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# Boost 4 Career – Assessment of a Distance-Based Career Resource Intervention according to Social Class and Work Status

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# Introduction

- HE students are increasingly aware of the changes in the labour market
- HE students acknowledge that technical field-related competencies are no longer sufficient to navigate the world of work and to succeed (Monteiro & Almeida, 2021; Tomlinson, 2008)
- HE students are challenged to become active agents of their career from an early stage

# Introduction

- Relevance of the promotion of career interventions that might be effective regardless of students' economic, social, cultural, educational, or personal situation;
- Distance career interventions as an opportunity to reach a wider and more heterogeneous public, which characterizes today HE' public;
- Despite the increasingly recognized value of distance career interventions, empirical studies about the effectiveness are still scarce [24], especially among diversified groups of individuals [11], 12],[25]–[27].

## Aim of the study

- Development of knowledge about the impact of this intervention with higher education students, with diverse individual and contextual characteristics, increasing evidence-based practices in this field.

# Theoretical Frameworks

## Boost for Career (B4C)

### Career success framework (Hirschi et al., 2018)

- Occupational Expertise
- Job Market Knowledge
- Soft Skills
- Organizational Career Support
- Study Challenge
- Social Career Support
- Career Involvement
- Career Confidence
- Career Clarity
- Networking
- Career Exploration
- Learning

### Self-determination theory

(Ryan & Deci, 2017)

- Make choices and manage life path
- Motivation to grow and change when needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy are supported

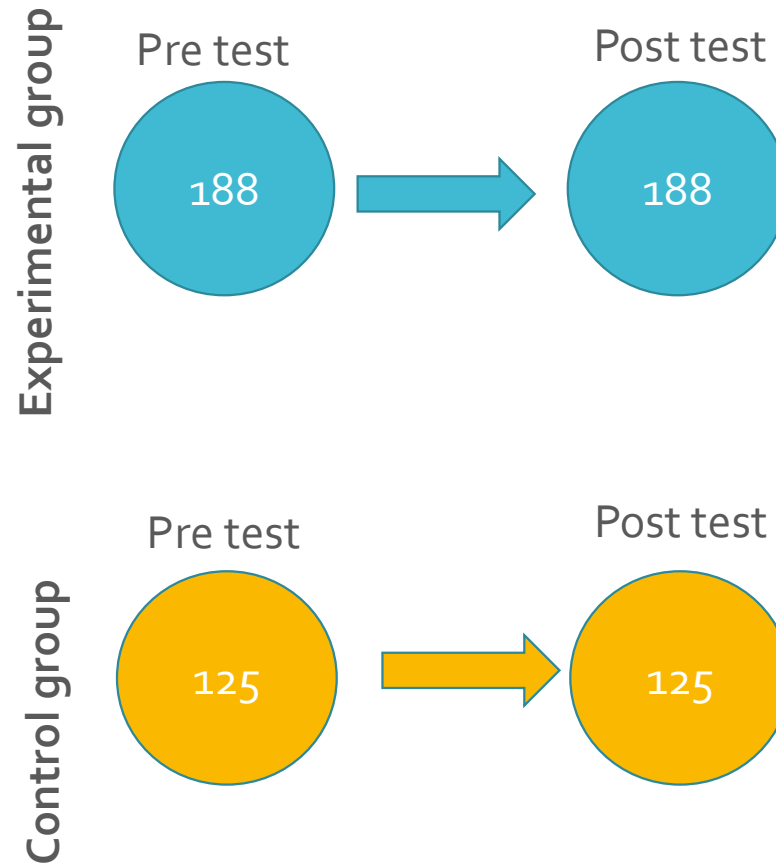
### Bloom's taxonomy of Educational Objectives

(Anderson, Krathwohl, and Bloom 2001; Krathwohl, 2002)

- Continuum of an increasing cognitive complexity:
  - (1) remember
  - (2) understand
  - (3) apply
  - (4) analyse
  - (5) evaluate
  - (6) create

# Methodology

## Quasi-Experimental design:



Free of charge

334 registrations

Two editions (February-April |  
April- June 2023)

# Methodology

Participants		Experimental Group	Control group
		(n= 187) n (%)	(n= 125) n (%)
		<b>Mean (SD)</b>	<b>Mean (SD)</b>
<b>Age</b>		28.96 (11.10)	33.86 (12.94)
		<b>n (%)</b>	<b>n (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	147 (78.6%)	98 (78.4%)
	Female	40 (21.4%)	27 (221.6%)
<b>Institution</b>	Minho University	65 (34.8%)	61 (48.8%)
	Open University	122 (65.2%)	64 (51.2%)
<b>Course Year</b>	1st year	21 (11.2%)	26 (20.8%)
	2nd year	35 (18.7%)	31 (24.8%)
	3rd year	70 (37.4%)	31 (24.8%)
	4th + years	61 (32.6%)	36 (28.8%)
	Missings	0 (0%)	1 (0.8%)
<b>Study Fields</b>	Human and Social Sciences	83 (44.4%)	87 (69.6%)
	Economics, management and juridical sciences	41 (21.9%)	15 (12.0%)
	Health Sciences	0 (0%)	2 (1.6%)
	Sciences	38 (20.3%)	13 (10.4%)
	Architecture and arts	2 (1.1%)	2 (1.6%)
	Engineering and Technologies	23 (12.3%)	6 (4.8%)
<b>Student worker status</b>	Yes	40 (21.4%)	83 (66.4%)
	No	147 (78.6%)	42 (33.6%)
<b>Mother Education</b>	Up to 6 years of education	72 (39,3%)	64 (52%)
	Between 7 and 12 years of education	76 (41.5%)	42 (34.1%)
	Higher Education	35 (19.1%)	17 (13.8%)

# Methodology

## Measures:

### Sociodemographic Questionnaire

**Career Resources Questionnaire** (Monteiro & Almeida, 2021 adapted from Hirschi et al., 2018); 12 dimensions; 5 point likert scale

$\alpha = .76 - .94$  (pre test) |  $\alpha = .79 - .95$  (pos test)

# B<sub>4</sub>C – Boost for Career

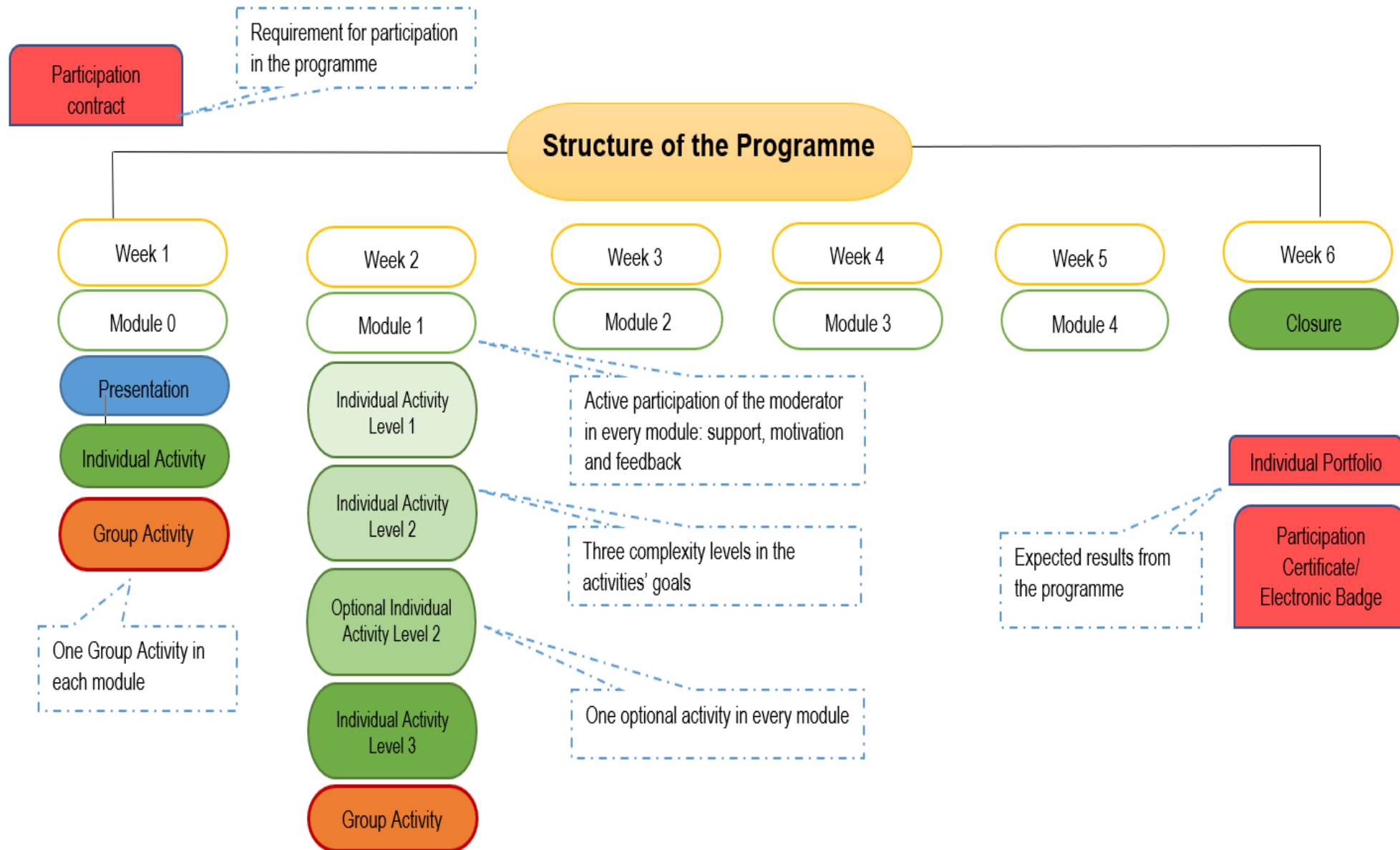
## Who is it aimed at?

- The B<sub>4</sub>C programme is addressed to all undergraduate students, integrated masters or masters students of Universidade do Minho and Universidade Aberta, with or without professional experience, who want to expand their knowledge, strategies and skills with a view to their integration or mobility in the labour market.

## What are the aims of the B<sub>4</sub>C programme?

- To enhance the acquisition of specific knowledge about the current labour market
- To Promote self-knowledge and clarity regarding career-related issues
- To guide the development of specific strategies for (re)integration in the labour market
- To promote self-confidence in the access to the labour market Provide an opportunity to apply what you learn to your personal experience

# B4C – Boost for Career



# B<sub>4</sub>C – Boost for Career

## Module 0

- (a) Negotiation of the participation contract;
- (b) Presentation of the group moderator and the participants;
- (c) Pre-test assessment;
- (d) Presentation of the programme and its relevance;
- (e) Familiarization with the eLearning platform and with participants and moderator of the programme.

# B<sub>4</sub>C – Boost for Career

## Module 1

Promotion of the resources **Career Exploration** and **Job Market Knowledge**, i.e., to enhance students' ability to identify and evaluate career information and resources.

## Module 2

Promotion of the resources **Occupational Expertise**, **Soft Skills** and **Learning**, aiming to enhance students' knowledge about the fundamental skills and the means to develop the competencies in need.

# B<sub>4</sub>C – Boost for Career

## Module 3

Promotion of the resources **Organizational Career Support** and **Networking**, to enhance students' ability to identify and expand their network and gain knowledge of resources to improve their learning inside academia

## Module 4

Promotion of the resources **Career Clarity** and **Career Confidence**, i.e., to enhance students' ability to project their career and expand their knowledge on how to reach their career goals

# B<sub>4</sub>C – Boost for Career

## Module 5

- (a) Compilation of the digital portfolio;
- (b) Certificate/electronic badge delivery;
- (c) Post-test assessment

# Results

*What are the effects of the B4C programme, comparing the experimental with the control group?*

## Data analysis:

- Repeated measures
- Within subjects (career resources dimensions) and between subjects analysis (experimental and control group)

# Results

(Experimental X  
Control group)

Career Resources	Experimental Group (n= 187)		Control Group (n=125)		Between subjects		Within subjects	
	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)		F	p	F	P
	Pre test	Post test	Pre test	Post test				
Occupational Expertise	3.16 (.69)	3.26 (.64)	3.38 (.77)	3.25 (.80)	1.882	.17	10.509	.001
Job Market Knowledge	2.59 (.90)	3.28 (.74)	2.89 (.91)	2.91 (.92)	.163	.69	50.351	.000
Soft Skills	3.56 (.81)	3.90 (.72)	3.75 (.77)	3.80 (.79)	.340	.56	11.804	.001
Organizational Career Support	3.07 (.89)	3.35 (.81)	3.11 (.91)	3.02 (.96)	2.551	.111	17.175	.000
Study Challenge*	3.63 (.79)	3.77 (.70)	3.64 (.82)	3.59 (.87)	1.079	.300	5.271	.022
Social Support*	3.52 (.82)	3.70 (.80)	3.55 (.83)	3.63 (.79)	.064	.800	1.280	.259
Career Involvement*	3.51 (.92)	3.63 (.88)	3.50 (.87)	3.46 (.95)	.884	.348	3.151	.077
Career Confidence	3.39 (.81)	3.65 (.70)	3.50 (.82)	3.53 (.82)	.013	.911	8.178	.005
Career Clarity	3.29 (1.00)	3.68 (.84)	3.49 (1.01)	3.58 (.98)	.269	.604	8.097	.005
Networking	2.98 (.89)	3.30 (.82)	3.19 (.90)	3.14 (.91)	.052	.819	16.001	.000
Career Exploration	3.04 (1.02)	3.46 (.86)	3.03 (1.05)	3.06 (1.00)	4.176	.042	13.977	.000
Learning	3.51 (.90)	3.85 (.67)	3.65 (.82)	3.66 (.93)	.069	.793	14.246	.000

\* Career resources not included in the B4C programme

# Results

*What are the effects of the B4C programme according with social class and work status ?*

## Data analysis:

- Experimental group
- Repeated measures
- Within subjects (career resources dimensions) and between subjects analysis (3 groups of mother education)
- Covariate: work status

# Results

(Experimental group X  
mother education +  
work status)

Career Resources	Mother Education					
	Up to 6 years of education (n= 72)		Between 7 and 12 years of education (n= 76)		Higher Education (n= 35)	
	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	
	Pre test	Post test	Pre test	Post test	Pre test	Post test
Occupational Expertise	3.09 (.79)	3.19 (.65)	3.23 (.61)	3.43 (.62)	3.13 (.67)	3.04 (.60)
Job Market Knowledge	2.56 (.90)	3.06 (.81)	2.65 (.89)	3.48 (.72)	2.47 (.95)	3.24 (.55)
Soft Skills	3.53 (.97)	3.85 (.76)	3.54 (.66)	3.93 (.68)	3.58 (.76)	3.94 (.67)
Organizational Career Support	2.97 (.91)	3.27 (.83)	3.08 (.92)	3.44 (.87)	3.26 (.77)	3.33 (.68)
Study Challenge*	3.63 (.68)	3.86 (.68)	3.67 (.85)	3.81 (.69)	3.55 (.90)	3.46 (.67)
Social Support*	3.33 (.85)	3.55 (.86)	3.66 (.74)	3.90 (.71)	3.67 (.84)	3.61 (.81)
Career Involvement*	3.60 (.86)	3.76 (.87)	3.53 (.98)	3.70 (.82)	3.21 (.89)	3.19 (.92)
Career Confidence	3.35 (.86)	3.63 (.77)	3.45 (.80)	3.77 (.67)	3.29 (.73)	3.44 (.60)
Career Clarity	3.40 (1.04)	3.83 (.71)	3.26 (.96)	3.70 (.88)	3.09 (1.00)	3.29 (.91)
Networking	2.92 (.92)	3.16 (.86)	3.04 (.87)	3.42 (.81)	2.94 (.89)	3.33 (.73)
Career Exploration	3.01 (.96)	3.40 (.92)	3.04 (1.08)	3.52 (.86)	3.07 (1.07)	3.45 (.77)
Learning	3.57 (.94)	3.91 (.66)	3.54 (.84)	3.87 (.67)	3.30 (.91)	3.71 (.71)

\* Career resources not included in the B4C programme

# Results

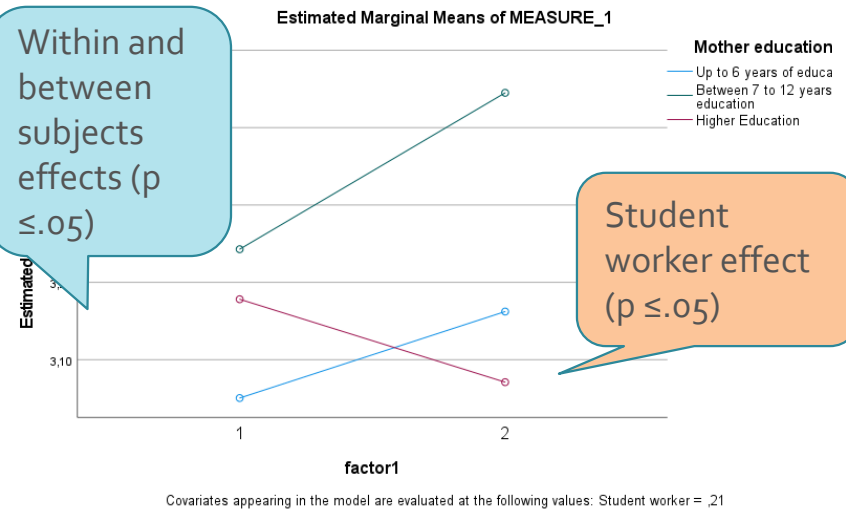
(Experimental group X  
mother education +  
work status)

Career Resources	Work status			
	Not Student worker (n=266)		Student worker (n=82)	
	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	
	Pre test	Post test	Pre test	Post test
Occupational Expertise	3.17 (.70)	3.19 (.66)	3.45 (.74)	3.38 (.75)
Job Market Knowledge	2.65 (.88)	3.12 (.81)	2.94 (.94)	3.24 (.85)
Soft Skills	3.53 (.80)	3.79 (.76)	3.78 (.78)	3.98 (.75)
Organizational Career Support	3.06 (.88)	3.24 (.88)	3.13 (.91)	3.24 (.92)
Study Challenge*	3.57 (.82)	3.65 (.80)	3.79 (.68)	3.85 (.72)
Social Support*	3.58 (.77)	3.72 (.72)	3.49 (.93)	3.61 (.95)
Career Involvement*	3.45 (.91)	3.48 (.92)	3.64 (.86)	3.74 (.89)
Career Confidence	3.36 (.76)	3.54 (.72)	3.63 (.88)	3.76 (.77)
Career Clarity	3.25 (1.00)	3.55 (.88)	3.76 (.90)	3.87 (.89)
Networking	3.02 (.87)	3.26 (.84)	3.28 (.90)	3.24 (.89)
Career Exploration	2.92 (1.01)	3.23 (.92)	3.35 (.97)	3.46 (.94)
Learning	3.44 (.85)	3.68 (.77)	3.86 (.77)	4.00 (.80)

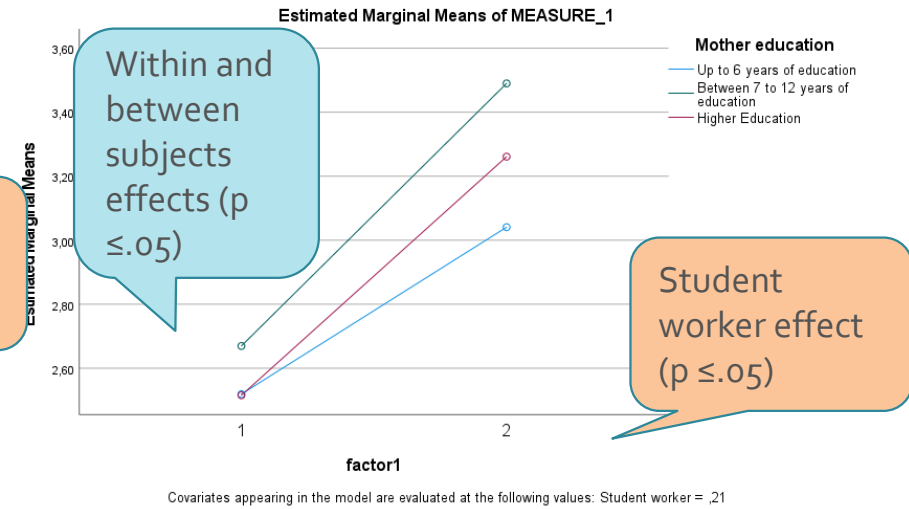
\* Career resources not included in the B4C programme

# Results

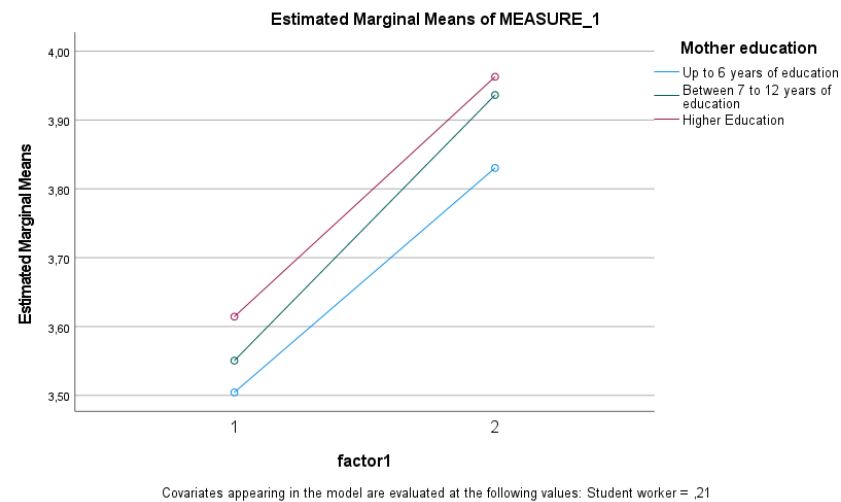
## Occupational expertise



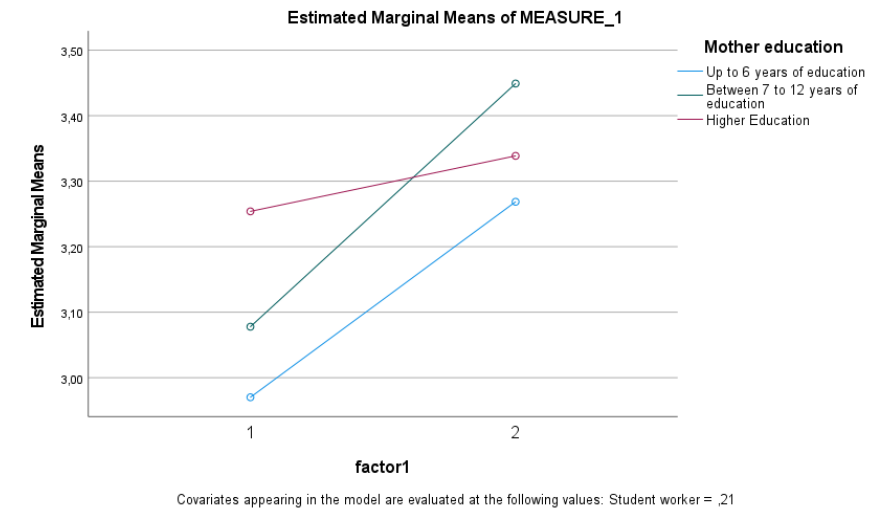
## Job market knowledge



## Soft skills

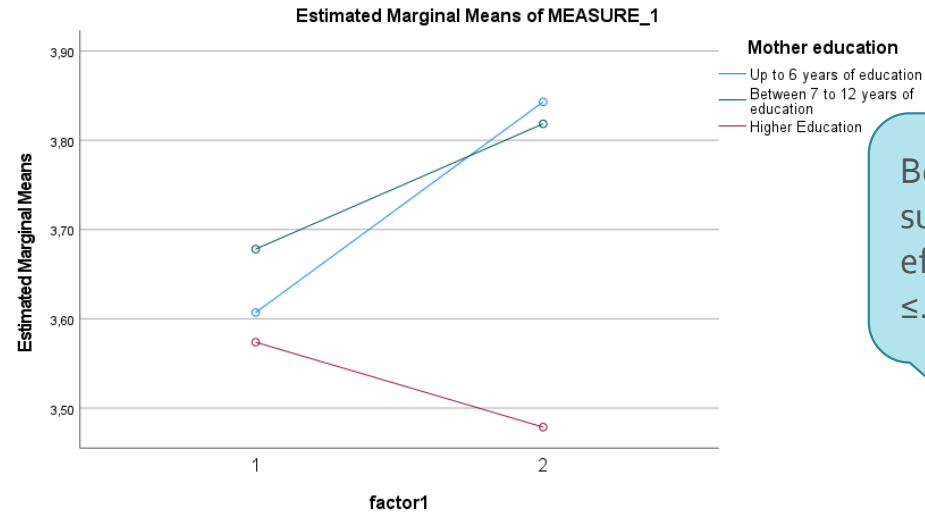


## Organizational Career Support



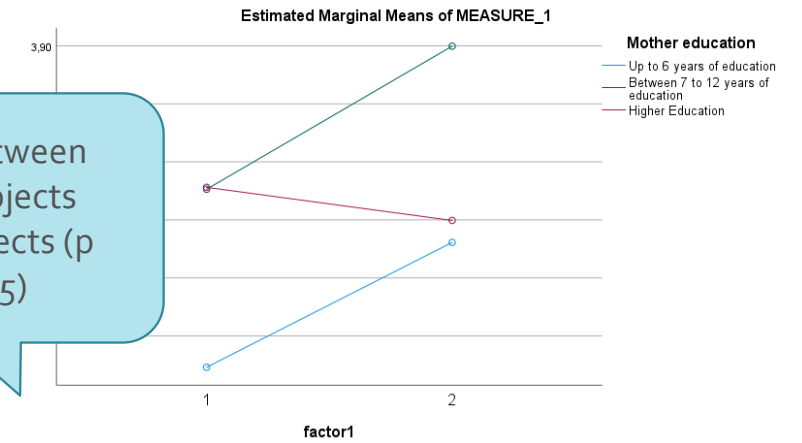
# Results

## Study Challenge



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Student worker = .21

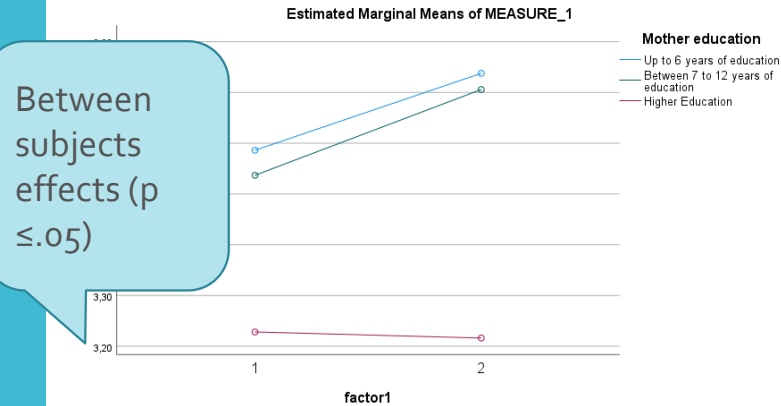
## Social Support



Between subjects effects ( $p \leq .05$ )

Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Student worker = .21

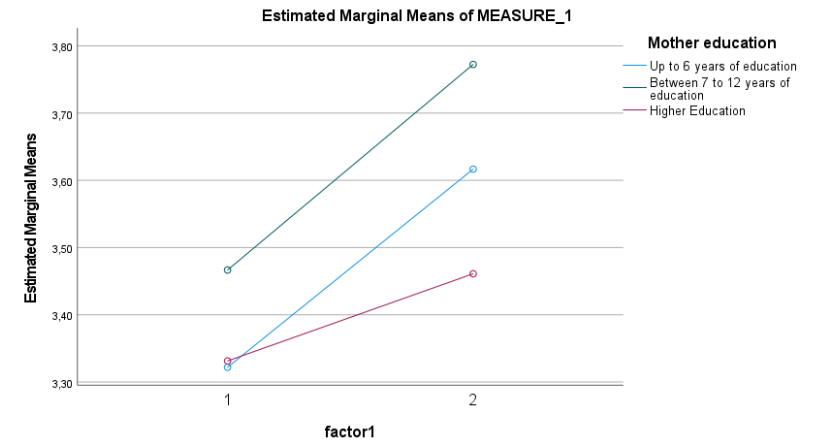
## Career Involvement



Between subjects effects ( $p \leq .05$ )

Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Student worker = .21

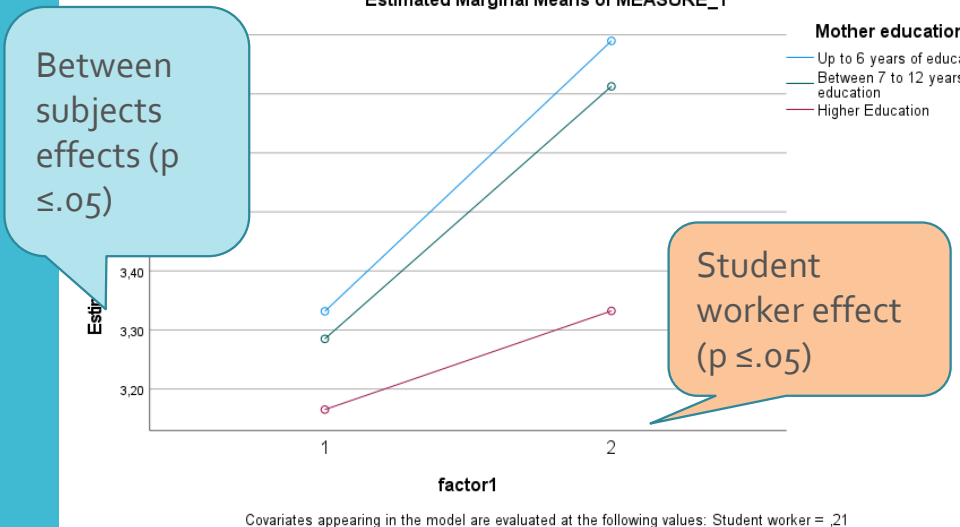
## Career confidence



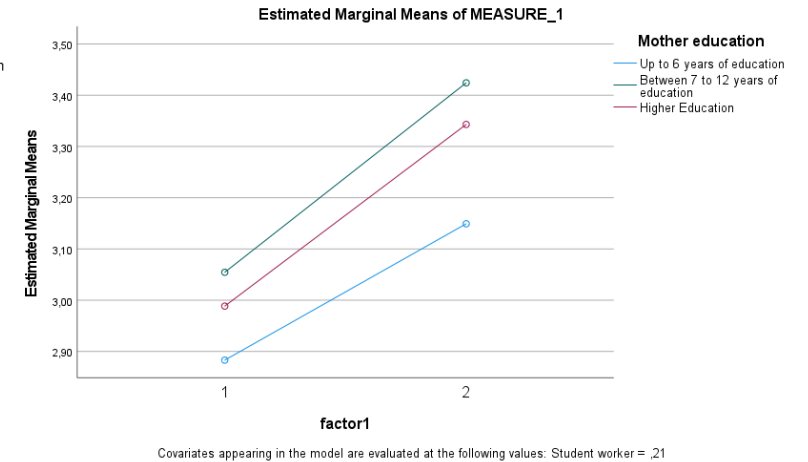
Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Student worker = .21

# Results

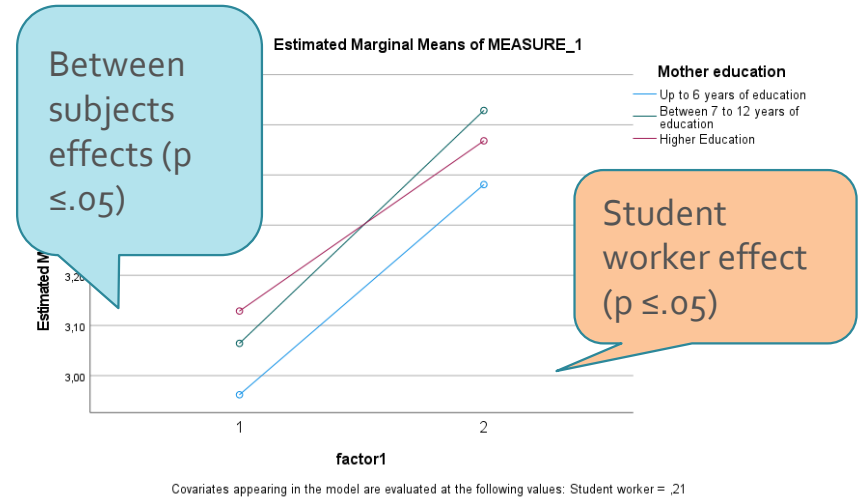
## Career Clarity



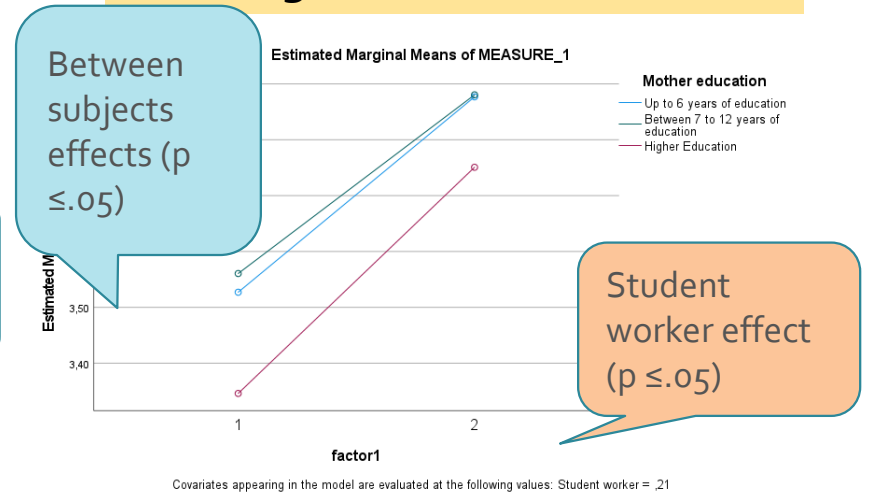
## Networking



## Career Exploration



## Learning



# Conclusions

- The B4C programme evidenced positive increasement of career resources
- Different effects according with students' social origin and work status:
  - Students with less educated mothers:
    - present lower career resources
    - overall evidenced higher earnings with the intervention
  - Student workers:
    - present higher career resources
    - evidenced less earnings with the intervention in the dimensions of occupational expertise and networking
- To be a student worker seem to mitigate some of the differences found between groups with different levels of mother education

# Conclusions

- Accessibility of the program to a wider and diversified HE population
- Distance career interventions might represent an effective way to mitigate social inequalities through the promotion of career resources
- Importance of dissemination of career interventions, reaching more students

**Thank you for  
your attention**

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