans et al., 2013b). Additionally, "career shock" has gained prominence within career changes, denoting recurring or disruptive events triggered by external forces beyond individual control, which prompt individuals to consider altering their career paths (Seibert et al., 2013, p. 172). However, despite the attention career shocks have received in career research (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018; Seibert et al., 2013), a significant knowledge gap that requires careful examination remains.

This thesis emphasized examining the concept of "career shock", particularly in its second and third studies, for several compelling reasons. Firstly, the study's context has recently witnessed

a notable increase in career shocks, providing valuable empirical data from participants. Secondly, “career shock” is relatively new in the field of career literature, offering ample opportunities for further investigation, as highlighted by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018).

The central objective of this doctoral thesis was to address an existing gap in the current literature by deepening our comprehension of how unforeseen changes, which individuals cannot control and which prompt them to reevaluate their career paths, termed “career shocks” (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018), affect their well-being and career development.

Problem Statement

The problem statement addressed in this thesis pertains to the response of employees to sudden and unexpected changes and the multifaceted impact of these changes on them. The overarching aim of this thesis was to provide insights into the substantial consequences of such changes, commonly referred to as “career shocks”, and their profound influence on individual well-being and future career trajectories.

Our research underscored the pivotal role played by individual characteristics and personal resources in this context, with adaptability emerging as a fundamental attribute within the framework of our analysis.

Findings

In this concluding chapter, we presented a succinct summary of the primary findings obtained through our research and expounded upon their broader implications. Additionally, we established connections between these key findings and their practical ramifications and recommendations.

RQ: To what extent do abrupt changes influence individuals, encompassing their well-being and career outcomes? What role do individual characteristics and career adaptability play in the face of career shocks?

The principal research inquiry was reinforced by three subsidiary research inquiries aligned with the three constituent studies encompassed within this doctoral thesis. Table 5.1 furnishes a brief overview of the findings pertinent to these research questions. Subsequently, the following sections will expound upon the findings derived from each study.

Table 5.1.1

Findings Summary

The Thesis Research Question:
To What Extent Do Abrupt Changes Influence Individuals, Encompassing Their Well-Being and Career Outcomes?
What Role Do Individual Characteristics and Career Adaptability Play in the Face of Career Shocks?

First Study (Chapter 2):
Leader's Personality, Adaptability, and Attitude Toward Change.
A Study in the Middle East.

RQ1	Design	Results	Theory
What is the mediating role of a leader's adaptability in the relationship between their personality traits and their attitude toward change in a volatile environment like the Middle East?	Quantitative Cross-Sectional Survey 170 Participants 57% Lebanon & 43% MEA SEM-AMOS	Leaders with high self-monitoring had higher levels of individual adaptability. Leaders with high self-monitoring are more positive toward the change. Leaders high on self-efficacy showed higher levels of individual adaptability. Leaders high on self-efficacy are more positive toward the change. Leaders with high levels of individual adaptability are less negative toward the change. Leaders' adaptability partially mediated the relationship between a) self-monitoring and b) self-efficacy and attitude toward change.	Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) Hobfoll (1989) I-ADAPT Theory Ployhart & Bliese (2006)

Table 5.1.2

Findings Summary

The Thesis Research Question:
To What Extent Do Abrupt Changes Influence Individuals, Encompassing Their Well-Being and Career Outcomes?
What Role Do Individual Characteristics and Career Adaptability Play in the Face of Career Shocks?

Second Study (Chapter 3):
Career Shocks and Employee Well-Being.
The Roles of Individual Adaptability and Self-Monitoring Among Lebanese Banking Employees.

RQ2	Design	Results	Theory
What is the impact of career shocks on the well-being of banking sector employees in Lebanon during an economic crisis, and how can agency-related traits buffer this impact?	Quantitative Cross-Sectional Survey 450 Participants Lebanese Banking Employees SEM-AMOS	Positive shocks have notably improved employee well-being, while negative shocks have adversely affected employees' well-being. Individually, neither self-monitoring nor individual adaptability mitigated the adverse effects of these shocks. However, when self-monitoring was coupled with shock duration and frequency, it exhibited a significant buffering effect, diminishing the adverse association between negative career shocks and employee well-being. In contrast, individual adaptability, either alone or in conjunction with shock duration and frequency, did not play a moderating role in mitigating the impact of negative shocks on employee well-being.	Job Demands-Resources Theory (JD-R) Bakker & Demerouti (2007) Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) Hobfoll (1989)

Table 5.1.3

Findings Summary

The Thesis Research Question: **To What Extent Do Abrupt Changes Influence Individuals, Encompassing Their Well-Being and Career Outcomes?** **What Role Do Individual Characteristics and Career Adaptability Play in the Face of Career Shocks?**			
Third Study (Chapter 4): Career Engagement or Career Regret: The Impact of Career Shocks Through Career Adaptability. A Longitudinal Study in the Lebanese Banking Sector.			
RQ3	**Design**	**Results**	**Theory**
How do negative career shocks affect career outcomes, and what role does career adaptability play in mediating these effects in Lebanon's banking sector during periods of significant crisis?	Quantitative Survey Longitudinal (3 waves) 388 Participants Lebanese Banking Employees PLS-SEM	Experiencing negative career shock had a noteworthy influence on career engagement. Experiencing a negative career shock had a significant and positive association with career regret. Experiencing a negative career shock was associated with a decrease in career adaptability. Career adaptability fully mediated the relationship between (a) negative career shocks and career engagement and (b) partially mediated between negative career shocks and career regret.	Job Demands-Resources Theory (JD-R) Bakker & Demerouti (2007) Career Construction Theory (CCT) Savickas (2002)

Chapter 2 Findings

RQ1: What is the mediating role of a leader's adaptability in the relationship between their personality traits and their attitude toward change in a volatile environment like the Middle East?

In addressing the initial research question, an empirical investigation was initiated in mid-2021, with two primary objectives guiding our study. Firstly, it explored the predictive capacity of individual characteristics such as self-monitoring and self-efficacy, extending beyond the traditional Big Five personality traits, and examined their influence on adaptability and attitude toward change. Secondly, we delved into the potential mediating role of individual adaptability in shaping the connection between leaders' characteristics and attitudes toward change.

Grounded in the theoretical frameworks of the Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and the I-Adapt Theory (Ployhart & Bliese, 2006), our study yielded intriguing findings. As anticipated, our research findings aligned with our initial hypotheses, emphasizing the pivotal role of individual characteristics, specifically self-monitoring and self-efficacy, in shaping individuals' perceptions of change. These personal attributes served as significant preparatory factors, fostering a mindset that viewed change as an opportunity rather than a threat. Thus, our findings revealed a positive relationship between self-monitoring and individual adaptability and a negative association between self-monitoring and attitude toward change. Additionally, there was a positive correlation between self-efficacy and individual adaptability and a negative association between self-efficacy and attitude toward change.

Furthermore, our findings indicated that individuals who exhibited elevated levels of adaptability possessed an enhanced ability to proficiently navigate and adapt to various challenges

and novel work environments. This adaptive prowess was strongly linked to maintaining optimistic attitudes toward change initiatives.

Moreover, our research demonstrated that individual adaptability mediated the relationship between self-monitoring and self-efficacy concerning attitude toward change.

Chapter 3 Findings

RQ2: What is the impact of career shocks on the well-being of banking sector employees in Lebanon during an economic crisis, and how can agency-related traits buffer this impact?

To address the second research question, this study assessed the impact of career shocks, both positive and negative, on employee well-being and investigated the moderating role of personal characteristics, such as individual adaptability and self-monitoring, in mitigating the effects of these career shocks on well-being.

Our research responded to the call for further investigation articulated by Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al. (2021b), who emphasized the empirical examination of various attributes associated with career shocks (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018). Accordingly, we delved into the valence of career shocks, distinguishing between "positive" and "negative" shocks while also considering two additional attributes, namely "duration" and "frequency". These attributes were pivotal in understanding how career shocks may have affected well-being. Moreover, we comprehensively explored how these attributes interacted with the moderating effects of individual characteristics, particularly individual adaptability and self-monitoring, to gain insights into their combined impact on employee well-being.

Drawing upon the Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and the Job Demands-Resources theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), this study unveiled a significant relationship between career shocks and employee well-being. Specifically, positive career shocks positively

influenced employee well-being, while conversely, negative career shocks negatively impacted overall well-being.

The Moderating Role of Individual Adaptability and Self-Monitoring

Contrary to our initial hypotheses, individual adaptability did not exhibit a significant moderating effect on the relationship between career shocks and employee well-being. Despite expectations that highly adaptable individuals would demonstrate greater resilience to negative career shocks, the empirical results did not support this hypothesis.

Similarly, self-monitoring did not emerge as a protective factor mitigating the adverse consequences of negative career shocks on employee well-being, contrary to initial expectations.

Our hypothesis was grounded in the belief that individuals characterized by high levels of self-monitoring, who are generally attentive to social cues and skillful at adapting their behavior, would be able to lessen the negative repercussions of career shocks. However, the empirical results of our study did not align with this expectation.

The Moderating Role of Shock Duration and Frequency

Turning to the attributes of career shocks, namely “duration” and “frequency”, extended shock durations significantly amplified the positive correlation between positive career shocks and employee well-being, particularly in workplace well-being. This enhancement was more pronounced when these positive events endured over an extended period, fostering heightened job satisfaction and meaningful work among employees.

Additionally, an increased frequency of career shocks was vital in reinforcing the positive association between positive career shocks and employee well-being, mainly psychological well-being. This manifested in improved self-esteem, increased confidence, and employee personal

growth. It highlighted the significance of the frequency of positive career shocks in positively influencing an individual's psychological well-being.

Furthermore, our analysis unraveled a noteworthy finding regarding the moderating role of self-monitoring in conjunction with shock duration and frequency. Self-monitoring assumed a significant moderating role when considering the duration of career shock. Specifically, self-monitoring became a pivotal factor when coupled with shock duration, influencing outcomes. A similar compelling finding emerged when exploring the relationship between the frequency of career shocks and self-monitoring. In this case, self-monitoring significantly moderated the adverse impact of negative career shocks on employee well-being when these shocks occurred with a frequency of two or more times. Accordingly, self-monitoring acted as a buffer, effectively attenuating the detrimental relationship between the occurrence of negative career shocks and the overall well-being of employees.

In summary, our research highlighted the crucial role of self-monitoring, in conjunction with both shock duration and frequency, in influencing the effects of career shocks on employee well-being.

Chapter 4 Findings

RQ3: How do negative career shocks affect career outcomes, and what role does career adaptability play in mediating these effects in Lebanon's banking sector during periods of significant crisis?

The third research question in this thesis was addressed through an additional empirical study, which aimed to investigate the indirect consequences of negative career shocks on two crucial aspects of career outcomes: career engagement and career regret. Furthermore, it aimed to elucidate the mediating role of career adaptability.

Our research was motivated by the imperative for further investigation across multiple domains. Nonetheless, our primary overarching objective was to address a knowledge gap elucidated by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018), Blokker et al. (2019), and Seibert et al. (2013). Specifically, we investigated how significant career events, particularly career shocks, influence individuals' career outcomes.

Employing the theoretical frameworks of Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 2002) and the Job Demands-Resources theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) and adopting a longitudinal research design spanning over three distinct time points, our study produced results that were based on the assessment of career shocks at T1, career adaptability at T2, and career outcomes, at T3.

Career Shocks Impact. Our study has revealed significant insights into the impact of career shocks on various facets of individuals' careers. Notably, we discovered that the encounter with a negative career shock affected career engagement, even though this relationship did not reach statistical significance. Moreover, our findings demonstrated a significant and positive correlation between experiencing negative career shocks and career regret. Additionally, it was evident that the experience of negative career shocks was linked to a decrease in career adaptability. These results illuminated the multifaceted effects of career shocks on individuals' career outcomes.

The Role of Career Adaptability. Furthermore, this study has revealed significant findings regarding the interrelationships among career adaptability, negative career shocks, career engagement, and career regret.

Specifically, we observed a robust and positive association between career adaptability and career engagement, signifying that individuals possessing higher levels of career adaptability tend to be more engaged in their careers. Additionally, our research revealed an inverse relationship between negative career shocks and career adaptability. The results highlighted an indirect link

between negative career shocks and career engagement, with career adaptability mediating. While the direct connection between negative career shocks and career engagement was not statistically significant, the mediation analysis confirmed that career adaptability fully mediates this relationship.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that our analysis uncovered a negative correlation between career adaptability and career regret. This finding suggested that individuals with greater career adaptability are less prone to experiencing career regret, underscoring the advantageous role of adaptability in mitigating such negative emotions. Additionally, our study identified a significant and positive indirect effect concerning negative career shocks and the occurrence of career regret, with career adaptability serving as the mediating variable. Consequently, career adaptability partially mediated the relationship between negative career shocks and career regret.

Discussion

Theoretical Contribution

This thesis was undertaken to address gaps in the current body of knowledge and provide substantial contributions to the theoretical foundations of the three conducted studies. In the following sections, we will delineate the specific gaps that motivated each study and elucidate the theoretical implications of their findings. While specific results aligned with established research, it is essential to recognize that they did so within specific contextual boundaries. Moreover, a noteworthy aspect of our findings is their novel contributions to the field.

Consequently, our research revealed an enrichment to the theoretical landscape in multiple dimensions, thereby making a substantial contribution to the extant body of literature.

Amarantou et al. (2018) proposed further investigation for individual characteristics beyond the Big Five personality traits and their impact on attitudes toward change. While investigating this research gap, we made two findings that supported the work of previous scholars, and one finding represented a novel contribution to the I-Adapt theory.

Self-monitoring and self-efficacy predicted adaptability and influenced attitudes toward change within dynamic organizational contexts. These findings supported the positive influence of self-efficacy on individual adaptability, aligning with the work of B. Griffin and Hesketh (2003) and Pulakos et al. (2006). Additionally, our results were consistent with existing literature that linked adaptability to openness to change, as documented by Van Den Heuvel et al. (2014), Wanberg and Banas (2000), and Oreg et al. (2011b). However, our findings indicated a negative impact of adaptability on attitude toward change.

I-Adapt Theory and Self-Monitoring

Our study expanded the I-Adapt theory by uncovering a previously unexplored positive correlation between self-monitoring and adaptability. While recent empirical studies had not directly linked self-monitoring to individual adaptability, the associated traits suggested potential correlations. Individuals with solid self-monitoring demonstrated proficiency in controlling, observing, modifying, and aligning their behavior with specific objectives (Day & Schleicher, 2006; Snyder, 1979), indicating their aptitude for adaptation. Previous research further supported these assumptions, which found positive correlations between high self-monitoring, extraversion, openness to experience, and adaptability (Barrick et al., 2005; Day & Schleicher, 2006; Day et al., 2002). Therefore, our study contributed to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence for the positive relationship between self-monitoring and adaptability.

Furthermore, in response to the call for further investigation into career shock outcomes, by Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018) and Akkermans, Rodrigues, et al. (2021) , we explored additional outcomes associated with career shocks, explicitly focusing on employee well-being. During this investigation, we addressed the need for more research by closely examining individual agencies' roles and the shocks' attributes in shaping their impact on employee well-being.

Consequently, we proposed below, some modest contribution to the theoretical domain, thereby facilitating the advancement of the existing body of scholarly literature.

Job Demands-Resources Theory and Career Shocks

Our investigation rigorously examined the impact of career shocks, differentiating between positive and negative shocks (valence), and assessed the role of shock duration and frequency. Emphasizing valence's importance, our research extends Akkermans et al. (2021), highlighting positive shocks' beneficial effects on well-being and negative shocks' adverse consequences.

Building upon the foundation laid by Akkermans et al. (2018), who suggested the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory as a valuable lens for examining the impact of career shocks on career outcomes, our research further expanded this inquiry by incorporating the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory. This addition served as a supplement theoretical framework to understand the implications of career shocks on well-being.

Akkermans et al. (2018) proposed that career shocks can influence the process of resource accumulation in both beneficial and detrimental ways. Positive shocks may result in an immediate enhancement of one's available resources. In contrast, negative shocks could lead to a direct diminishment of resources and may even trigger a process of resource depletion. Therefore, they

proposed that COR theory might provide a valuable perspective for explaining the effects of career shocks on career outcomes (Akkermans, Seibert, & Mol, 2018, p. 7).

Our investigation supported the arguments of Akkermans et al. (2018) as the COR theory focuses on the broader context of resource conservation and depletion, offering a lens through which to understand how individuals strategically allocate and protect their resources as personal characteristics, conditions and energies that enable them to cope with job demands (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023, p. 219).

To enhance our comprehension of career shocks within the context of job-specific demands and resources, we have chosen to utilize the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory as the framework for developing our hypotheses. This decision is underpinned by the work of Hobfoll et al. (2018b), who assert that the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory serves as "the foundational basis for the more work-specific leading theory of organizational stress, namely the Job Demands-Resources model" (Hobfoll et al., 2018b, p. 103).

The JD-R theory, proposed by Demerouti et al. (2001), distinguishes job demands as elements necessitating sustained effort, potentially leading to diminished well-being and job resources as facilitators of goal achievement and personal growth, contributing to heightened well-being (Akkermans et al., 2013b; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Accordingly, when referring to the definition of career shocks by Akkermans et al. (2018, p. 4), one of the core characteristics of a career shock is its capacity to prompt a deliberate contemplation about one's career. Consequently, individuals engage in a systematic assessment, employing a controlled mechanism for long-term consideration, a process described by Hockey (1993) as a "Performance-protection strategy" when facing "environmental demands" (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011, p. 2).This active information processing and control

mechanism requires "physical and/or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort" with additional "physiological and/or psychological costs", ultimately depleting an individual's energy (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Accordingly, by its definition, career shocks require effort and may eventually lead to exhaustion and related health problems (Bauer et al., 2014). Accordingly, they can be conceived as job demands. Nevertheless, career shocks can differ in valence, and the above reasoning typically holds for negative shocks. Shocks with a positive valence can be conceived as job resources, which are, according to the re-definition by Bauer et al. (2014, p. 56), "positively valued physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that are functional in achieving work goals, reduce job demands, or stimulate personal growth and development".

Building on Seibert et al.'s (2013) measuring of positive career shocks, marked by successes in challenging new jobs or projects, as valuable for fostering learning and achievement, we further enhanced Akkermans et al.'s (2018) notion that such shocks can significantly augment an individual's resources. We also proposed that these positive career shocks are categorized as job resources within the Job Demands-Resources (JDR) framework, either by diminishing job demands or facilitating personal growth and development.

Furthermore, we built on Akkermans et al.'s (2018) assertion that negative shocks can deplete an individual's resources and potentially trigger a resource depletion process (Akkermans et al., 2018, p. 7). Specifically, we argued that negative career shocks, such as downsizing, often lead to increased health-impairing demands, such as heightened work intensity (Harney et al., 2018b), which can be classified as job demands (Bauer et al., 2014). Accordingly, downsizing, as a job demand by itself (Bauer et al., 2014), can also trigger a resource depletion process. This perspective aligned with the Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018b), suggesting that energy resource losses from high job demands can deplete reserves, impairing coping abilities

for future demands. This process potentially results in a loss spiral, creating further job demands (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023; van Woerkom et al., 2016).

Accordingly, the conceptual framework guiding the operationalization of career shocks aligns with the JD-R theory, positioning negative career shocks as job demands and positive career shocks as job resources within the employees' job context.

Conservation of Resources Theory and Non-Supported Findings

Akkermans, Seibert, and Mol (2018) called for investigating the traits and behaviors of individuals experiencing career shocks, which had been an underexplored area in the existing literature. Despite its importance in modern professional contexts and its impact on career success (Converse et al., 2012; Seibert et al., 2001), the individual agency has received limited attention. Our contribution filled this gap by exploring how agency-related traits and behaviors influenced the relationship between negative career shocks and employee well-being, aligning with Akkermans et al.'s (2018a) recommendation.

Hence, we focused on the moderating role of individual characteristics, such as individual adaptability (IA) and self-monitoring (SM), on the relationship between negative career shocks (NCS) and employee well-being (EWB). Contrary to existing theories and prior research, which suggested that personal resources might buffer the impact of demands on well-being, our findings indicated that neither IA nor SM significantly reduced the negative effects of NCS on EWB. However, our findings revealed that one of these resources, self-monitoring, when analyzed in conjunction with shock attributes like duration and frequency, influenced the NCS-EWB relationship, albeit not in isolation.

Nevertheless, the non-supported findings presented an intriguing avenue for further examination, with the aim of understanding the underlying reasons within the context of our thesis.

Our research, grounded in the extended Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Schaufeli, 2017), sought to explore the protective function of personal resources against job demands. We focused on the roles of individual adaptability (IA) and self-monitoring (SM) in countering the adverse effects of career shocks on well-being. Furthermore, to expand the JD-R theory's limitations regarding resource processes, we incorporated the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) to enrich our analysis of personal resources. By applying the COR theory's Resource Investment principle, our study examined how individuals deploy their resources to mitigate losses, rebound from challenges, and gain new resources, showcasing how individual adaptability and self-monitoring serve as critical resources for maintaining well-being amidst workplace demands (Hobfoll et al., 2018b, p. 105). This integrated approach provided a comprehensive understanding of personal resource utilization in the face of job-related stressors.

Despite our initial hypotheses, our findings revealed that personal resources were inadequate in offsetting the negative effects of negative career shocks (NCS) on employee well-being (EWB). This outcome prompted a deeper investigation into the dynamics of recurrent NCS over extended periods. Such prolonged exposure to NCS places individuals under continuous job demands, compelling the frequent utilization of personal resources to prevent exhaustion and effectively manage these challenges. Hobfoll et al. (2018) underscored that persistent high demands can lead to significant resource depletion, potentially initiating a loss spiral that requires resource replenishment through enhanced coping mechanisms (Hobfoll et al., 2018b, p. 105). Personal resources such as adaptability and self-monitoring have been posited to mitigate the adverse effects of these demands (Bauer et al., 2014; Demerouti & Bakker, 2023; Schaufeli, 2017; van Woerkom et al., 2016b).

However, to elucidate the mechanisms underlying our non-supported findings, we delved into the fourth principle of the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, a dimension not extensively explored in existing research (Hobfoll et al., 2018a). This principle suggests that responses to resource depletion may be either defensive, aiming to conserve existing resources, or exploratory, seeking alternative strategies for survival or adaptation that may not initially appear adaptive (Hobfoll et al., 2018a, p. 106). Our study's engagement with this principle offers new insights into the complex interplay between personal resources and the enduring impact of NCS on EWB, highlighting the potential for innovative coping strategies in the face of resource depletion.

Our study, drawing on Hobfoll et al. (2018b), investigated how individuals respond when their resources are "overstretched or exhausted" (Hobfoll et al., 2018b, p. 105). In such scenarios, individuals may adopt a "defensive mode" marked by aggression and potential irrationality as a means of self-preservation. This defensive withdrawal served as a coping strategy, enabling individuals to disengage temporarily to conserve resources and devise new mechanisms to handle ongoing and frequent negative career shocks or job demands (Hobfoll et al., 2018a). This strategy became crucial when traditional coping mechanisms fall short in the face of the severe and recurrent nature of these demands.

Our post hoc analyses findings aligned with this and indicated that individuals facing sustained high demand and repeated challenges may engage in "defensive withdrawal" behaviors to safeguard their well-being, as described by Hobfoll et al. (2018a). This strategic disengagement permitted the conservation of resources and the exploration of alternative coping strategies, particularly when adaptability is overstretched by recurrent job demands that persisted over time

(Hobfoll et al., 2018a). As a result, individuals might increasingly rely on other resources, such as self-monitoring, to manage these challenges more effectively.

Furthermore, we expanded the investigation in the Career shocks literature to bridge an existing research gap, primarily focusing on "Career Shocks" and "Career Adaptability" and career outcomes.

Career Construction Theory and Job Demands-Resources Theory

Following Johnston's (2018) recommendation, our study aimed to develop a theoretical perspective that integrates career and organizational theories to better understand career adaptability. Johnston (2018) conceptualized career adaptability as a framework for comprehending stress and coping mechanisms within the workplace and suggested that researchers need to explore this concept "through models that combine career and organizational theories, notably the Job Demands-Resources (JDR) model" (Johnston, 2018, p. 16). Responding to this call, our investigation examined the mediating role of career adaptability in the relationship between negative career shocks, as job demands, and career outcomes.

Furthermore, drawing on the work of Akkermans, Paradniké, et al. (2018), who posited that career adaptability serves as a critical career resource with equivalent functions as personal resources within the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Akkermans, Paradniké, et al., 2018, p. 3), our study extended this premise. The authors suggested that career adaptability not only constitutes a significant career resource but also plays a pivotal role in motivating individuals, similar to the role of personal resources delineated in the JD-R theory (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Building upon this foundation, our research explored the application of career adaptability within the integrated framework of the Career Construction Theory (CCT) (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012a) and the JD-R theory (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023).

Accordingly, our study extended the Career Construction Model (Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas, 2013) by incorporating "career shocks" as a crucial contextual factor affecting adaptability resources. By exploring this predictive role of negative career shocks, we contributed to a deeper understanding of how such negative career shocks influenced adaptability resources and, consequently, career management strategies in challenging contexts. Furthermore, our findings supported earlier research, including Johnston (2018), by reinforcing the significance of external influences on career adaptability.

Career Adaptability as a Mediator. Our study aimed to advance existing knowledge through empirical examination of career adaptability's mediating role, aligning with the guidance of Johnston (2018). Previous scholars have explored the potential mediating role of adaptability resources, primarily driven by their intrinsic self-regulatory nature (Johnston, 2018). Our findings aligned with prior research, such as the work of Mansur and Felix (2020), who investigated how career adaptability mediated the relationship between career shocks and thriving. Our results revealed that career adaptability fully mediated the relationship between negative career shocks, as job demands, and career engagement and partially mediated the relationship between negative career shocks and career regret.

Outcomes for Career Adaptability. Based on Career Construction Theory, our study unveiled a positive correlation between career adaptability and career engagement. These findings harmonized with previous research (Johnston, 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017; Tolentino et al., 2014), which had demonstrated that heightened career adaptability was linked to transactional competencies and psychosocial resources, thereby contributing to favorable career outcomes and overall life satisfaction (Rudolph et al., 2017).

Furthermore, our study's outcomes aligned with the research conducted by Zacher et al. (2015), providing additional support for our observation of a negative relationship between career adaptability and the experience of regret. Zacher et al. (2015) emphasized the importance of higher career adaptability resources in reducing levels of career entrenchment, indicating an increased inclination to explore alternative professional pathways (Johnston, 2018; Zacher et al., 2015). Individuals with elevated career adaptability resources exhibited enhanced capabilities to evade stagnation and limited career mobility, ultimately reducing the manifestation of career regret.

Incorporating a longitudinal approach in our study provided several distinct advantages that enhance the existing research landscape. Previous studies, as emphasized in Johnston's comprehensive systematic review in 2018, predominantly relied on cross-sectional designs to explore the relationship between career adaptability resources and their positive influence on individuals and organizations (Johnston, 2018). These cross-sectional investigations consistently revealed a significant correlation between career adaptability resources and favorable outcomes. However, our longitudinal study brought unique strengths to address certain limitations inherent in cross-sectional research.

Practical Implications

Our study holds substantial practical implications for stakeholders in volatile contexts marked by recurring disruptive events, exemplified by the Lebanese situation. The findings provide valuable insights to help organizations, Human Resources departments, and employees navigate such challenges.

In the modern landscape, employees, particularly in the Lebanese banking sector, often face career shocks across various industries. This consistent exposure to crises profoundly affects their well-being and future career prospects.

Guidance for Organizations

The findings in this thesis provide valuable guidance for organizations, offering insights into strategies to mitigate adverse effects on employee well-being during negative career shocks. Additionally, they suggest methods to enhance career engagement while reducing the occurrence of career regret in response to unfavorable career shocks.

The detrimental impact of these career shocks on employee well-being is a compelling reason for organizations to take proactive measures before and during challenging times. To effectively support and sustain employee well-being and improve career outcomes, organizations should consider implementing key measures:

Effective Internal Communication Practices. Organizations prioritize clear and transparent internal communication practices during career shocks, emphasizing quality (content) and quantity (frequency). The primary goal of these practices is to reduce ambiguity and insecurity stemming from uncertainty.

For example, in our study focusing on Lebanese banks, it is clear that sharing information about potential consequences, such as sector downsizing, is crucial. This includes providing employees with details on actions to be taken, such as branches closures, layoffs, and recovery strategies. Such an approach minimizes ambiguity and reduces fear of the unknown, ultimately mitigating the adverse impact of negative career shocks on employee well-being and future career outcomes. Employees can focus their energy on maintaining performance and job security during crises by addressing concerns about potential outcomes.

Climate of Trust in Management. Establishing and maintaining a climate of trust in management decisions is paramount, especially in volatile times. Organizations should allocate substantial resources and effort to foster such an environment at all times, specifically during

career shocks, to give employees unwavering confidence in their management's decision-making processes. This trust assumes heightened significance during crises, such as situations necessitating severe measures like downsizing, mergers, or layoffs.

Trust provides a sense of stabilization while boosting employee morale and engagement, even in challenging decisions. This, in turn, protects employees' well-being and, more specifically, their workplace well-being.

Fairness and Impartiality. Cultivating a culture of fairness and impartiality is exceptionally important, particularly during crises. Organizations must actively promote and demonstrate their commitment to equitable career development practices, even without predefined policies and guidelines. To achieve this, organizations should establish clear and comprehensive policies that unequivocally emphasize fairness in every aspect of the employee journey, including hiring, promotion, compensation, and daily interactions. This commitment is crucial during career shocks, such as missed promotions or layoffs, which can lead to mistrust and uncertainty about career paths. Such sentiments may result in reduced engagement and even career regret among employees.

These strategies are among the guiding principles for organizations to navigate uncertain and challenging times, protecting employee well-being and career outcomes during career shocks.

Guidance for Human Resources

Our thesis's investigation focused on two crucial aspects of individual characteristics. Firstly, we explored their positive impact on employees' responses to change. Secondly, we examined their ability to serve as buffers against the adverse effects of negative career shocks on employees well-being. These findings are highly relevant for HR professionals, given their

multifaceted responsibilities encompassing recruitment, training, coaching, and comprehensive career development planning for managers and employees.

HR professionals are pivotal in managing job demands and promoting job resources, especially during challenging times. They can advise organizational leaders on effectively addressing job demands, ensuring manageable workloads, clarifying responsibilities, and providing support during emotionally demanding situations. Additionally, HR professionals drive investments in employees' job resources, particularly during challenging circumstances.

To enhance employee well-being and career development, HR should prioritize and implement several practices, relevant at all times but especially during challenges, including:

Continuous Development Plans. HR can contribute significantly by implementing continuous employee development plans. This involves ongoing training and on-field coaching to equip employees with skills necessary to navigate unforeseen challenges, alongside special coaching sessions for managers.

Work-Life Balance. Facilitating work-life balance, especially during volatile times, is vital. Offering flexible schedules, particularly beneficial for working mothers balancing professional responsibilities with caregiving duties, is recommended.

Performance Feedback. Providing transparent performance feedback, especially during uncertain periods like layoffs, helps employees assess their job security.

Regular Assessments. Conducting regular assessments and providing feedback are critical HR responsibilities. These assessments evaluate employee skills, behaviors, and perceptions of organizational changes. Feedback serves multiple purposes, providing employees with security and promoting their active participation and open communication.

Open Communication. Promoting open communication through feedback channels empowers employees to express concerns, ideas, and suggestions, fostering a culture of transparency.

In summary, our findings underscore the importance of recognizing and addressing the impacts of career shocks. HR departments can proactively emphasize the importance of well-defined and well-equipped teams with essential adaptive skills, especially individuals with high self-monitoring, self-efficacy, and individual adaptability. This underscores the proactive need for HR to recruit, develop, and maintain resilient and adaptive teams capable of performing effectively even in challenging circumstances.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Several limitations necessitate consideration for future research endeavors. A key aspect pertains to the distinctive focus of our study, which centers on a particularly unique and pertinent context for exploring well-being and career outcomes arising from career shocks. A notable strength of our research lies in the data collection in Lebanon, a Middle Eastern nation marked by significant political, economic, and social transformations. However, it is imperative to acknowledge that the specific contextual factors inherent to Lebanon may restrict the generalizability of our findings to a broader global context. Consequently, the applicability of our study's results may be limited, primarily suited to specific geographic regions worldwide. Thus, forthcoming research endeavors should account for potential outcome variations across diverse geographical and sociocultural contexts.

Furthermore, the study's primary objective was to collect data from the banking sector, considering its profound impact during the crisis. However, caution is needed when generalizing the findings to other sectors, as each industry may have unique dynamics and responses to the

crisis, leading to diverse outcomes and implications. Future research should explore and analyze employees' experiences in various sectors to understand the crisis's overall impact.

Sampling and Data Collection Limitation

The situation constraints of our context necessitated the decision to use convenience sampling instead of a random one. We acknowledge this as a limitation of our thesis because our convenience sampling method relied on participants who agreed to participate before receiving the survey, which may or may not represent the larger population. This homogeneity among willing participants can impact external validity and generalizability.

Additionally, excluding individuals who did not respond to our messages or refused to participate may lead to underrepresentation or overrepresentation of specific characteristics. Accordingly, this might limit the external validity of the research, noting that this lack of generalizability is a common issue in convenience sampling, that leads to biased estimates that may not accurately reflect the actual effects within the target population (Jager et al., 2017, p. 16).

Despite the generalizability limitations of convenience samples, Jager et al. (2017) introduced the concept of "homogeneous convenience samples", emphasizing their clearer generalizability compared to conventional convenience samples. This method intentionally restricts the sampling frame based on sociodemographic characteristics, focusing on a specific subgroup (Jager et al., 2017, p. 21).

Increased homogeneity in sociodemographic factors results in a more uniform sample and a narrower sampling frame, boosting researchers' confidence in generalizability (Jager et al., 2017, p. 22). Logical reasoning supports the idea that heightened homogeneity within a population increases the likelihood of obtaining a representative sample, even in convenience sampling. Deliberate constraints on the sampling frame to reduce sociodemographic heterogeneity lower the

probability of sampling bias, although complete elimination is not guaranteed (Jager et al., 2017, p. 22).

Our study employed convenience sampling due to specified factors, resulting in a sample with homogeneous sociodemographic characteristics. The target population, a subgroup within the broader banking community, shares multiple sociodemographic factors.

While we do not claim prior knowledge of homogeneous convenience sampling's potential to mitigate biases when targeting our participants, it represents a viable approach for minimizing such biases. We also recognize that the survey results may not be representative of the entire banking or broader working population in Lebanon, mirroring a common limitation within the fields of Human Resource Management (HRM) and psychology regarding sample representativeness. Additionally, it is acknowledged that a selection bias may have occurred, with participants possessing a higher interest in the study being more likely to engage. This potential bias should be considered when interpreting the findings.

Despite the clearer but narrower generalizability of homogeneous convenience samples compared to conventional ones, both types have inferior generalizability compared to probability samples (Jager et al., 2017). We recommend that future research considers homogeneous convenience samples as a viable alternative when constrained to convenience sampling (Jager et al., 2017, p. 13).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Limitation

While conducting Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in our studies, model optimization was achieved by eliminating 24 manifest variables from the original 48 in Study 2 and 12 out of 35 in Study 3. This step was taken in response to identified issues related to weak loadings and

cross-loadings. Specifically, items with factor loadings below 0.6 were systematically removed, indicating their inefficacy in measuring the intended construct (Shrestha, 2021).

Notably, removing a substantial number of items from the construct measurement, driven by low factor loadings, may introduce potential biases in survey results. Hence acknowledging and considering these biases in evaluating the validity and reliability of survey findings is imperative. Accordingly, this aspect should be recognized as another limitation in the context of our thesis findings.

Nonetheless, each of our studies utilized meticulously selected scales derived from established literature to ensure instrument validity (Table 1.5). A comprehensive literature review has demonstrated the rigorous validation of these selected scales in diverse contexts, spanning various countries, continents, and participant samples. Notably, these scales have primarily been validated in Western countries, and South and East Asian regions, involving diverse samples such as students, academics, or medical professionals.

However, it is crucial to underscore the absence of validation studies for these scales in the Middle East, particularly Lebanon. This region, marked by unique conditions encompassing cultural disparities, economic intricacies, and distinct political dynamics, diverges significantly from the contexts mentioned above.

Reviewing the cultural embeddedness or contextual differences is crucial, particularly considering that the scales employed lack international validation. The reliance on scales primarily validated in Western contexts may result in diminished factor loadings due to cultural bias or contextual inappropriateness within a specific sample.

Despite English proficiency among Lebanese banking employees, ambiguity in item wording can be another concern. Items with unclear or ambiguous language can confuse

respondents, impacting response accuracy and reducing factor loadings. This ambiguity may stem from issues in the question-answer process, such as a failure to comprehend the question, difficulty retrieving necessary information, respondent motivation, the sensitive nature of the question topic, or inadequately designed questionnaires (Leeuw, 2001).

Furthermore, persistent response bias, where participants consistently agree with statements, can distort factor loadings in specific survey items. Participants may respond "less thoroughly, especially in lengthy surveys" (Andreadis & Kartsounidou, p. 31), as observed in our three studies, each comprising an average of 90 questions. This tendency may lead to unintentionally inaccurate or less thoughtful responses, undermining the reliability and validity of the collected data (Andreadis & Kartsounidou).

Although a pilot test was conducted before the survey dispatch back in November 2021, it had limited participant representation, involving a restricted number of individuals and a single wave of assessment. Despite addressing queries regarding survey items for ambiguity and considering comments on survey length, the outcome failed to recognize potential issues with item loading.

Therefore, heightened attention to the survey's initial phases is of utmost priority for future research, addressing any shortcomings in pilot testing and item refinement that may contribute to concerns about factor loading.

Accordingly, subsequent research is recommended for the Middle East, with a specific focus on Lebanon, to verify whether the operationalization of the construct differs in this context. However, it remains inconclusive at present, as our studies alone do not provide robust evidence to ascertain whether the observed discrepancy results from a measurement issue or an inherent

cultural dimension rendering certain items inapplicable. Therefore, further research in this region is imperative for a more comprehensive understanding.

Protective Role of Individual Characteristics

Despite theoretical expectations and prior research suggesting the potential protective role of individual characteristics, our analysis did not find supportive evidence in this specific context. Individual adaptability (IA) and self-monitoring (SM) did not significantly mitigate the adverse effects of negative career shocks when considered independently. Notably, these non-significant findings do not diminish the relevance of individual characteristics in other contexts or their potential importance in various aspects of employee well-being. Further research is needed to explore alternative individual characteristics as moderators influencing employees responses to career shocks. Understanding these factors can lead to tailored interventions and support systems to address employees' unique needs during organizational change and uncertainty. This aligns with Akkermans et al.'s (2021a) perspective on understanding the role of agency-related traits and behaviors in managing unforeseen events. Consequently, additional research is warranted to examine contextual and individual characteristics in this domain (Akkermans et al., 2021a).

Career Shocks and the Way Forward

Career Shocks Comprehensive Measurement Tool. Throughout the thesis, we operationalized measuring positive and negative career shocks by combining items from various sources. Table 5.2 offers a comprehensive overview of the most measures adopted within the field of career shocks over the past decade. However, a consolidated and validated measurement instrument is absent for comprehensively assessing the broad spectrum of career shocks.

Therefore, future research should focus on developing a robust measurement tool encompassing diverse dimensions of career shocks, a recommendation supported by scholars like Seibert (2013), Akkermans et al. (2021a), and Blocker et al. (2019).

Career Shocks Measurement Level. The investigation into career shocks encompasses a multifaceted research domain that intersects with various levels of analysis, each contributing unique insights into the phenomenon (Akkermans, Collings, et al., 2021). At the micro-level, psychological research is pivotal, focusing on individual responses to career shocks. This dimension includes examining coping mechanisms and resource management strategies that individuals employ to navigate career disruptions (Akkermans, Collings, et al., 2021). At the meso-level, the study encompasses management research, which delves into the impact of organizational events and diversity on career trajectories (Akkermans, Collings, et al., 2021).

Furthermore, at the macro-level, sociological research provides a broader lens through which to view career shocks, examining the influence of societal shock events. This analysis considers how large-scale occurrences, such as economic recessions, pandemics, or political instability, can precipitate widespread career disruptions (Akkermans, Collings, et al., 2021).

Within the scope of our thesis, we adopted a broad perspective on career shock by situating our research within the Lebanese context. This entailed an exploration of the political instability, economic and financial crises, and the aftermath of the port explosion, intending to provide a thorough comprehension of the environment. Such a nuanced contextualization justifies Lebanon as the study's primary focus, underscoring its pertinence for our research objectives and illuminating the intricate dynamics within Lebanon that are crucial to our analysis.

Although our approach may initially suggest a macro-level perspective on career shocks, such as the impact of financial crises, our research primarily adhered to the existing frameworks

of career shocks at the individual job context level. While we acknowledge organizational events like downsizing (as a meso-level investigation), our central aim was to investigate individual coping mechanisms and resource management. This focus aligns with micro-level psychological research despite the broader environmental factors considered in our study's backdrop (Akkermans et al., 2021).

Current literature on career shocks predominantly focuses on micro to meso-level phenomena, with notable exceptions such as the exploration of the COVID-19 crisis by Akkermans et al. (2020) and the study of earthquake-like career shocks by Wordsworth and Nilakant (2021). This trend indicates a concentration on isolated instances of shocks within specific organizational settings, as evidenced in Table 5.2. However, to attain a holistic understanding of career shocks and their multifaceted impacts, we recommend an expansion of research into macro-level analyses. Such an approach would not only encompass negative and positive career shocks on a broader scale but also unravel the societal, economic, and global dimensions influencing career development. Investigating macro-level shocks, such as technological disruptions, global financial crises, and major policy changes, could offer invaluable insights into the dynamic interplay between external forces and career trajectories. This comprehensive perspective could facilitate more robust support systems for individuals navigating their career paths in an ever-changing world, urging an interdisciplinary approach to capture the full spectrum of career shocks.

Micro-Level Career Shocks on Long-Term Career Outcomes. An important insight from our thesis highlights that the investigation of micro-level career shocks, such as a mentor's departure or organizational downsizing, may not sufficiently provoke deep introspection about one's long-term career trajectory, particularly in terms of engagement or regret. Although these

events are significant and can lead individuals to reassess their position within their current organization, they may not necessarily prompt a radical reevaluation of their overall career path.

Nevertheless, while our study assessed the impact of career shocks at a micro level, it is crucial to emphasize that our research was contextualized within a severe economic crisis that not only led to the downsizing of specific organizations but also impacted the entire banking sector. This crisis severely hindered career advancement opportunities across the sector, demonstrating the interplay between micro-level career shocks and macro-level economic disruptions. We refer to this as the "main shock", which likely precipitated individual-level events such as downsizing, mentor departures, or missed promotions, and profoundly affected individuals' engagement and attitudes towards their career paths. The significant disruption, combined with a prolonged recovery period and limited career growth prospects, has forced banking professionals to reevaluate their career commitments and confront potential regrets. This situation underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of how sector-wide crises influence individual career decisions and highlights the importance of incorporating macro-economic contexts into career shock research.

Accordingly, while our study focuses on micro-level shocks within the context of a macro-level economic crisis, we propose that these two levels interacted to influence our participants' career perceptions. Accordingly, this interaction clearly highlighted that individual experiences are not isolated but are significantly shaped by larger economic conditions, highlighting the necessity for further research to explore this dynamic relationship.

Table 5.2

Questions Around Career Shocks from the Current Literature

	Seibert, Kraimer, Holtom, & Pierotti (2013)
NCS	Had a mentor or colleague that was important to you leave the company.
NCS	Your organization went through a significant negative event such as a reduction-in-workforce, bankruptcy, or a major ethical scandal.
PCS	Succeeded in a new job or visible project that initially challenged you in new and significant ways.
PCS	Received a pay raise, promotion, or desirable increase in responsibility sooner than expected.
	Seibert, Kraimer, & Heslin (2016)
NCS	Having an important mentor leave the organization.
NCS	Failure to receive an expected job assignment or promotion.
NCS	Receiving a poor performance review.
NCS	Experiencing a negative political incident within one's work unit.
NCS	Being in an organization that announces a significant organizational change such as a reduction in workforce, merger, or ethical scandal.
	Hofer, Spurk, & Hirschi (2020)
NCS	Your organization went through a significant negative event, such as a reduction-in-workforce, bankruptcy, or major ethical scandal.
	Mansur & Felix (2020)
NCS	Your organization went through a significant negative event such as a reduction in workforce, bankruptcy, or major ethical scandal.
NCS	You had a mentor or colleague who was important to you left the company.
NCS	I was passed over for promotion.
	Blokker, Akkermans, Tims, Jansen, & Khapova (2019)
NCS	Had a mentor or colleague that was important to you leave the company.
NCS	Your organization went through a significant negative event such as a reduction-in-workforce, bankruptcy, or major ethical scandal.
NCS	You were overwhelmed at your first job by all the new responsibilities and tasks you were confronted with.
PCS	After completing your education, you found your first job faster than expected.
	Ali, Ghani, Islam, & Mehreen (2020)
NCS	Unexpected forced job rotation adversely affected my social relations and behavior.
NCS	Unexpected downsizing adversely affected my career path.
NCS	Clash with supervisor/coworker negatively influenced my career planning.
NCS	The unexpected departure of a mentor or colleague placed me in trouble to sustain my career.
PCS	I unexpectedly received a new job offer.
PCS	I was promoted sooner than expected.
PCS	I was unexpectedly selected for the best performance award.
PCS	I was unexpectedly selected for an advanced training program.
PCS	I unexpectedly received a salary increase.

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