

The Relationship between PGI and College Students' Career Decision Making Self-efficacy: A Chain Mediation Model

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Abstract: To explore the influencing factors and mechanism of career decision making self-efficacy of college students, the research uses PGIS-II, Future Time Perspective Scale, Academic Engagement Scale, and Career Decision Making Self-efficacy Scale to investigate 148 college students. The results show that PGI, career decision making self-efficacy, future time Perspective, and academic engagement are significantly positively correlated; future time perspective and academic engagement play a mediating role between PGI and college students' career decision making self-efficacy; PGI significantly predicted career decision making self-efficacy through the chain mediation of future time perspective and academic engagement.

Keywords: Career decision making self-efficacy; Personal growth initiative (PGI); Future time perspective; Academic engagement

1. Introduction

Recently, the situation of the graduates' employment has become increasingly grim, and the employment issue of college students has become a hot spot of social concern. It is of great significance to explore the factors affecting college students' career decision making self-efficacy and its influencing mechanism to improve the employment dilemma.

Career decision making self-efficacy is a sense of confidence felt when making career-related choices, including five specific tasks: self-evaluation, collecting career information, determining goals, making plans, and solving problems[1]. It has a positive correlation with college students' career adaptability [2].

Personal growth initiative refers to the tendency of individuals consciously and actively enhancing themselves in the process of growth. PGI was significantly positively correlated with career development and career identity, while having a negative correlation with career flexibility and skepticism [3].

The tendencies that individuals show when predicting, planning, and constructing the likelihood of future development of themselves and society is Future time perspective[4]. It is a kind of cognitive, emotional and behavioral tendencies towards future. College students' self-efficacy in making career decision increases with their future time perspective increases.

Academic engagement refers to an active and vigorous state of learning[5]. Students gain self-efficacy by fully devoting themselves to studies, and individuals with high levels of PGI are more active in personal development thus more willing to invest energy into studies[6]. College students with high PGI have stronger planning and preparation, and are more likely to take the initiative to develop long-term plans for future development, promoting them to increase their academic engagement to achieve their goals. Above all, we propose the research hypothesis: PGI predicted career decision making self-efficacy through the chain mediation of future time perspective and academic engagement.

Hypothetical model shows in Figure 1.

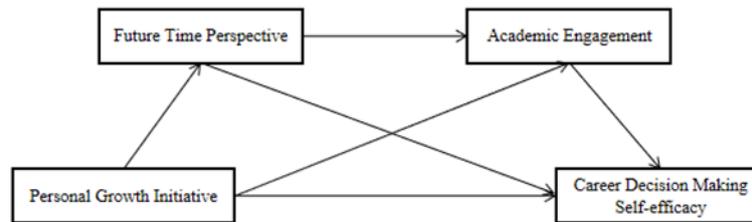


Figure 1: Hypothetical model

2. Methodology

2.1. Research objects

We enroll 148 college students as subjects, and there are 52 boys and 71 girls; the age range is between 17-24 years old. 124 valid questionnaires are collected, and the recovery rate is 84%.

2.2. Research tools

The Chinese version of PGIS-II scale consists of 16 items and four dimensions. The rating scale is 6. The one scores high has higher level of PGI. $\alpha=0.959$.

The Career Decision Making Self-efficacy Scale of has a total of 39 items and 5 dimensions in total. It's 5-point scoring, the higher the scores are, the better the individual's career decision-making self-efficacy will be. $\alpha=0.986$.

The Chinese version of the Accademic Engagement Scale has a total of 17 items. It's 7-point scoring, the higher the scores are, the more engagement a person will put into his study. $\alpha=0.986$.

General Future Time Perspective Scale has 20 items and 5 dimensions in total. Scoring high on this scale means higher future time perspective. $\alpha=0.986$.

2.3. Data Analysis

Common method deviation is tested with Harman's one-factor test. Descriptive statistics are performed using SPSS, with age and gender as control variables. The chain mediation effect is tested using the PROCESS program.

3. Result and discussion

3.1. Common method deviation test

The first factor explains 37.85% of the overall variance, less than 40% of the critical criterion. There is no serious common method deviation in the data of this study.

3.2. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Correlation analysis

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Grade	2.24	0.97		.197*	.576**	0.033	0.098	-0.02
2. Gender	0.41	0.49	.197*		.294**	.279**	.336**	.223*
3. Age	20.61	1.72	.576**	.294**		.281**	.456**	0.088
4. PGI	58.4	1.75	0.033	.279**	.281**		.813**	.720**
5. Career Decision Making Self-efficacy	145.59	1.15	0.098	.336**	.456**	.813**		.667**
6. Future Time Perspective	84.45	1.46	-0.02	.223*	0.088	.720**	.667**	
7. Academic Engagement	87.59	0.61	0.079	.336**	.408**	.833**	.841**	.639**

Note: N=148, * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$. aGender is a dummy variable: 0=girl, 1=boy

As shown in Table 1, the four variables are all significantly positively correlated ($r=0.639 \sim 0.841$, $p<0.01$), well-prepared for further mediating effect test.

3.3. Test of mediation effect

As shown in Figure 2, PGI can positively predict future time perspective and academic engagement ($\gamma=0.72, t =11.19, p<0.001$; $\gamma=1.01, t =9.40, p<0.001$); future time perspective can positively predict Academic engagement; PGI, future time perspective, and academic engagement can all significantly predict career decision making self-efficacy ($\gamma=0.85, t =3.43, p<0.001$; $\gamma=0.53, t =2.86, p<0.001$; $\gamma=0.76, t=4.76, p<0.001$).

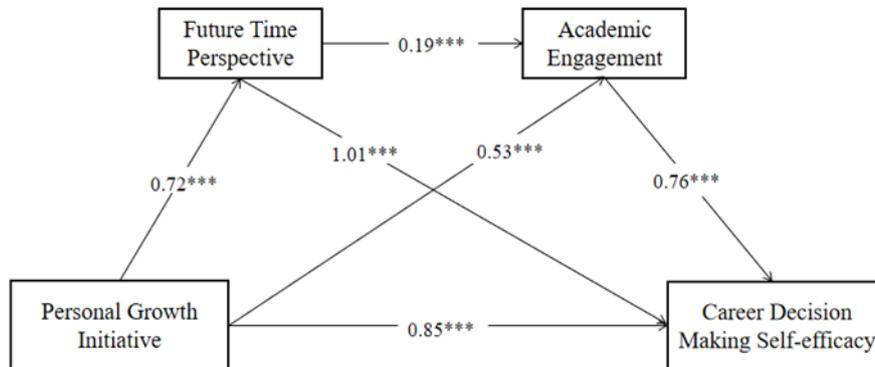


Figure 2: The Chained Mediation Model

If 0 is not contained in the confidence interval, the mediation effect is significant. The effect values of the three mediation paths are shown in Table 2. The mediation effects are all significant, validating the research hypothesis.

Table 2: Results of the mediating effect

effect	Effect Path Relationship	Effect Size	95% Confidence Interval
Direct effect	PGI → Career Decision Making Self-efficacy	0.8504	[0.359 , 1.341]
Mediating effect	PGI → Future Time Perspective → Career Decision Making Self-efficacy	0.3889	[0.065 , 0.738]
	PGI → Academic Engagement → Career Decision Making Self-efficacy	0.7716	[0.365 , 1.299]
	PGI → Future time Perspective → Academic Engagement → Career Decision Making Self-efficacy	0.1059	[0.034 , 0.291]
Total mediation effect		1.2664	[0.692 , 1.829]
Total effect		2.1168	[1.821 , 2.411]

3.4. Discussion

PGI can enhance students’ self-efficacy in vocational choosing by improving their future time perspective. Students with high PGI have more proactive growth tendencies, and can make clearer and longer-term plans for future job.

Academic engagement mediates between PGI and career decision making self-efficacy. Students with high PGI pay more attention to learning, which can sharpen their professional skills and ability, thus enhancing their confidence in career choices.

Future time perspective and academic engagement also act as chain mediator. High PGI Students will make long-term plans for their future, thus wholeheartedly engaging themselves in study to lay a solid foundation for their future career. As a result, their career decision making self-efficacy increases with their professional knowledge and skills improved. It’s of vital importance for their vocational development in the competitive society.

4. Conclusion

As PGI can significantly predict career decision making self-efficacy through the chain mediation

of future time perspective and academic engagement, group counseling, series of training and other methods can be used in the future to enhance the personal growth initiative of college students. Intervention research will help to expand the findings of this study, making the research more realistic meaningful, and help college students to get out of the employment dilemma.

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