# The Influence of Social Support on Career Decision-Making Difficulties:

# Bayesian Modeling Based on Longitudinal Data

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*Abstract*：Career decision-making plays an important role in individual development. The career decision-making difficulties of college students also have a profound impact on the reserve of national innovation professionals. Therefore, how to intervene the career decision-making difficulties of college students from family, school and society is of great significance for the development of college students and country.

From the perspective of social support, the purpose of this study is to examine the causal effect between external factors and career decision-making difficulties by a longitudinal study, and a model includes moderated mediation effect was also established to examine the influence mechanism of social support on career decision-making difficulties in a cross-sectional study.

A longitudinal questionnaire survey was conducted among 167 college students (*Mean* = 20.42, *SD* = 1.47) at three time points. Results from the Bayesian longitudinal structural equation model demonstrated that the level of social support at the previous time point had a significant negative predictive effect on career decision-making difficulties at the latter time point.

In the cross-sectional study, we explored the mediation role of career adaptability and the moderation role of emotional intelligence. Through a questionnaire survey of 353 undergraduates (*Mean* = 19.55, *SD* = 1.45), the Bayesian method and the maximum likelihood estimation method were used to respectively test the structural validity of the scale. A structural equation model was established to test the theoretical hypothesis. We also tested the generalization ability of the model by sensitivity analysis. The results show that: (1) Social support had a significant negative effect on college students' career decision-making difficulties; (2) The negative impact of social support on career decision-making difficulties was fully mediated by career adaptability; (3) The mediated effects of career adaptability was moderated by emotional intelligence, that is, the indirect effect was stronger for college students with high emotional intelligence than those with low emotional intelligence; (4) The research results are not sensitive to external setting errors, the omission of proactive personality variable does not affect the results of this model.

These results revealed the casual effect and the influence mechanism of social support on career decision-making difficulties. The sensitivity analysis results also exclude the interference of proactive personality factors to some extent. This is of guiding significance for improving the career decision-making difficulties of college students through social support from family, school and society. Moreover, this research also compared Bayesian estimation with traditional maximum likelihood estimation in detail, and promotes Bayesian latent variable modeling and sensitivity analysis methods.

*Keywords*：social support, career decision-making difficulties, career adaptability, emotional intelligence, Bayesian estimation