

The Relationship Between General Future Time Perspective and Future Work Self: Understanding The Intermediary Role of Social Support

Yu Li*

School of Tianjin Vocational and Technical Normal University, Tianjin, China

*Corresponding author: 467303099@qq.com

Abstract

Objective To explore the General Future Time perspective of college students and the relationship between social support and future work self. **Methods** This study conducted from April 2024 to June 2024, using the method of convenient sampling, using the questionnaire star platform and offline classroom to collect questionnaires, a total of 749 valid questionnaires. After that, the data were collated, and the correlation analysis and mediation effect analysis were conducted. The questionnaires used in the study included: General General Future Time perspective questionnaire, perceived social support questionnaire, and future work self-questionnaire. **Results:** General Future Time perspective and social support ($r=0.586$, $P < 0.001$) showed significant positive correlation with future work self ($r=0.602$, $P < 0.001$); perceived social support and future work self ($r=0.643$, $P < 0.001$). **Mediation effect analysis:** Model 4 in PROCESS 3.5 was used to test the General Future Time perspective, perceived social support and future work self. The results showed that perceived social support has a significant impact on this mediation model. **Conclusion** The General Future Time perspective of college students can not only directly affect the future work self, but also indirectly affect the future work self through understanding that social support, and understand that social support plays an intermediary role between the General Future Time perspective and the future work self.

Keywords

College students; General Future Time perspective; understanding of social support; future work self.

1. Introduction

Employment is the foundation of people's wellbeing, stability, and development. Under the background of the current national implementation of the "six stability" and "six protection" policies, "stable employment" and "guaranteed employment" are always in the first place. According to statistics from the Ministry of Education, the number of college graduates in 2021 was 9.09 million, and the number of college graduates in 2022 reached 10.76 million, exceeding 10 million. In 2023, the number of college graduates reached 11.58 million, an increase of 820,000 year on year, hitting a record high. By 2024, the number of college graduates is estimated to reach 11.87 million. In general, the current employment situation of college graduates is more complex and severe, and it is more difficult to achieve high-quality employment smoothly, which not only makes college students feel confused and anxious about their future career choices, but also even unable to make corresponding career decisions [1].

In recent years, more and more scholars have begun to study students' career decision-making from a time perspective, and found that individuals' General Future Time perspective has a positive impact on career planning attitudes [2]. General Future Time perspective refers to the

individual's cognitive, emotional attitude towards self-development possibility, and behavioral tendency [3]. Socioemotional choice theory holds that time perception plays an important role in the choice and pursuit of social goals. SST predicted the General Future Time perspective on the importance of individual target priority choice, late to middle years, perception to the rest of the life is abundant, knowledge gain motivation target is in the first place, and people are more willing to make new friends, expand social circle, efforts to establish extensive relationships for their future life [4]. Individuals with high understanding of social support have higher levels of psychological capital, tend to have full confidence in their lives, have less social pressure during decision-making, and show good professional decision-making judgment [5]. At the same time, some researchers found that future work is closely related to career decisions. Guan et al. [6] studied fresh graduates of a Chinese university and found that their self-clarity in future work could positively predict job-hunting results through career adaptability and self-efficacy. The higher the self-clarity of students' future work, the greater the success rate of job hunting. Therefore, according to the theory of social emotional choice, we understand that social support plays a mediating role in General Future Time perspective and future work self. So far, no study has explored the relationship between General Future Time perspective, perceived social support, and future work self among college students. In conclusion, this study samples a group of college students to explore the relationship between General Future Time perspective, perceived social support and future work self, and further explore the intermediary role of social support in understanding. This is of great practical significance for understanding college students' career decisions and strengthening employment guidance.

2. Objects and Methods

2.1. Study subjects

This study used the convenient sampling method and combined the questionnaire star platform and offline collection. The author of this study was the main test. The questionnaire was collected from April 2024 to June 2024. The main test explains the instruction language of the questionnaire, informing the students that the questionnaire should be conducted anonymously. Students voluntarily participate in the survey, and filling in the questionnaire agrees to participate in the questionnaire survey. Students can withdraw from the questionnaire at any time during the survey, and 749 valid questionnaires are finally collected.

2.2. Research tools

General Future Time perspective Questionnaire (general future time perspective questionnaire, GF TPQ): The General General Future Time perspective Questionnaire prepared by Song Qiming [3] was used in this study. The questionnaire has 20 items. The questionnaire was scored by 4 points, with 1 point "fully consistent", 2 points "relatively consistent", 3 points "somewhat consistent" and 4 points "completely inconsistent". Five reverse scoring items were included in the questionnaire. A higher score of an individual indicates a lower level of General Future Time perspective. In this study, the scale Cronbach's α coefficient was 0.934, with good reliability and can be applied to this survey.

perceived social Support Questionnaire The perceived social Support Scale compiled by Jiang Qianyuan (1999) [7] consists of three dimensions, 12 questions, and consists of three parts: family support, friend support and other support. Among them, the family support dimension includes topics 3,4,8 and 11, the friend support dimension includes topics 6,7,9 and 12, and the other support dimensions include questions 1,2,5 and 10. The scale adopts the Likert 7-point scoring method, with options ranging from 1= "extreme disagree" to 7= "extreme agree". The higher the total score, the stronger the social support individuals feel and the more satisfied

they are with the social support. The internal consistency reliability (Cronbach α) of this scale in this study was 0.89.

Future Work Self-definition Questionnaire Strauss et al. The Future Work Self-definition Scale (Future Work Self Scale, FWSS) was compiled using the [8] according to the possible self-definition study of King and Raspin [9], which was translated into the Chinese version of Guan et al. [6] and revised it. There are four self-assessment items in this scale, using the Likert level 7 scoring method, and the options range from 1= "extreme disagree" to 7= "extreme agree". The higher the total score, the clearer the individual's future work self. The internal consistency reliability (Cronbach α) of this scale in this study was 0.88.

2.3. Statistical methods

In this study, SPSS 27.0 software, the data were tested for common method bias, correlation analysis and mediation effect, and the PROCESS3.5 plug-in of SPSS27.0. The study used a two-tailed test, and the significance level of the statistical test was $P < 0.050$.

3. Results

3.1. Common method deviation test

Using Harman univariate analysis, the results showed 14 factors with eigenvalue greater than 1, and the variance interpretation rate of the first factor was 36.90%, which is below the critical value of 40%. All the above data indicate that there is no multicollinearity problem among the variables used in this study [10].

3.2. Correlation analysis

General Future Time perspective and perceived social support ($r=0.586$, $P < 0.001$) and significant positive correlation with future work self ($r=0.602$, $P < 0.001$); perceived social support and future work self ($r=0.643$, $P < 0.001$). See the table below.

Table 1. Correlation analysis

variable	M	SD	1	2
1. General Future Time perspective	2.9433	.42863		
2. perceived social support	5.3113	1.04785	.586**	
3. future work self	5.1669	1.19952	.602**	.643**

3.3. Analysis of the mediation effect of perceived social support

Understanding the significant correlation between social support and General Future Time perspective and future work self can be entered into the mediation test analysis. In the mediation test, this study examined General Future Time perspective, perceived social support, and future work self using model 4 in PROCESS 3.5. The results showed the significant effect of perceived social support on this mediation model, shown in the table below.

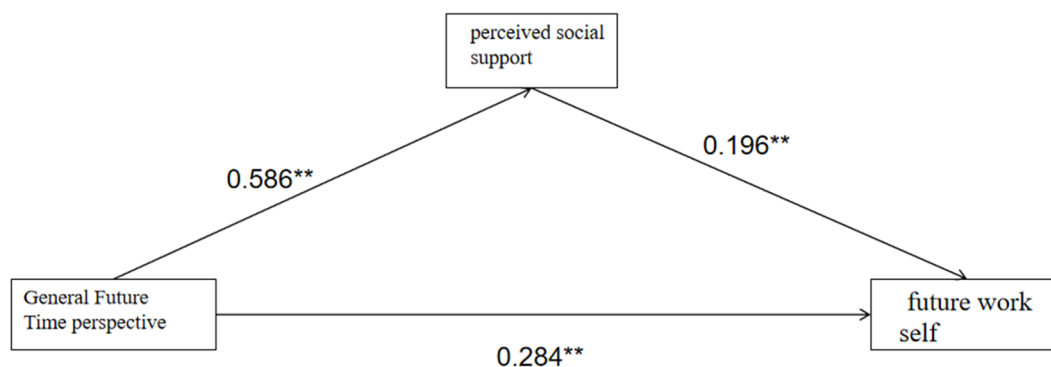


Table 2. The mediation effect

This regression model was tested using the deviation correction percentile Bootstrap method with repeated 1000 samples and the 95% confidence interval was estimated. The results showed that the direct effect of the General Future Time perspective on the future work self was 0.284, and the 95%CI was [0.104,0.164]. However, for General Future Time perspective- - -perceived social support- - -future work self, 95%CI is [0.127,0.462], and the indirect path mediation effect value was 0.281, accounting for 49.73% of the total effect size. The 95% confidence interval of the effect estimates for this pathway does not include 0, so the mediation effect of social support is significant.

4. Discussion

The results showed that there was a significant correlation between General Future Time perspective, understanding of social support, and future work self. The higher the individual's General Future Time perspective level, the higher the future work self. This is consistent with the findings of the [11] study. Understanding that social support can significantly positively predict future work self [12] is the same in this study. Individuals who often receive high awareness of social support will also have higher self-clarity in their future work. Individuals with high General Future Time perspective tend to choose to acquire high social support to handle problems. The results of the mediation test show that the understanding of social support has a significant mediation effect and can be used as a mediation variable. This shows that the General Future Time perspective can directly affect the future work self, and can also have an indirect impact on the future work self through perceived social support. There are still many shortcomings in this study, such as the selection of subjects, there are many science students in the sample, the sampling has certain limitations, and the generalization of the research results needs to be further studied.

5. Conclusion and Study Significance

This study focuses on college students' career decisions, and based on the social and emotional choice theory and related empirical research results, we construct a mediation model to investigate the mediation role of social support between college students' General Future Time perspective and future work self and how this mediation effect is regulated. Research helps to answer the question that college students' insight into future time influences their future work self. The results have positive theoretical significance for deepening the study on the relationship between college students' General Future Time perspective and future work self. At the same time, it provides certain empirical support and theoretical guidance for the career planning and personalized pre-service guidance of this group. This study shows that the General Future Time perspective can directly influence the future work self, and can also indirectly influence the future work self by perceived social support. From the perspective of

practice, colleges and universities can carry out the following two aspects of career guidance for college students. First of all, from the perspective of General Future Time perspective, schools can carry out career education in stages to help college students have a clearer understanding and planning of the future. In the freshman year, college students pay less attention to career planning, which can strengthen their career planning education in the entrance education. In the second year, college students are encouraged to actively participate in practical activities and help them gradually explore the future employment direction. In the third stage, college students should provide good guidance for employment to help them prepare for job hunting. Secondly, from the perspective of positive psychological quality, it is more necessary to strengthen the social support system for college students in their career decision-making, so as to enhance self-cognition and improve self-efficacy. The more social support individuals receive, the more self-clarity college students have about their future work (Liu Siyu). In addition, it is hoped that traits, as a positive psychological quality, educators should empower college students to enhance their self-clarity in their future work.

References

- [1] Build a new road, Xu Xin.(2022). Research on "Slow Employment" among Chinese College Students.
- [2] Markok., Savickas,M.(1998).Effectiveness of a Career Time Perspective Intervention. *Journal of Vocational Behavior-J VOCAT BEHAV*,52,106-119
- [3] Song for. Theoretical and empirical study of the General Future Time perspective of college students [D]. Southwest Normal University, 2004.
- [4] Carstensen, L.L.(1991).Selectivity theory: Social activity in life-span context. *Annual Review of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, 11, 195-217.
- [5] Xu Bibo, Chen Xiaoyun, Wang Jiaying, et al. The relationship between General Future Time perspective and self-efficacy of college students' career decision-making: a chain intermediary of social support and self-esteem [J]. *Psychological exploration*, 2021,41 (03): 276-281 + 288.
- [6] Guan, Y., Guo, Y., Bond, M.H., Cai, Z., Zhou, X., Xu, J., ...Ye, L.(2014).New job market entrants' future work self, career adaptability and job search outcomes: Examining mediating and moderating models.*Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 85(1), 136-145.
- [7] Jiang Qianjin.(1999). Understanding of the Social Support Scale (PSSS). See Wang Xiangdong, Wang Xilin, Ma Hong (editor), *Mental Health Rating Scale Manual* (revised edition, pp.131-133). Beijing: The Chinese Journal of Mental Health.
- [8] Strauss, K., Griffin, M.A., & Parker, S.K.(2012).Future work selves: how salient hoped-for identities motivate proactive career behaviors.*Journal of applied psychology*, 97(3), 580.
- [9] King, L.A., & Raspin, C.(2004).Lost and found possible selves, subjective well-being, and ego development in divorced women.*Journal of Personality*, 72(3), 603-632.
- [10] Hong-yun liu. *Advanced psychological statistics* [M]. Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2019:59-79.
- [11] Rao Rongrong. Longitudinal relationship between career General Future Time perspective and career decision-making difficulties [D]. Southwest University, 2023.
- [12] Liu Siyu. Understanding the impact of social support on self-clarity in future work: the role of career exploration and proactive personality [D]. Southwest University, 2023.