A study on the relationship between sense of meaning of life, understanding of social support and employment intention in the elderly

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to understand the status quo of elderly people's sense of meaning of life, understanding of social support and employment intention, and to explore the relationship among the three. The sense of meaning of life of the elderly is above the average level, the sense of social support is medium, the overall employment intention is low, and the total score of sense of meaning of life is significantly positively correlated with the total score of sense of social support and its dimensions. There was a significant positive correlation between the total score of sense of life meaning and employment intention. The overall employment intention of the elderly is low, and there are significant differences in different demographic variables. Understanding social support can positively predict the sense of life meaning; Improving the sense of meaning of life and understanding social support of the elderly have a positive effect on promoting employment.

Key words: Sense of life meaning; Employment intention; Understanding social support; seniors

The seventh National census showed that 264.02 million people were aged 60 or above, accounting for 18.70 percent of the total population (among them, 19.064 million were aged 65 or above, accounting for 13.50 percent). The elderly are a special group, they have accumulated many years of rich knowledge and experience, to continue to work as best as they can, not only to contribute to the society, but also to increase the economic income in the old age, enrich the old life, which is a good thing for both people and society. The elderly are a rich resource and an important participant in building a harmonious society. However, the basic national conditions of China, with its large population and abundant labor resources, make the employment of the elderly face many practical difficulties. In addition to the practical difficulties faced by the elderly in re-employment, different family status, understanding of social support, and their own experience, ability and ideas will also affect the employment willingness of the elderly to varying degrees. At present, the employment willingness of the elderly in China is generally low, and women are less than men. In the case of limited help provided by national policies, the elderly themselves will suffer from physical and psychological conditions, or less social support such as supporting their children, social prejudice and discrimination, which will reduce their employment willingness.

I. Research content

1. Research purpose

In view of the above problems, this study will investigate the elderly's sense of life meaning, employment intention and understanding of the current situation of social support through questionnaire survey; To explore the relationship between the sense of meaning of life, employment intention and understanding of social support in the elderly.

2. Research methods

In this study, elderly people in urban areas were selected as subjects, data were distributed and collected through online and offline questionnaires, and 214 paper questionnaires and online questionnaires were collected using convenient sampling methods. After the invalid questionnaires were excluded, 196 valid questionnaires remained, and the questionnaire recovery rate was 91.6%.

3. Research tools

The employment intention questionnaire is divided into three levels for assessment: The correlation analysis among the employment intention, formal social support (pension insurance participation, medical insurance participation, government transfer payment) and informal social support (external economic sources, frequency of meeting of children, frequency of meeting of relatives and friends) of the urban young elderly shows the correlation between employment intention and pension insurance participation, medical insurance participation and government transfer payment The sex was -0.146**, 0.099*, 0.326**; The correlations between employment intention and external economic sources, meeting frequency of children and meeting frequency of relatives and friends were 0.122**, 0.097* and -0.308**, respectively. The questionnaire had internal consistency. The Sources of Meaning Scale for Elderly (SMSE) contains a 43-item item pool of SMSE. Including eight dimensions: health autonomy, family, personal experience, personal development, social support, sense of value, leisure activities and life security. The Cronbach's α coefficient of the scale was 0.924, and the Cronbach's α coefficient of each dimension ranged from 0.727 to 0.870. Retest reliability of the scale was 0.856. There are 12 items in the Perceived Social Support Scale (PSSS), which is composed of three dimensions: "others' support", "family support" and "friend support". The total score between 12-36 indicates low support, while 37-60 indicates medium support. 61 to 84 is high support state, the higher the total score, the higher the social support of an individual.

II. Research results

1. Correlation analysis between sense of meaning of life and understanding of social support

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted on the elderly's sense of life meaning and perceived social support and their scores in each dimension, and the results were shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Correlation analysis between sense of meaning of life and perceived social support in the elderly

	Total score of perceptive social support	Support from Others	Family support	Friend support
Overall sense of meaning in life	0.81 * * *	0.78 * * *	0.77 * * *	0.75 * * *
Family	0.73 * * *	0.71 * * *	0.72 * * *	0.65 * * *
Social support	0.77 * * *	0.75 * * *	0.72 * * *	0.74 * * *
Sense of worth	0.77 * * *	0.75 * * *	0.74 * * *	0.72 * * *
Life support	0.70 * * *	0.67 * * *	0.68 * * *	0.66 * * *
Personal Development	0.66 * * *	0.65 * * *	0.62 * * *	0.63 * * *
Leisure activities	0.66 * * *	0.64 * * *	0.64 * * *	0.61 * * *

The results of correlation analysis from Table 1 showed that the total p score of sense of life meaning was significantly positively correlated with the total score of perceptive social support and its dimensions (p<0.001).

2. Correlation analysis between sense of meaning of life and employment intention

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted on the elderly's sense of meaning of life, its various dimensions and the scores of employment intention, and the results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Correlation analysis of the elderly's sense of life meaning and employment intention

	Family	Social support	A sense of worth	Living security	Personal development	Leisure activities	Overall score for sense of meaning in life
Employment intention	0.18 * *	0.12	0.13	0.10	0.13	0.21 * * *	0.16 *

The results of correlation analysis from Table 2 showed that the total score of sense of life meaning was significantly positively correlated with employment intention (p<0.05); The family dimension of sense of life was significantly positively correlated with employment intention (p<0.01); The leisure activity dimension of sense of life was positively correlated with employment intention (p<0.001); However, social support, sense of value, life security and personal development were not significantly correlated with employment intention (p>0.05).

3. Comprehending the correlation analysis between social support and employment intention

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted on the scores of perceptive social support, its dimensions and employment intention of the elderly, and the results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Correlation analysis of perceptive social support and employment intention among the elderly

	Others support	Family support	Friend support	Get your social support score
Employment intention	0.10	0.12	0.04	0.09

The results of correlation analysis from Table 4.14 show that there is no significant correlation between perceptive social support and employment intention (p>0.05).

III. Discussion

This study found that there was a significant positive correlation between senile sense of life meaning and perceived social support, indicating that the higher the senile sense of life meaning, the higher the perceived social support. Because older people with a higher sense of meaning in life are more willing to socialize and participate in activities, their level of perceived social support is also higher. There was a significant positive correlation between the sense of life meaning and employment intention of the elderly, indicating that the higher the sense of life meaning of the elderly, the stronger the employment intention. The elderly with a strong sense of life meaning have better physical condition, higher understanding of social support, richer and more active living conditions and ways, and are more willing to constantly try and experience life and pursue the realization of self-value, so their employment intention is also higher.

The sense of life meaning plays a very important role in the employment intention of the elderly. In order to improve the sense of life meaning of the elderly, the government, society and individuals should make efforts. First of all, improve the welfare security system, meet the basic living and economic needs of the elderly, pay attention to special groups of the elderly, such as the elderly living in cities, the elderly living alone, formulate corresponding support policies, improve their mental health level; Strengthen education for the elderly, provide rich educational resources for the elderly, and help the elderly improve and develop themselves; According to the health level and cultural level of the elderly, arrange suitable jobs for them, and provide them with opportunities to play their value; And regular community activities suitable for the elderly to help them integrate into community life, increase social interaction and reduce employment discrimination among the elderly. It can gradually transform the elderly from "forced labor for livelihood" to "re-employment for self-worth

and self-pursuit".

The elderly individuals should also face their old life positively and optimistically, maintain a healthy physical and mental state, adapt to the changes of The Times and try new things to enrich their old life; Their relatives and friends should also maintain close contact and care for each other, so that they can feel the support and warmth, improve their understanding of social support, and have a happier life in their old age.

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