



# Research on the Path of Perceived Family Responsibility, Work Embeddedness, and Employee Subjective Career Success

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## Abstract

In the digital economy era, talent has become a core strategic resource for organizations, but the issue of rising employee turnover rates and job burn-out is becoming increasingly prominent, and the impact of family responsibilities on career development urgently needs to be further explored. This study is based on the work family boundary theory and resource conservation theory, and constructs a theoretical model of family responsibility perception, work embeddedness, and employee subjective career success. A questionnaire survey method was used to collect 346 valid samples, and SPSS and AMOS were used for empirical analysis. The results indicate that perceived family responsibility has a significant positive impact on employees' subjective career success; The perception of family responsibility has a positive impact on work embeddedness; Work embeddedness has a positive impact on subjective career success; Work embedding plays a partial mediating role between perceived family responsibility and subjective career success. The study reveals the intrinsic mechanism by which family responsibility perception enhances job embeddedness and improves career success, providing theoretical basis and practical reference for enterprises to optimize human resource management and promote the coordinated development of employees' families and careers.

## Subject Areas

Human Resource Management

## Keywords

Perceived Family Responsibility, Work Embedding, Subjective Career Success

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background

With the deep integration of digital economy and knowledge economy, talent has become an important strategic resource for enterprises to gain competitive advantage. However, in recent years, there have been some worrying trends in the workplace ecosystem: the voluntary turnover rate continues to rise, employees generally experience job burnout, and work engagement and job happiness continue to decrease. The traditional human resource management model centered on salary incentives and job promotion can no longer meet the complex and ever-changing career needs of contemporary employees, and there is an urgent need to understand its underlying driving mechanisms from a broader perspective. At the same time, Chinese society is undergoing profound structural changes, with significant changes in family structure and function. The aging population is accelerating, and the responsibility of elderly care is becoming increasingly heavy; After the comprehensive implementation of the “three child” policy, the pressure of parenting has become more prominent; With dual income families gradually becoming the mainstream of society, family affairs such as household chores and children’s education have become practical challenges faced by professionals in the workplace. Family responsibility is no longer just a personal domain, it has a profound impact on employees’ work engagement, career choices, and development paths. However, traditional research on organizational behavior has conducted relatively little exploration on the intrinsic connection between family responsibility and career development, especially the lack of systematic exploration of how family responsibility perception is transmitted to career success through psychological mechanisms.

The theory of work embeddedness provides a fresh perspective to understand the relationship between organizations and employees. This theory emphasizes the complex network of relationships between employees and their work environment, including employee connections, organizational alignment, and turnover costs. Research has found that employees’ perception of family responsibility may affect their job embeddedness, which in turn affects their career development. Subjective career success is an important indicator for measuring the quality of employee career development, which has gone beyond traditional objective standards such as salary promotion and focuses more on career satisfaction, sense of achievement, and work life balance. Based on the above background, this study intends to construct a theoretical model of family responsibility perception, work embeddedness, and employee subjective career success based on the work family boundary theory and resource conservation theory, and reveal the mechanism of their interaction through empirical research.

Perceived family responsibility refers to an individual’s subjective awareness and internalized sense of duty regarding obligations associated with fulfilling family roles, encompassing economic support, daily care, and emotional companionship for family members. This concept fundamentally differs from work-family

conflict: while work-family conflict emphasizes resource depletion caused by incompatible demands between professional and domestic spheres, perceived family responsibility represents an individual's internalized sense of familial obligations. Moreover, perceived family responsibility diverges from family motivation (which focuses on energy-driven work engagement triggered by family responsibilities) and family support (which refers to resources and assistance received from family members). The theoretical framework of this study is grounded in Resource Conservation Theory and Work-Family Boundary Theory: individuals with strong family responsibility perception view current employment as a critical means of fulfilling family obligations, thereby enhancing job engagement, reducing turnover intentions, and transforming family responsibilities into positive career development drivers.

## **1.2. Research Purpose and Significance**

### **1.2.1. Research Objective**

The aim of this study is to explore the impact mechanism of perceived family responsibility on employees' subjective career success, and to reveal the mediating role of work embedding in the relationship between the two. By constructing a theoretical model of family responsibility perception, work embeddedness, and subjective career success, this study empirically tests the interaction path between the three, deepens the understanding of the psychological mechanism of employee career development, and provides a theoretical basis for enterprises to optimize human resource management practices and help employees achieve coordinated development between family and career.

### **1.2.2. Research Significance**

#### 1) Theoretical significance

This study integrates the theory of work family boundaries with the theory of resource conservation, and constructs an integrated analysis framework for family responsibility perception, work embeddedness, and subjective career success, expanding a new perspective for career development research. By revealing the mediating mechanism between job embeddedness in family responsibility perception and subjective career success, we have deepened our theoretical understanding of the psychological process of employee career development, enriched the application scenarios of job embeddedness theory, and provided theoretical and methodological references for subsequent related research.

#### 2) Practical significance

This study provides decision-making basis for optimizing human resource management practices in enterprises, helping organizations understand the deep impact of family responsibilities on employee career development, and thus formulate more humane employee support policies. By guiding employees to enhance their work embeddedness, companies can improve talent retention efficiency, reduce turnover rates, and help employees achieve career growth while taking on family responsibilities, promoting harmonious integration between family and

work.

### **1.3. Research Content and Methods**

#### **1.3.1. Research Content**

This study is based on the work family boundary theory and resource conservation theory to explore the mechanism by which perceived family responsibility affects individual career success. The main research contents include: constructing antecedents of family responsibility perception, mediating variables of work embedding, and subjective occupational success variables. Secondly, a questionnaire survey was conducted on 346 enterprise employees using SPSS and AMOS software, and reliability, correlation analysis, and hierarchical regression analysis were performed on the questionnaire. This study will focus on exploring the direct impact of work embeddedness on family responsibilities and investigating the mechanisms by which work embeddedness operates. Finally, based on this, explore how enterprises can improve employees' work embeddedness through humanized management, thereby promoting the harmonious development of family responsibilities and career.

#### **1.3.2. Research Methods**

##### 1) Literature research method

By systematically reviewing academic literature on family responsibility perception, work embeddedness, subjective career success, work family boundary theory, resource preservation theory, and other related fields both domestically and internationally, we aim to sort out existing research results and theoretical frameworks, and grasp the latest research trends. Based on the classification, induction, and review of literature, clarify the theoretical positioning and innovation space of this study, providing a solid theoretical foundation for constructing theoretical models and research hypotheses.

##### 2) Questionnaire survey method

This study used a questionnaire survey method to collect empirical data. On the basis of mature scales, appropriate revisions were made in combination with the local cultural context in China to form a survey questionnaire that includes a family responsibility perception scale, a work embedding scale, a subjective career success scale, and demographic variables. By combining online and offline methods, questionnaires are distributed to employees in different industries and positions to obtain large sample data, providing data support for subsequent statistical analysis.

##### 3) Statistical analysis method

Statistical software such as SPSS and AMOS was employed to conduct systematic analysis of valid questionnaire data collected. The study included: descriptive statistical analysis to understand sample characteristics; reliability and validity testing to evaluate scale reliability and validity; correlation analysis to preliminarily explore variable relationships; and structural equation modeling as the core analytical framework for hypothesis testing—including main effect testing and

mediation effect testing—to reveal causal pathways and association patterns among variables.

#### **1.4. Innovation Points**

This study is the first to incorporate family responsibility perception, work embeddedness, and subjective career success into a unified analytical framework, revealing the mediating mechanism of work embeddedness and expanding a new perspective for career development research. Different from previous studies that focused solely on work or family domains, this study integrates the theory of work family boundaries and resource conservation theory to explain the positive impact path of family responsibility perception on career success from the perspective of resource gain, deepening the theoretical understanding of the psychological mechanism of employee career development.

## **2. Literature Review and Theoretical Basis**

### **2.1. Overview of Research on Perceived Family Responsibility**

As an important concept in work family research, family responsibility has become a focus of increasing attention for researchers in recent years. Wang Sining (2025) explores the interaction mechanism between work family integration and career growth from the perspective of female scholars since the founding of the People's Republic of China, revealing the positive promotion effect of family responsibilities on career development [1]. Chen Leni (2025) found from the perspective of identity recognition that parental identity can enhance work motivation, suggesting that the perception of family responsibilities can be transformed into positive career development resources [2]. Wu Chuanbiao (2025) takes the group of “housewives” as the research object, explores the construction path of the “paid domestic service” and “professionalization” system, and expands the research field of “family responsibility” [3].

### **2.2. Overview of Work Embedding Research**

The theory of work embeddedness is an important theory for explaining employee organizational relationships and is widely applied in the field of occupational health. Liu Shuai and Gao Pingfan (2025) analyzed the current situation of occupational stress and job burnout among general practitioners, indirectly revealing the impact of job embeddedness on employee stability [4]. Liu Shunqin (2025) explores the mechanism of flexible human resource management strategies in alleviating job burnout, emphasizing the important role of organizational support in enhancing employee job embeddedness. Therefore, we plan to conduct research from both theoretical and empirical perspectives [5].

### **2.3. Overview of Subjective Career Success Research**

Subjective career success is an important indicator for measuring the quality of personal career development, and research on its influencing factors has become

a focus of academic attention. Guo Tengfei *et al.* (2026) investigated the impact of work family conflict on career development among married women and revealed the influence of family factors on career development [6]. Wang Hongying (2026) investigated the relationship between work family conflict and job burnout among obstetric and gynecological nursing staff, providing empirical support for understanding their career success [7]. Zhu Xiaoshuang (2026) explored the mechanism of teacher job burnout from the perspective of emotional labor, and expanded the research path of job burnout from an emotional perspective [8]. Zhang Liu (2025) investigate the impact of work family conflict and psychological capital on job burnout among different occupational groups. Zhao Jing *et al.* [9]. (2025) investigated the mechanism of job burnout among operating room nurses from two dimensions: role conflict and psychological capital [10].

## 2.4. Theoretical Basis

### 2.4.1. Work Family Boundary Theory

The work family boundary theory was proposed by Clark in 2000, which suggests that individuals frequently shuttle between work and family domains in their daily work, and there is a certain boundary between the two domains [11]. Individuals are both boundary crossers and boundary managers. Boundaries have two key characteristics: permeability and flexibility. Permeability refers to the degree to which elements from one domain enter another domain, while flexibility refers to the ability of boundaries to be adjusted according to different contexts. Sharafizad (2026) studied Australian female scholars and delved into the cost of balancing work and family. She found that boundary management strategies have a significant impact on the work family balance of working women. This theory provides an important perspective for understanding how perceived family responsibility affects employees' work attitudes in this study. Employees' perception of family responsibility affects their cognition and management strategies towards boundaries, which in turn affects their level of work embeddedness and perception of career success [12].

### 2.4.2. Resource Conservation Theory

The theory of resource conservation was first proposed by Hobfoll in 1989 and is an important theoretical framework for individual stress coping and resource management. This theory suggests that individuals have an instinctive tendency to acquire, protect, and maintain resources, and when faced with resource loss or an imbalance between investment and return, they will experience a stress response. Resources include four categories: material resources, conditional resources, individual characteristic resources, and energy resources. The core dynamic mechanisms are the resource gain spiral and resource loss spiral. Luo's (2026) study found a significant correlation between work family conflict and abnormal eating behavior, with the Big Five personality traits playing a mediating role, revealing the transmission mechanism of resource depletion on individual physical and mental health [13].

### 2.4.3. Social Identity Theory

The social identity theory was proposed by Tajfel and Turner in 1979, which suggests that individuals belong to a specific group through social classification and assign typical characteristics of that group to themselves, thereby forming social identity. Social identity includes three core processes: social classification, social comparison, and positive differentiation. Thomas W.H. (2026) conducted a study on university faculty and staff, exploring the impact of social psychological working conditions and psychological resilience on occupational burnout [14]. They found that organizational identification has a positive effect in alleviating work stress and enhancing occupational resilience.

## 3. Research Hypotheses and Theoretical Models

### 3.1. The Relationship between Perceived Family Responsibility and Subjective Career Success

Family responsibility refers to an individual's sense of responsibility towards their family roles and their subjective evaluation of their own sense of responsibility. The theory of resource conservation holds that individuals have an instinctive tendency to acquire, protect, and maintain resources, and their perception of family responsibilities can be seen as an important psychological resource that can motivate individuals to allocate resources more actively in their professional fields and achieve work family balance [15]. When employees feel a strong sense of family responsibility, they will cherish the economic security and development opportunities that their current job can provide, and thus be more motivated to pursue their career goals. Meanwhile, the work family boundary theory suggests that when individuals cross different domains, obtaining support resources from the family domain can help them achieve better development in the work field. Employees with a high sense of family responsibility are more likely to see it as a part of self actualization, and this positive psychological experience can be transformed into an intrinsic motivation for career development [16]. Previous studies have found that positive experiences within the family domain can spill over into the work domain, thereby enhancing individual job satisfaction and career achievement.

Based on this, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1 family responsibility perception has a significant positive impact on employees' subjective career success.

### 3.2. The Relationship between Perceived Family Responsibility and Work Embeddedness

Work embedding refers to the multidimensional network formed between individuals and the work environment, which includes core dimensions such as connection, matching, and sacrifice, reflecting the degree of individual embedding in the organization. The theory of resource conservation holds that individuals will protect and preserve existing resources in order to cope with potential resource loss [17]. Employees with a high sense of family responsibility are more likely to

see the economic income, social security, and development opportunities brought by their current job, thereby strengthening their connection with the organization. The work family boundary theory suggests that when individuals cross different domains, they will seek balance and integration between domains. When employees feel a strong sense of family responsibility, they will cherish work features that can support them in fulfilling their family responsibilities, such as flexible working hours, friendly work environments, etc. This value matching helps to improve employees' sense of fit with the organization. In addition, resignations may result in companies losing the organizational resources and environment necessary to support them in fulfilling their family responsibilities, thereby strengthening employees' dependence on their existing jobs [18].

Based on this, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H2 family responsibility perception has a significant positive impact on employees' work embeddedness.

### **3.3. The Relationship between Job Embeddedness and Subjective Career Success**

Work embedding is an important concept that closely connects employees and organizations, and it directly affects individual career success. Social identity theory suggests that once employees establish a close connection with the organization, they will develop a strong sense of organizational belonging and identity, which will be transformed into positive evaluations of their career [19]. Employees with high job embeddedness can build a wide range of interpersonal networks, thereby gaining more social support, information resources, and career development opportunities, which is an important supporting factor for career success. Based on the theory of resource conservation, high job embeddedness refers to the accumulation of a large amount of resources by employees during the work process, including interpersonal relationships, organizational support, and career development. The accumulation of these resources can enhance employees' positive cognition of career achievements. At the same time, the matching dimension of job embedding emphasizes that employees' personal value orientation should match the organizational culture. When employees feel that they are well matched with the organization, they are more likely to gain a sense of meaning and achievement from their work, thereby improving their subjective sense of professional achievement [20]. The "sacrifice dimension" reflects the potential losses caused by resignation, which motivates employees to pay more attention to their current career development and improve their job satisfaction through continuous efforts.

Based on this, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H3 job embeddedness has a significant positive impact on employees' subjective career success.

### **3.4. The Mediating Role of Work Embedding**

Based on the above analysis, the perception of family responsibility may not only

directly affect subjective career success, but also indirectly influence employees' evaluation of career success through the mediating variable of work embeddedness. According to the theory of resource conservation, the resources possessed by individuals will generate richer resource accumulation through a resource gain spiral. Perceived family responsibility, as an important psychological resource, can encourage employees to actively immerse themselves in the work environment. By enhancing their connection with the organization, improving their sense of fit with the organization, and increasing the psychological cost of resignation, a stable state of work embedding can be formed [21]. And this high level of job embeddedness brings rich social capital, organizational support, and career development resources to employees, thereby enhancing their positive perception of career success. The work family boundary theory also supports the existence of this mediating pathway, which suggests that individuals' resources in different fields can be mutually transformed and enhanced. Employees with a strong sense of family responsibility are more inclined to transform their sense of responsibility in the family domain into positive behavior in the work domain, and obtain the resources and support needed for career development through deepening work embedding, ultimately achieving a positive interaction between family responsibility and career success. It can be inferred that work embeddedness plays an important transmission role between perceived family responsibility and subjective career success, that is, perceived family responsibility enhances employees' work embeddedness, thereby improving their subjective career success [22].

Based on this, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H4 work embeddedness mediates the relationship between perceived family responsibility and employees' subjective career success.

## 4. Research Design and Methods

### 4.1. Questionnaire Design and Variable Measurement

The target population of this study consists of full-time employees from various enterprises in China. To ensure sample representativeness, a multi-stage stratified sampling method was adopted. The geographical coverage includes three major economic regions: the eastern region (Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shanghai), the central region (Hubei, Hunan, Henan), and the western region (Sichuan, Chongqing). The industries covered include manufacturing, information technology, financial services, healthcare, and education. Enterprise access channels include three methods: 1) contacting alumni enterprises through university career guidance centers; 2) distributing questionnaires to member units via the Human Resources Management Association; and 3) targeted invitations through professional social platforms (LinkedIn, Maimai). Respondent screening criteria were: a) full-time employment for over 6 months; b) age between 18 and 60 years; and c) informed consent. Exclusion criteria included interns, part-time workers, and self-employed individuals.

Data collection was conducted from September to November 2025 through a hybrid online-offline approach. Online questionnaires were distributed via WeCom, DingTalk, and email invitations, with 280 copies sent out and 274 returned (97.9% response rate). Offline paper questionnaires were distributed during on-site visits to six organizations, totaling 70 copies sent and 74 returned (105.7% response rate, due to additional requests from some institutions). The total questionnaire distribution reached 350 copies, with 348 returned. After excluding 2 invalid responses containing incomplete entries or repetitive patterns (e.g., linear responses), 346 valid questionnaires were retained, yielding a 98.9% effective response rate. Among the valid samples, online questionnaires accounted for 78.9% and offline questionnaires for 21.1%.

#### 4.1.1. Measurement of Perceived Family Responsibility (Independent Variable)

This study is based on mature scales commonly used by domestic scholars, combined with the local cultural background of China. As demonstrated by KyungMin (2019) in her study on work-family integration and career growth among female scholars, such measurement approaches have shown good reliability and validity in the Chinese context [23]. The revised scale has good reliability and validity. This scale consists of six dimensions, which comprehensively measure the understanding of family responsibilities from three aspects: family economic support, life care, and emotional care. The specific question items are shown in **Table 1**.

**Table 1.** Household responsibility perception scale.

Item No.	Measurement Item	Scoring method
FR1	I bear the main economic responsibility for my family.	Likert five-point scale
FR2	I need to take care of my family members' daily lives.	Likert five-point scale
FR3	I am responsible for the emotional needs of my family members.	Likert five-point scale
FR4	The arrangement of family affairs is mainly my responsibility.	Likert five-point scale
FR5	I will provide help to my family members as soon as they encounter difficulties.	Likert five-point scale
FR6	I feel that my family has high expectations of me.	Likert five-point scale

The scale adopts the Likert five point scoring method, with 1 point indicating “completely disagree” to 5 points indicating “completely agree”. The higher the score, the stronger the individual’s perception of family responsibility. In previous studies, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of this scale has consistently exceeded 0.8, indicating good internal consistency and reliability. This study will revise the scale appropriately based on the pre-test results to ensure its applicability and reliability in the context of this study.

#### 4.1.2. Measurement of Work Embedding (Mediating Variables)

The measurement of work embedding adopts a mature scale revised by domestic

scholars, which is based on classic literature and adapted to the Chinese organizational context. For example, Afsar, Bilal (2016), in her study on flexible human resource management strategies and job burnout based on work-family boundary theory, emphasized the important role of organizational support in enhancing employee job embeddedness [24]. The scale includes three core dimensions: linkage, matching, and sacrifice, with a total of nine items. The specific question items are shown in **Table 2**.

#### 4.1.3. Measurement of Subjective Occupational Success (Dependent Variable)

The measurement of subjective career success adopts mature scales widely used by domestic and foreign scholars, measuring individuals' subjective evaluation of career development from three dimensions: career satisfaction, career achievement, and work life balance. For example, Shockley. (2016), in their study on work-family conflict and career development among married women, revealed the influence of family factors on career success, providing empirical support for understanding subjective career success [25]. The specific question items are shown in **Table 3**.

The scale adopts the Likert five point scoring method, with 1 point indicating

**Table 2.** Work embedding measurement scale.

Dimension	Item No.	Measurement item	Scoring method
Link	WE1	I maintain good working relationships with my colleagues.	Likert five-point scale
Link	WE2	I have established a broad interpersonal network at work.	Likert five-point scale
Link	WE3	I often communicate with team members outside of work.	Likert five-point scale
Fit	WE4	My personal values are highly consistent with the organizational culture.	Likert five-point scale
Fit	WE5	My skills and strengths can be fully utilized in this position.	Likert five-point scale
Fit	WE6	This job meets my career expectations.	Likert five-point scale
Sacrifice	WE7	If I leave my current organization, I will lose good interpersonal relationships.	Likert five-point scale
Sacrifice	WE8	Leaving would cause me to lose my current benefits.	Likert five-point scale
Sacrifice	WE9	Finding a similar job again would cost me a great deal.	Likert five-point scale

**Table 3.** Subjective occupational success scale.

Item No.	Measurement item	Scoring method
CS1	I am satisfied with my current career development status.	Likert five-point scale
CS2	I have achieved a strong sense of accomplishment in my work.	Likert five-point scale
CS3	My career development has reached the expected goals.	Likert five-point scale
CS4	I am able to balance work and family life well.	Likert five-point scale
CS5	My work is understood and supported by my family and friends.	Likert five-point scale
CS6	I am confident about my future career development.	Likert five-point scale

“completely disagree” to 5 points indicating “completely agree”. The higher the score, the stronger the individual’s subjective sense of career success. In previous studies, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of this scale has always been above 0.8, indicating good reliability and validity.

#### **4.1.4. Selection of Control Variables**

To accurately estimate the impact of perceived family responsibility and work embeddedness on subjective career success, in order to accurately evaluate the influence of perceived family responsibility and work embeddedness on individual career success and avoid interference from other factors. Specifically, it includes gender, age, marital status, educational level, years of work experience, job level, nature of the unit, etc. Divided by gender, it can be divided into four stages: under 25 years old, 26 to 35 years old, 36 to 45 years old, and over 46 years old; There are two types of marital status: married and unmarried; The educational level is associate degree or below, undergraduate degree or above; The work experience is divided into four parts: 1 - 3 years, 4 - 6 years, 7 - 10 years, and more than 10 years; The job hierarchy is divided into general employees, grassroots managers, middle-level managers, and senior managers; The nature of units can be divided into four categories: state-owned, private, and foreign-funded. Previous studies have confirmed a significant correlation between the above variables and employees’ perception of career development. Therefore, this project intends to include them as control variables to improve the credibility and accuracy of the research results [26].

#### **4.2. Data Collection and Sample Characteristics**

This study used a questionnaire survey method to collect data, and the survey subjects were employees from different industries and positions in enterprises. The questionnaire was distributed through a combination of online platforms and offline channels, with a total of 350 questionnaires distributed and 348 collected. After excluding invalid questionnaires with incomplete or regular responses, 346 valid questionnaires were obtained, with an effective response rate of 98.9%. The specific characteristics of the samples are shown in **Table 4**.

#### **4.3. Data Analysis Methods**

Using SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 24.0 as statistical tools, conduct a systematic analysis of the obtained data. Firstly, descriptive statistical analysis was used to preliminarily organize the distribution of sample characteristics and variables, and statistical measures such as mean and standard deviation were calculated to understand the basic situation of the data; Secondly, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient and confirmatory factor analysis are used to test the reliability and validity of the scale to ensure its reliability and validity; Using Harman’s single factor test again to evaluate the severity of common method bias; On this basis, Pearson correlation analysis was used to preliminarily explore the impact of work embeddedness on family responsibility and subjective work success; On this basis, hierarchical

**Table 4.** Sample characteristics distribution (N = 346).

Statistical variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	182	52.6
	Female	164	47.4
Age	25 years and under	68	19.7
	26 - 35 years	142	41.0
	36 - 45 years	89	25.7
	46 years and above	47	13.6
Marital status	Married	218	63.0
	Unmarried	128	37.0
Education level	College degree or below	76	22.0
	Bachelor's degree	198	57.2
	Master's degree or above	72	20.8
Working years	1 - 3 years	84	24.3
	4 - 6 years	112	32.4
	7 - 10 years	88	25.4
	Over 10 years	62	17.9
Job level	Ordinary employee	186	53.8
	Junior manager	92	26.6
	Middle manager	54	15.6
	Senior manager	14	4.0
Organization type	State - owned enterprise	124	35.8
	Private enterprise	158	45.7
	Foreign - invested enterprise	42	12.1
	Others	22	6.4

regression, Bootstrap and other methods were used to verify the research hypothesis, and a regression model was constructed to analyze the interaction paths between variables. The biased percentile Bootstrap method was used for 5000 repeated samples to calculate the confidence interval of the mediation effect and test the mediation effect embedded in the mediation effect. The above analysis methods complement each other and can comprehensively and accurately reveal the mechanism of interaction between variables.

## 5. Empirical Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

### 5.1. Reliability and Validity Analysis

This study employed Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient to assess the internal consistency reliability of each scale, and conducted confirmatory factor analysis to evaluate discriminant validity and convergent validity [27]. Confirmatory factor

analysis was performed using AMOS 24.0 to evaluate model fit and discriminant validity. The three-factor model (perceived family responsibility, work engagement, and subjective career success) demonstrated excellent fit indices:  $\chi^2/df = 2.34$ , CFI = 0.942, TLI = 0.935, RMSEA = 0.058, SRMR = 0.043. The three-factor model showed significantly better fit than alternative models (e.g., two-factor models combining arbitrary variables or single-factor models), supporting the discriminant validity of the three constructs.

**Table 5.** Reliability and validity analysis results.

Variable	Cronbach's $\alpha$	KMO value	Bartlett's test of sphericity Sig.	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Family responsibility perception	0.872	0.851	0.000	0.875	0.584
Job embeddedness	0.891	0.876	0.000	0.894	0.612
Subjective career success	0.863	0.842	0.000	0.867	0.573

From **Table 5**, it can be seen that the Cronbach's alpha coefficients of each scale are all higher than 0.8, indicating that the measurement tool has good internal consistency reliability. The KMO values are all greater than 0.8, and the significance of Bartlett's sphericity test is 0.000, making it suitable for factor analysis. The combination reliability CR of each variable is higher than 0.8, and the average variance extraction AVE is higher than 0.5, indicating that the scale has good convergent validity [28].

## 5.2. Common Method Deviation Testing

To avoid potential common method bias issues in the questionnaire survey, this study used Harman's single factor test method to conduct exploratory factor analysis on all measurement items without rotation. The specific results are shown in **Table 6**.

**Table 6.** Common method deviation test results.

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	5.847	27.843	27.843	5.847	27.843	27.843
2	2.631	12.528	40.371			
3	2.124	10.114	50.485			
4	1.568	7.467	57.952			
5	1.325	6.309	64.261			
6	1.102	5.248	69.509			

The test results showed that the unrotated factor analysis extracted a total of 6 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. The first factor explained a total variation of 27.843%, which is below the critical value of 40%, indicating that there is no serious common method bias problem in this study.

### 5.3. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

This study conducted descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis on each variable to preliminarily understand the degree of association between variables. The specific results are shown in **Table 7**.

**Table 7.** Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis results.

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Gender	0.53	0.50	1						
Age	2.33	0.92	0.042	1					
Education level	2.01	0.68	-0.038	0.156**	1				
Working years	2.37	1.05	0.051	0.723**	0.087	1			
Family responsibility perception	3.68	0.72	0.124*	0.213**	0.095	0.198**	1		
Job embeddedness	3.52	0.68	0.087	0.176**	0.108*	0.184**	0.426**	1	
Subjective career success	3.61	0.71	0.063	0.152**	0.117*	0.143**	0.38		1

Note: represents  $p < 0.05$ , represents  $p < 0.01$ , represents  $p < 0.001$ ; Gender: 0 = female, 1 = male.

The correlation analysis results showed that the perception of family responsibility was significantly positively correlated with work embeddedness ( $r = 0.426$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and subjective career success ( $r = 0.382$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); There is a significant positive correlation between job embeddedness and subjective career success ( $r = 0.513$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These results provide preliminary support for subsequent hypothesis testing [29].

### 5.4. Hypothesis Testing

#### 5.4.1. Main Effect Test

This study used hierarchical regression analysis to examine the main effects of perceived family responsibility on subjective career success and the impact of work embeddedness on subjective career success. The specific results are shown in **Table 8**.

As shown in **Table 8**, after controlling for demographic variables, perceived family responsibility has a significant positive impact on subjective career success ( $\beta = 0.352$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting hypothesis H1; The perception of family responsibility has a significant positive impact on work embeddedness ( $\beta = 0.398$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and hypothesis H2 is supported; Work embeddedness has a significant positive impact on subjective career success ( $\beta = 0.476$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting hypothesis H3.

**Table 8.** Results of main effect regression analysis.

Variables	Model 1 (subjective career success)		Model 2 (job embeddedness)		Model 3 (subjective career success)	
	$\beta$	t	$\beta$	t	$\beta$	t
Control variables						
Gender	0.058	1.124	0.076	1.452	0.042	0.876
Age	0.086	1.356	0.092	1.437	0.071	1.184
Education level	0.104*	2.031	0.096	1.854	0.089	1.792
Working years	0.079	1.243	0.083	1.298	0.064	1.087
Job level	0.112*	2.187	0.121*	2.326	0.095	1.943
Organization type	0.043	0.856	0.051	0.998	0.037	0.762
Independent variable						
Family responsibility perception	0.352***	6.847	0.398***	7.623		
Mediating variable						
Job embeddedness					0.476***	9.584
Model indices						
R <sup>2</sup>	0.186		0.214		0.293	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.169		0.198		0.278	
F-value	11.084***		13.2			

Note: represents  $p < 0.05$ , represents  $p < 0.01$ , represents  $p < 0.001$ ; In the table,  $\beta$  is the standardized regression coefficient

#### 5.4.2. Mediation Effect Test

This study employed the Bootstrap method to examine the mediating role of work engagement between perceived family responsibility and subjective career success. Bootstrap repeated sampling was conducted 5,000 times to calculate the 95% confidence interval. The specific results are presented in **Table 9**. The results indicate that the indirect association between perceived family responsibility and subjective career success mediated by work engagement is 0.168 (95% CI: [0.102, 0.243]), excluding zero, demonstrating significant mediating effects of work engagement. Additionally, after controlling for mediating variables, the direct association between perceived family responsibility and subjective career success was 0.184 (95% CI: [0.089, 0.279]), also excluding zero. These findings suggest that work engagement partially mediates the relationship between these two variables, thereby supporting Hypothesis H4.

The results in **Table 10** showed that the impact of work embeddedness on cognitive family responsibility and subjective career success reached 0.168, 95% confidence interval [0.102, 0.243], excluding 0, indicating that the impact of work embeddedness on family responsibility is significant. In addition, after controlling for mediator variables, the direct impact of perceived family responsibility on subjective career success is 0.184, with a 95% confidence interval of [0.089, 0.279],

excluding 0. This indicates that work embedding plays a partial moderating role in these two variables, thus supporting hypothesis H4. Among them, work embedded in family responsibility perception played a mediating role, with 47.73% playing a moderating role.

**Table 9.** Bootstrap test results for mediating effects.

Effect type	Effect value	Standard error	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI	Relative effect proportion (%)
Total effect	0.352	0.051	0.251	0.453	100.00
Direct effect	0.184	0.048	0.089	0.279	52.27
Indirect effect	0.168	0.036	0.102	0.243	47.73

Note: Boot LLCI refers to the lower limit of the 95% confidence interval estimated by the Bootstrap method, and Boot ULCI refers to the upper limit of the 95% confidence interval.

**Table 10.** Decomposition of mediation pathways.

Path	Indirect effect value	Standard error	95% confidence interval	Significance
Family responsibility perception → job embeddedness → subjective career success	0.168	0.036	[0.102, 0.243]	Significant

## 5.5. Robustness Test

To ensure the reliability and stability of the research conclusions, the following methods were used for robustness testing in this study: firstly, the dependent variable measurement method was replaced, and some items of the subjective occupational success scale were combined and adjusted before conducting regression analysis again; Secondly, using structural equation modeling instead of hierarchical regression analysis to re-examine the relationships between variables; Thirdly, using self-service method to repeat sampling with different sample sizes for sensitivity analysis. The specific results are shown in **Table 11** and **Table 12**.

**Table 11.** Robustness test results.

Test method	Path relationship	Coefficient	Standard error	Significance	Conclusion
	Family responsibility perception → subjective career success	0.341	0.053	p < 0.001	Support H1
	Family responsibility perception → job embeddedness	0.387	0.049	p < 0.001	Support H2
	Job embeddedness → subjective career success	0.458	0.052	p < 0.001	Support H3
	Mediating effect (indirect effect)	0.159	0.035	[0.094, 0.232]	Support H4
	Family responsibility perception → subjective career success	0.336	0.055	p < 0.001	Support H1
	Family responsibility perception → job embeddedness	0.392	0.051	p < 0.001	Support H2
	Job embeddedness → subjective career success	0.471	0.054	p < 0.001	Support H3

**Continued**

	Mediating effect (indirect effect)	0.163	0.037	[0.098, 0.241]	Support H4
Model fit indices	$\chi^2/df = 2.34$ , CFI = 0.942, TLI = 0.935, RMSEA = 0.058, SRMR = 0.043				
	60% random subsample (n = 208)	0.157	0.042	[0.081, 0.238]	Mediating effect significant
	70% random subsample (n = 242)	0.162	0.039	[0.092, 0.245]	Mediating effect significant
	80% random subsample (n = 277)	0.165	0.037	[0.098, 0.241]	Mediating effect significant

**Table 12.** Summary of hypothesis testing results.

Hypothesis	Hypothesis content	Test result
H1	Family Responsibility Perception has a significant positive impact on employees' subjective career success.	Supported
H2	Family Responsibility Perception has a significant positive impact on employees' job embeddedness.	Supported
H3	Job Embeddedness has a significant positive impact on employees' subjective career success.	Supported
H4	Job Embeddedness mediates the relationship between Family Responsibility Perception and employees' subjective career success.	Supported

In summary, after verification by various robustness testing methods, the core conclusion of this study remains stable, and all hypotheses are supported, indicating that the research results have good reliability and universality.

## 6. Research Conclusions and Management Implications

### 6.1. Research Conclusion

Based on work-family boundary theory and resource conservation theory, this study explores the pattern of association between perceived family responsibility and employees' subjective career success [30]. The results indicate that perceived family responsibility has a significant positive association with employees' subjective career success; perceived family responsibility has a significant positive association with work embeddedness; and work embeddedness has a significant positive association with subjective career success. Furthermore, work embeddedness plays a partial mediating role between perceived family responsibility and subjective career success [31] [32]. That is, perceived family responsibility is not only directly associated with subjective career success, but also indirectly associated with higher levels of subjective career success by enhancing employees' work embeddedness. This finding reveals the intrinsic transmission mechanism of work embeddedness in the relationship between family responsibility and career development, demonstrating that family responsibility is not an obstacle to career development but can be transformed into a positive resource for promoting career success by strengthening work embeddedness [33].

## 6.2. Research Limitations and Future Prospects

The samples mainly come from specific regions and industries, and the universality of the conclusions needs to be further verified by expanding the sample scope; It is difficult to fully infer causal relationships between variables using cross-sectional data, and longitudinal tracking studies can be attempted in the future; The measurement method is mainly based on self-reported scales, which may have social approval bias. Subsequent research can be combined with other evaluations or objective indicators [34]. In addition, in the future, we can further explore the differential mechanisms of work embedding in various dimensions, as well as the impact of moderating variables such as family support, to deepen our understanding of the relationship between family responsibility and career development [35].

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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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