

The Pathway from Salient Future Work Selves to Proactive Career Behaviors: The Moderating Role of Perceived Control (Thesis Title, Bold, 14-point)

by

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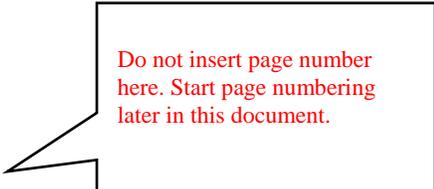
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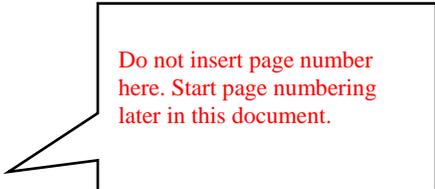
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ABSTRACT

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The overarching purpose of the extant research was to investigate the impact of salient future work selves on proactive career behaviors, given the moderating effect of perceived control. Having an image of the self in the future would promote proactive career behaviors aimed at self-development. Additionally, perceived control would further strengthen the relationship by providing additional motivation for individuals to engage in such behaviors. To test the relationships, the study collected data from 249 Taiwanese final-year students including local and international ones who are proficient in Chinese. The data was then processed by SPSS AMOS 23 and IBM SPSS to run confirmation factor analysis and to test the hypothesis results. Findings statistically confirmed that future work self salience positively predicted career planning and proactive skill development and perceived control as a moderator strengthened the relationships. This study contributed several theoretical and practical significances to the extant career literature. The study responded to a call for more research regarding the role of autonomous motivation (future work selves) to proactivity and filled research gaps by suggesting an effective mechanism under which the relationship between the selves and proactive behaviors is enhanced. Furthermore, relevant parties can cultivate insights in this study to promote individuals' proactivity by increasing individuals' level of future self salience or nurturing an environment that signals high perceived control.

Keywords: proactive career behaviors, perceived control, future work self salience

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

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This chapter provides fundamental information regarding the background, statement of the problem, research purpose, research questions, definitions of key terms, significance, and limitation of this study.

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Background of the Study

During the past three decades, the labor market has undergone several valuable-yet-costly changes (Mazahreh et al., 2019). Due to technological advancements and fast-paced

evolution, firms have started to shrink their businesses to be more flexible and adaptable in the volatile economy (Sullivan, 1999). Organizations no longer wish to sustain long-term

employment relationships with their employees. The dramatical changes, consequently, have turned employees into passive “victims” in their own work. Even the most invulnerable ones

such as managers and highly-educated workers cannot run away from the negative consequences brought by the century shift (Sullivan, 1999). They are involuntarily forced to face increased job

layoff rates (Eby et al., 2003) and job-seeking difficulties (Mazahreh et al., 2019). They begin to encounter job insecurity (Batt, 1996; Beckman, 1996) and no longer trust their organizations

(Murrell et al., 1996). Worse, those who hopelessly wish to secure their employment have to sacrifice their personal benefits. They accept to have their working hours extended, their job

responsibilities increased, and forego career advancement opportunities (Brockner et al., 1992) in order to trade for an employed position.

Accordingly, such impactful events have turned the nature of career into a new stage (Sullivan, 1999). Traditionally, careers used to be confined as “a lifetime job” or “a context within

one or two organizations” (Smale et al., 2018). Notwithstanding, the traditional definition of career

For the work with three or more authors, include the name of only first author plus “et al.” in every citation, including the first citation (p. 266).

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no longer remains valid nowadays. To survive in this era, employees move more freely from organizations to organizations and from markets to markets (Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998; Greenhaus et al., 2008; Sullivan, 1999) to seek opportunities. This results in the present careers becoming boundaryless, non-linear, and increasingly associated with frequent transitions and uncertainty of career path (Strauss et al., 2012).

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As career boundarylessness has grown in prominence, it encourages scholars to

intensively pay greater attention to how individuals manage their career. Noticeably, it is no longer appropriate for employees to remain “passive, reactive respondents to their context”

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(Parker et al., 2010, p. 828). That being said, being passive is competitively disadvantageous in

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fulfilling core tasks and adding value to the organization (Parker & Collins, 2010). Indeed,

organizations now only select to maintain employment with individuals who enhance

organization’s competitive advantage (Greenhaus et al., 2008). Inevitably, when the time comes,

passive employees are the most vulnerable to layoff. Thus, they are advised not to inactively

follow orders or wait for instructions (Bindl & Parker, 2010). Rather, they should take on a more

proactive responsibility in shaping their careers (Chughtai, 2019), which aims at changing

oneself or the environment to secure employment (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). Planning

own career, developing skills, seeking career advice and expanding

proactive career activities that employees can engage in (Strauss et al., 2012).

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Ultimately, not only employees but also organizations enjoy benefits produced by proactive career behaviors. From an individual level, proactive career behaviors exert a positive impact on employee’s employability, career satisfaction (De Vos & Soens, 2008), objective and subjective career success (Smale et al., 2018). From an organization level, these behaviors effectively predict job performance (Thompson, 2005), innovation (Kickul & Gundy, 2002) and

organizational effectiveness (Strauss & Parker, 2014). For this reason, organizations nowadays effortfully seek after candidates who exert strong proactive capacity (Bindl et al., 2012) to contribute to overall organizational success (Greenhaus et al., 2008).

Given the practical significance of proactive career behaviors across domains in the boundaryless context, it is highly essential to gain insights into how individuals conduct and also sustain such behaviors to achieve success (Strauss et al., 2015), especially when employees become less pragmatic to any organizational proactivity interventions (Strauss & Kelly, 2016). In response to the call, research has recently attributed future self at work as a personal driver to proactive behaviors (Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015; Strauss & Kelly, 2016). It is believed that having a career aspiration (i.e., a *future work self*) motivates people to conduct necessary activities in bringing about that aspiration; thus, they display proactive career behaviors as a means to develop themselves to fulfill their dreams (Strauss et al., 2012).

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Although it sounds appealing that imaging a self in the future stimulates individuals to display proactive behaviors (Oyserman, 2015), reality says otherwise. A study conducted in Taiwan revealed that 65% of employees in this country were no longer motivated to attain their career aspirations (i.e., *future work selves*) (Everington, 2017). Nevertheless, that reality was more complicated than their imagination. What is worthy of attention is significant 65% of the participants decided to abandon their future work selves because they are unattainable; therefore, demotivating to conduct proactive career behaviors to bring about their future. The disengagement in proactive career behaviors apparently incurs explicit as well as implicit costs to human functioning and organizations as aforementioned. Hence, it is timely to investigate the relationship between future work self and proactive career behaviors and under

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which mechanism this relationship is strengthened/weakened to promptly propose solutions for relevant parties.

Statement of the Problem

Favorable consequences resulted from proactivity are incentives for scholars to cultivate insights regarding how to promote proactive behaviors to ultimately benefit individuals and organizations. Typically, a decision to engage in proactive behaviors is made merely based on the comparison between costs and benefits (Parker et al., 2010). For example, an employee is likely to display proactive behaviors if perceiving support from group norms; thus, engagement in such behaviors would yield more group approval. Conversely, if behaving proactively is perceived as associated with group disapproval or rejection, the employee finds no interest in conducting such risky behaviors (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). Nonetheless, Strauss and Parker (2014) indicated that proactive behaviors that are motivated by rewards consume more psychological resources and more harmful to individual's well-being than intrinsically motivated behaviors – behaviors that are generated by non-instrumental states (i.e., a sense of challenge or enjoyment). Thus, autonomously-driven proactivity is particularly more effective than extrinsically-driven proactivity in triggering changes in individuals and organizations.

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Interestingly, despite its practical meanings, autonomous motivation to proactive behaviors does not yield extensive interest from scholars (Ashford & Barton, 2012; Strauss & Kelly, 2016). Worse, some even question the effectiveness of using autonomous motivation to promote proactivity. Specifically, scholars have attributed salient future work selves, hopes and aspirations about the future self at work that people can easily and clearly imagine, as a non-utilitarian predictor of proactive career behaviors (Guan et al., 2017; Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015; Strauss et al., 2012). Nevertheless, the selves do not always have behavioral implications

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(Hoyle & Sherrill, 2006; Oyserman, 2015). Rather, “people can still eat cake or the rest of the leftover pizza even while looking at the bikini image on the refrigerator door” (Oyserman, 2015, p. 12). Or when they are constrained by work context that is low in job control and procedural justice (Parker et al., 2010). Scholars contend that the ineffectiveness of salient future identities is because that the selves have long been examined as a stand-alone construct rather than in a process that mediates personal functioning (Hoyle & Sherrill, 2006; vanDellen & Hoyle, 2008).

Needless to say, this particular issue calls for more research on the selves as an antecedent of proactivity. Nevertheless, while employees are under pressure to be proactive, researchers have increasingly expressed growing concern toward the dark side of proactivity (Strauss & Parker, 2014). Proactive behaviors do not always promise job performance (Chan, 2006). They do, sometimes, come at a cost (Belschak et al., 2010). As such, it is imperative not only to identify ways to promote proactivity but also to improve its effectiveness. Embracing on the idea that it will be more effective for organizations and less costly for individuals to perform proactive behaviors that are intrinsically driven (Strauss & Parker, 2014), this study investigated ways to strengthen this relationship by treating salient future work selves as a central factor (Hoyle & Sherrill, 2006; vanDellen & Hoyle, 2008) drawing from motivational systems theory where behaviors are regulated.

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Purpose of the Study

Future work selves are defined as hopes and aspirations individuals have for their future work lives. They can be characterized as either salient or elaborated (Strauss et al., 2012). The current study investigates future work selves under the perspective of their salience. A salient

future work self is one in which individuals can easily and clearly picture the self that they want to become in the future (Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015). Strauss et al. (2012) further elaborated that a salient work identity stimulates self-initiated behaviors targeting developing and changing oneself. Such change- and development-oriented behaviors encapsulate underlying principles of proactive career behaviors which are to influence the self and impact the environments.

Therefore, the present study predicts that employees who have a clear picture of their work future are likely to develop themselves in accordance to the image that they want to become, thereby engaging in proactive career behaviors as a means to strive for their future (Parker et al., 2006). In a parallel situation, if they fail to realize their desired future self, they tend not to set a goal for reaching that future (Strauss et al., 2012). Therefore, they are less likely to conduct goal-directed behaviors aimed at proactively changing the self. Thus, given the facilitative effect of a salient future work self, the first goal of this study is to propose that future work self salience is positively related to proactive career behaviors.

However, while the future work self salience might facilitate career proactivity, the current study acquires solid evidence that a salient future work identity by itself might not be a sufficient predictor of proactive career behaviors. As argued by Hoyle and Sherrill (2006), future possible selves did not significantly regulate people's behaviors. Rather, they act as a key component in the behavior regulation process. Thus, to engage in such effortful and risky proactive behaviors (Parker et al., 2010), individuals are likely to refer to perceived control which is beliefs of attainability over a possible self (Norman & Aron, 2003) to make final decisions. Specifically, if people perceive high potential in achieving a future work identity, they are more motivated to take needed steps to do so (Norman & Aron, 2003), thus exerting efforts, setting goals and striving for their future (Skinner, 1995). In turn, when people believe that they

have little control over the attainment of their future, they hesitate to enact as they see no value in pursuing the unattainable future (Skinner, 1995), even the highly desired one (Oyserman, 2015). As a result, individuals low in perceived control behave passively toward their future work selves (Skinner, 1995). Taken together, the second goal of this study is to propose perceived control as a moderator in the relationship between future work self and proactive career behaviors.

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Research Questions

The study proposes the following research questions:

1. Does a salient future work self exert a positive influence on proactive career planning?
2. Does a salient future work self exert a positive influence on proactive skill development?
3. Does perceived control positively moderate the positive relationship between future work self salience and career planning?
4. Does perceived control positively moderate the positive relationship between future work self salience and proactive skill development?

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Definitions of Key Terms

Salient Future Work Selves

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Future work selves are cognitive representations of hopes and aspirations about the self that people wish to become in the future (Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015; Strauss et al., 2012).

Salient future work selves are the ones that come to mind, are easy and clear for individuals to picture (Strauss et al., 2012).

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Proactive Career Behaviors

Proactive career behaviors are intentional behaviors conducted by employees with respect to realizing their career goals (Vos, Dewilde, & Clippelaar, 2009).

Perceived Control

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Perceived control is a set of beliefs of being effective to produce a desired and avoid an undesired outcome. In the context of this study, perceived control represents individuals' beliefs that attaining a future work self is within their reach (Norman & Aron, 2003).

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CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

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Future Work Self Salience

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Strauss et al. (2012) have drawn from possible selves and introduced the concept of future work selves which represent hopes and aspirations about the self that people wish to become in the future (Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015; Strauss et al., 2012). Therefore, possible selves and future work selves share some common characteristics. However, to some extent, future work selves are more distinctively specific. First, the work selves are future-oriented whereas possible selves can sometimes be presence-oriented (i.e., the ideal *current* self). This difference in the time perspective can subsequently have different influences on individuals. For example, the discrepancy created by comparing one's actual current self and an ideal current self is often associated with negative psychological state (Strauss & Kelly, 2016). In contrast, the comparison between the current and ideal future self does not necessarily accompany with negative consequences (Strauss & Kelly, 2016). Second, the future work-based identities are positive hoped-for selves while possible selves can represent feared selves that people are afraid and wish to avoid. Therefore, future-oriented work selves provide greater resources in regulating behaviors (Strauss et al., 2012). Third, future work selves are made specific in the domain of work; thus, being considered as a relevant mechanism to study career-related behaviors (Strauss & Kelly, 2016).

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Similar to other possible selves, future work selves provide motivational resources that can be used to direct individuals' actions (Strauss & Parker, 2018). Not all future work selves are motivationally influential; however (Strauss et al., 2012). The motivational role of future work selves in fostering future-directed behaviors is dependent on their salience level (Strauss et al.,

2012). Therefore, the present study will concentrate on examining the salience perspective of future work selves.

Specifically, research shows that most people can have a future work self. When instructed to, they are able to construct a wide range of future selves, even if they pay little attention to them (King & Raspin, 2004). Thus, the idea is that future work selves as a whole do not have motivational implications; rather, only the salient future work selves that come to mind, are easy and clear for individuals to picture can significantly produce behavioral consequences (Strauss et al., 2012). They have to be accessible at the moment (Oyserman, 2015) and are activated in the working self-concept (Strauss et al., 2012). The activated identities in turn “cue readiness to act” (Oyserman & Destin, 2010, p. 1003) and exert their impact on individual’s perception, behavior, and judgment (Strauss & Kelly, 2016). Notwithstanding, which identities come to the activation depends on situational cues or social contexts (Oyserman et al., 2007). For example, when asked, people often describe various possible selves ranging from employment, schooling, motherhood, and lifestyles (Oyserman, 2015). Of course, these different identities do not all at once impose their effects on behaviors; in fact, only those that are cued by the current social context do. A person during the school years will have his class-leader made salient and activated, with a lesser focus on the other (Oyserman, 2015). Thus, that person would display behaviors that communicate his class-leader identity rather than healthy or employed identity. In a similar vein, a person in early employment is likely to activate his future work self and give rise to its salience. Subsequently, since behaviors are identity-congruent, that person would engage in performing actions that are consistent with his future self (Oyserman, 2015). Taken together, a future work self, when activated by social contexts, displays its motivating power over individual’s behaviors (Strauss et al., 2012).

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Accordingly, if used frequently, a salient future work self stimulates behaviors directed at attaining the hoped-for future. By capturing individuals' future selves, they provide a career compass that helps employees navigate "through the fog of multiple career trajectories" and identify occupations that are in line with their values (Strauss et al., 2012, p. 582). Importantly, these future self-representations facilitate goal-establishing and encourage people to strive for these goals (Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015). They prompt self-initiated behaviors that direct at change and self-development; therefore, being considered as particularly critical for proactive career behaviors (Hoyle & Sherrill, 2006).

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Proactive Career Behaviors

In the era where career paths are unstructured and nonlinear, workers can no longer rely solely on their organizations for career management. They are expected to take a more proactive responsibility in developing their careers to survive in the fast-paced labor market (Chughtai, 2019). Accordingly, they are advised to display proactive behaviors that are self-initiated, change- and future-oriented (Smale et al., 2018). Raising voice, feedback-seeking, issue selling, and personal initiative are some activities that proactive employees exhibit.

This study chooses to focus only on one specific sub-category of proactive behaviors which is proactive career behaviors. A research review proves that proactive career behaviors have been examined under different terms such as career management (Verbruggen et al., 2007), career self-management (De Vos & Soens, 2008), and career-enhancing strategies (Nabi, 2003). In spite of the difference in names, all together demonstrates self-initiated behaviors carried out by individuals to actively manage their careers (Seibert et al., 2001). A more specific definition of proactive career behaviors is provided in the work of Vos (2009), where the behaviors are defined as intentional actions conducted by employees with respect to realizing their career

goals. To further examine the role of proactive career behaviors, the present research pays attention to two classifications of proactive career behaviors which are career planning and proactive skill development (Strauss et al., 2012). Career planning refers to future orientation where individuals envision career goals and generate strategies needed to achieve those goals whereas proactive skill development refers to the act of employees taking part in training, building new skills, and gaining qualifications that are compulsory for future goals (King, 2004).

Argued in the study of Parker et al. (2010), proactive behaviors were not a particular set of behaviors. In fact, they are a goal-driven process in which people proactively anticipate, plan and strive to change themselves or influence the environment. Being proactive involves goal generation process in which individuals anticipate desired outcomes and develop strategies to achieve them, and goal striving process in which people purposefully implement necessary activities to accomplish their goals (Strauss & Parker, 2014). Therefore, an activity that focuses only on envisioning and generating plans is not treated as a proactive behavior since it does not make any impact on the self and the environment. Hence, striving is an important characteristic of proactivity. Goal striving further includes two phases that are enacting and reflecting (Parker et al., 2010). Enacting is overt behaviors that are carried out in an attempt to achieve self-set goals (Bindl et al., 2012). For example, an employee who wishes to make improvements in a process might potentially and effortfully engage in convincing managers and relevant parties to implement the improvement (Parker et al., 2010). After enacting needed actions, individuals proceed to the reflecting stage where they look back and analyze success, failure, or consequences of their proactivity (Strauss & Parker, 2014). The information gained from the reflection serves as a standard against which people decide to sustain, modify or even abandon their proactive behaviors (Parker et al., 2010). Thus, goal-striving, where people enact and reflect

proactive goals, is a reference point used to decide whether to pursue or terminate a proactive behavior.

Findings from recent articles revealed several factors that can prompt proactive career behaviors. For instance, career adaptability has long been studied as its antecedent (Taber & Blankemeyer, 2015). Self-efficacy which is one's beliefs of having sufficient skills and knowledge to achieve a desired outcome also shows its positive association with proactive career behaviors (Parker et al., 2010). Despite its prominence, research to date has failed to capture another aspect of identity-congruent proactive behaviors which is future work selves (Strauss & Kelly, 2016). Few studies have actually investigated the relationship between the future possible selves and career proactivity, which leaves a great gap of insights waiting to be uncovered.

Motivational Systems Theory

Throughout the history of social psychology, enormous efforts have been circulated to understand how and why behaviors occur. The most common answer people often receive is because they are motivated (Carver & Scheier, 1998). One of the prominent motivational theories is Bandura's self-efficacy theory in which self-efficacy serves as a central factor that governs motivation and human behaviors through self-regulatory mechanisms. Although these theories have excellently contributed to the research field, each of them conveys a separate piece of the big picture. In the midst of numerous motivational theories, motivational systems theory stands out as "the most comprehensive integrative conceptual framework for understanding and influencing human motivation" (Ford, 1992, p. 173). The theory considers not only personal but environmental factors that are crucial to development. Therefore, it paints a more complete picture of how to motivate individuals than just a signal-factor model does (i.e., self-efficacy) (Hirschi, 2009). Thus, to yield a more solid understanding of how people engage in proactive

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career behaviors, the study will employ motivational systems theory as a theoretical foundation for hypotheses.

Motivational systems theory describes motivation to conduct behaviors as an interaction of personal goals, personal agency beliefs, and emotions (Ford, 1992). *Goals* “represent desired

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future states and outcomes [*sic*] and prepare the person to try to produce those desired futures”

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(Ford, 1992, p. 73). Thus, the term *personal goals* emphasize the fact that the goals are always

driven or adopted by a person; goals that are imposed on individuals carry little motivational meanings. Under the theory, personal goals take on a leadership role in motivating people to initiate goal-directed behaviors. They provide information on desired consequences and necessary strategies to achieve those outcomes. Personal agency beliefs pertain to a general belief of one’s attainability of a desired consequence whereas emotions are referred to positive activated affect such as joy and enthusiasm (Dellen, 2012; Hirschi, 2009).

Motivational systems theory postulates that no single personal or environmental factor is sufficient in promoting behaviors. Indeed, they are interdependent; if one goes missing, individuals are discouraged to generate a behavior episode (Ford, 1992). That being said, motivation must be an organized patterning of personal goals, personal agency beliefs, and emotions (Chatterjee et al., 2015). In other words, although personal goal takes on a leadership role in guiding and amplifying one’s motivation, it remains ineffective if the performer perceives little capacity or context supports. For instance, a highly capable person who receive contextual support might hesitate to engage in goal-oriented behaviors if that person aims no goal or perceive the goal attainment is of no value. In a similar vein, a person with an activated goal might not be motivated if that person falsely believes the goal is unattainable due to a lack of

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capacity and context supports. Hence, besides personal goals, agency beliefs and emotions must be firmly in place to provide additional information for people to initiate behavior (Ford, 1992).

Salient Future Work Selves and Proactive Career Behaviors

Future work selves capture individual's hopes and aspirations for career in relation to work (Strauss & Parker, 2018). They are conceptually defined as *hoped-for selves* (Strauss et al., 2012), reflecting internally presented desired states (Lin et al., 2016, p. 146). They are not *ought to be selves*—the selves other people expect individuals to become (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Therefore, future work selves can be viewed as personal goals under motivational systems theory as they, too, project future outcomes individuals want to achieve and they are likely to be self-envisioned or self-adopted; rather than being involuntarily imposed on people. Specifically, under the motivational systems theory, serving the role as personal goals, the future-oriented selves produce motivation to initiate goal-directed behaviors. A person with a salient future self at work would engage in the process of self-comparison, which, in turn, enables him to realize the discrepancy between his current and future ideal self (Strauss & Kelly, 2016; Strauss & Parker, 2018). Thus, to successfully achieve the hoped-for future, the person is motivated to conduct goal-directed activities aiming at minimizing the self-gap; therefore, generating self-initiated behaviors aimed at change and self-development (Hoyle & Sherrill, 2006; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Strauss et al., 2012).

The notion that proactivity is a goal-driven process has been widely discussed. That being said, a person has to fully engage in the process in order for an activity to be considered as proactive. Therefore, that person is required to involve in the goal generation and goal striving stages as aforementioned. However, Strauss et al. (2014) reported an exception in which individuals overtly perform the enactment phase while neglecting the remaining ones. This

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negligent case results from the use of external contingencies to motivate proactive behaviors, which is then proven to cause proactivity ineffective. The researchers further argued that autonomous motivation (i.e., salient future work selves) is a more reliable form to stimulate proactive behaviors that are effective in bringing about change for individuals and organizations. Thus, people with salient future work selves show greater inclination to full engagement in the proactivity process. Ideally, they participate in both of the stages, which then improves the effectiveness of proactivity.

To minimize the self-gap, they first involve in a process of proactive goal generation in which they envision career outcomes and develop action plans to achieve the desired outcomes (Grant & Ashford, 2008). To some extent, the goal generation process encapsulates the meaning of proactive career planning. That is, to set out career goals and strategies to achieve these goals (Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998). The conceptual similarity of the terminologies suggests people who are driven by future work-based identities perform proactive career planning as efforts toward self-change. Individuals start the envisioning phase by anticipating desired future states and mentally representing that future in their mind (Grant & Ashford, 2008). The information obtained from the phase is then served as a reference from which a sequential action plan is constructed in the planning phase. In this study context, the phase of planning might include developing self-changing strategies that aim at skill mastery (Parker et al., 2010). A person will create a list of action steps related to “reputation building, enhancing employability through the cumulation of work experiences and increasing career-relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities” (Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998, p. 360). However, one might question the possibility of future work selves facilitating proactive career planning as their concepts are overlapping. Indeed, since career planning demands individuals set out a career goal (i.e., a future self at work), it is easy to

misperceive the variables. The distinction of career planning from work-related self lies on the notion that career planning includes a future self envisioning and the development of sequential action steps to achieve the state whereas future work self merely is a mental representation of the self in the future with no strategy development involved. Thus, though closely related, they are distinctive in nature. Therefore, a person with a salient future self is motivated to conduct proactive career planning.

The basic requirement for any proactive behavior is that individuals must engage in proactive goal striving. As argued in the study of Parker et al. (2010), existing under a form of reason-to motivation, salient future work selves are goals that are important and central to the self. The evidence reflects that goals as such produce a greater commitment to goal striving. That is, individuals are more likely to initiate proactive enactment and revision (Strauss & Parker, 2014). Accordingly, individuals feel energized to implement their career plans. They participate in self-changing activities. They begin to learn skills that are currently unnecessary; yet, crucial for their future development (Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998; Strauss & Parker, 2018). This type of developmental behavior is associated with an accumulation of knowledge and skills, providing basics for problem-solving and improvement (Dong et al., 2017). In addition, being future-selves-driven encourages reflection on the process and the consequences of initiated behaviors (Strauss & Parker, 2014). Individuals with a future-oriented self are more likely to study their skill-developing behaviors and revise if the goals are not achieved. Hence, it is expected that having a salient future self promotes proactive skill development; such that individuals engage in both enactment and revision of skill mastery.

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with ellipsis

In sum, “salient future work selves... support the process through which self-set goals are defined and help to generate strategies to maintain striving toward these goals” (Strauss, 2012, p.

582). They prompt career development (Yu et al., 2016). Empirically, Taber and Blankemeyer (2015) found that a salient future work self prompts self-directed behaviors for the purpose of self-development. Other studies reported a positive correlation of future work selves to career planning and to proactive skill development with career adaptability as the mediator (Guan et al., 2014; Lin et al., 2016). Thus, considering the facilitative effect of a salient future work self, the current study proposes that future work self salience is positively related to career planning and proactive skill development.

Hypothesis 1: Salient future work selves are positively related to career planning.

Hypothesis 2: Salient future work selves are positively related to proactive skill development.

After reviewing the relevant literature, you should give an introduction to the research to be presented so that the reader understands what work occurred, the specific predictions that were tested, what results were expected and why those results were expected.

Chapter title, (16-point)

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

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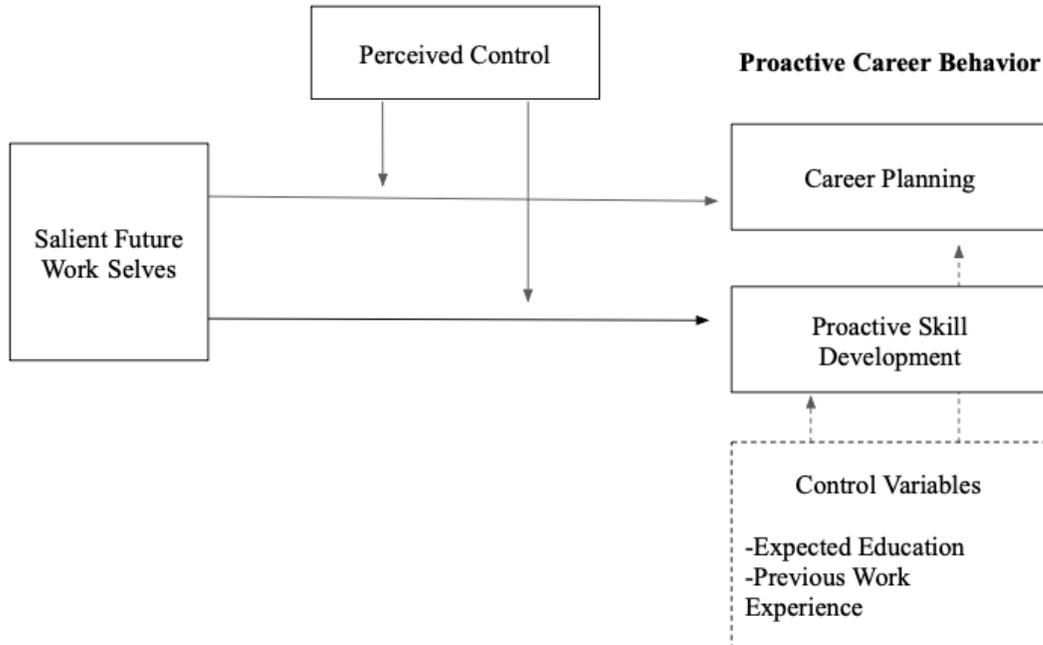
Research Framework

Figure 3.1

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Research Framework

Figure title, Italic, 12-point



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Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Future work self salience is positively related to career planning.

Hypothesis 2: Future work self salience is positively related to proactive skill development.

Hypothesis 3: Perceived control strengthens the relationship between future work self salience and career planning.

Hypothesis 4: Perceived control strengthens the relationship between future work self salience and proactive skill development.

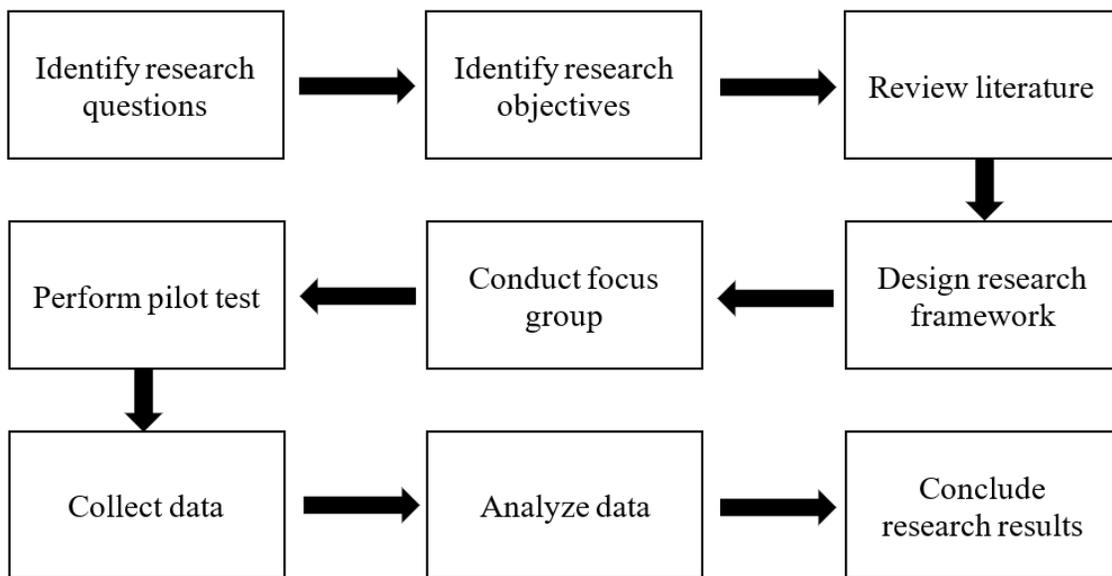
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Research Procedure

Figure 3.2 is the research procedure that was conducted for this study.

Figure 3.2

Research Procedure



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Sample

This sample of this study was the final-year students in Taiwan, including local and international students who are fluent in reading, speaking, listening and writing Chinese. There are two main reasons to select this target group as the sample.

Given the career boundaryless, fresh graduates are increasingly advised to be proactive in managing their own careers (Chiesa et al., 2019; De Vos & Soens, 2008). However, Tien, Lin, and Chen (2005) reported that “about two-thirds of [Taiwanese] college students were unclear about their career futures” (p. 163). The unclear future work selves, in turn, would discourage them to perform proactivity to conquer the career boundarylessness. Thus, the study expected to gain additional insights regarding this particular issue.

“Taiwanese”
added in
square
bracket to
clarify
meaning

Specifically, this study collected data from 249 participants studying in Taiwan. The online data collection started in the Fall semester from August 1, 2019 to November 1, 2019. Participants were first asked to specify their studying status. Students who expected to finish their studies during this period were classified as final-year students. An online link was sent to the prospective participants through Facebook, personal and business email. To encourage their participation, coffee vouchers were given to them upon the survey completion.

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Measures

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Future Work Self Salience

The study employed a 5-item scale developed by Strauss et al. (2012) to measure participants’ future work self salience. The responses were recorded following a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Before answering, participants were asked to

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the most salient future work self to them, they were constrained to a specific point in future time. Sample items were “I am very clear about who and what I want to become in my future work” and “What type of future I want in relation to my work is very clear in my mind”. The set of questionnaires had a Cronbach alpha of 0.89.

Table 3.3
Future Work Self Salience Scale

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Questions

1. This future is very easy for me to imagine.
2. The mental picture of this future is very clear.
3. I can easily imagine my future work self.
4. I am very clear about who and what I want to become in my future work.
5. What type of future I want in relation to my work is very clear in my mind.

Note. Adapted from “Future Work Selves: How Salient Hoped-For Identities Motivate Proactive Career Behaviors,” by K. Strauss, M. A. Griffin, and S. K. Parker, 2012, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97(3), pp. 580–598. ([http://doi: 10.1037/a0026423](http://doi.org/10.1037/a0026423)). Copyright 2012 by the American Psychological Association.

Proactive Career Behaviors

The variable was measured by a 7-item scale developed by Strauss et al. (2012). The scale contains two dimensions: career planning and proactive skill development. Career planning is measured by four items and proactive skill development is measured by three items. The sample item in the dimension of career planning is “I am thinking ahead to the next few years and plan what I need to do for my career.” The sample item in the dimension of proactive skill

General note:
 It is designated by the word Note (Italicized) followed by a period.

Author:
 First name, Second name, Family name

development is “I develop knowledge and skill in tasks critical to my future work life. The 5-item scale was rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The internal consistency reliabilities of this construct are 0.793 for career planning and 0.709 for proactive skill development.

Table 3.4

Proactive Career Behavior Scale

Questions	
1.	I am planning what I want to do in the next few years of my career.
2.	I am thinking ahead to the next few years and plan what I need to do for my career
3.	I engage in career path planning.
4.	I have recently begun to think more about what I would like to accomplish in my work during the next year or two.
5.	I develop skills which may not be needed so much now but in future positions.
6.	I gain experience in a variety of areas to increase my knowledge and skills.
7.	I develop knowledge and skill in tasks critical to my future work life.

Note. Adapted from “Future Work Selves: How Salient Hoped-For Identities Motivate Proactive Career Behaviors,” by K. Strauss, M. A. Griffin, and S. K. Parker, 2012, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97(3), pp. 580–598. ([http://doi: 10.1037/a0026423](http://doi:10.1037/a0026423)). Copyright 2012 by the American Psychological Association.

Perceived Control

Perceived control was measured by using the 6-item scale demonstrated in the study of Norman and Aron (2003). Sample items were: “How capable do you feel of achieving this hoped for

future self?” and one reverse-scored question “There is little I can do to aid in the realization of this hoped for future self”. The 6-items measurement was rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not capable*) to 5 (*very capable*) for question number **one, two, and three** (Table 3.5) and on 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) for question number **four, five, and six** (Table 3.5). The scale reported an internal consistency of 0.81.

Table 3.5

Perceived Control Scale

Questions	
1.	How much control do you believe you have in attaining this particular hoped for future self?
2.	How capable do you feel of achieving this hoped for future self?
3.	How likely do you think it is that this hoped for future self will be achieved?
4.	The actions I take can influence the attainment of this hoped for future self.
5.	There is little I can do to aid in the realization of this hoped for future self (R).
6.	I can attain this hoped for future self if I really set my mind to do it.

Note. (R) represents reverse-scored questions. Adapted from “Aspects of Possible Self that Predict Motivation to Achieve or Avoid It,” by C. C. Norman, and A. Aron, 2003, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 39(5), pp. 500–507. Copyright 2003 by the American Psychological Association.

Control Variables

Expected Education

A body of research has demonstrated the positive effects of education on proactive career behaviors. To be specific, as reported in Strauss et al. (2012), doctoral students tended to display more career proactivity. Moreover, people with a higher level of education are likely to behave more proactively in job search and voice behaviors which are classified as proactive behaviors (Bindl & Parker, 2010). Considering its influence on proactivity, education was controlled in this study.

Previous Work Experience

Work experience has a positive effect on career-enhancing strategies such as career planning (Mihail, 2008) and on proactive behaviors as a whole (Ashforth et al., 2007). Thus, previous work experience was included for controlling purposes.

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Demographic Factors

Besides control variables, information regarding basic demographics were gathered to help better understand the subject of this study.

Nationality

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The participants were asked to write down their nationality in an open-ended question.

School Status

The participants were asked to clarify their school's operation mechanism (i.e., public or private).

The coding was private = 0, public = 1.

Example 1

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Expected Education

The final-year students were asked to indicate their expected level of education which they are undertaking.

The coding was associated bachelor = 1, bachelor = 2, master = 3, doctor = 4.

Major

Example 2

The participants were asked to specify their current academic major.

The coding was arts, humanities and languages = 1; social science, journalism = 2; agriculture, forestry, fishing & animal husbandry = 3; information & communication technology = 4; engineering, manufacturing and construction = 5; law = 6; business & management = 7, natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics = 8, medicine and social work services = 9, education = 10, service (human health, social security, transportation) = 11, other = 12.

Previous Job Status

Example 3

The participants were required to indicate past job statuses that they were employed.

The coding was no experience = 0, internship = 1, part-time = 2, full-time = 3, self-employed = 4, freelancer = 5. Multiple answers are allowed.

Example 4

Previous Work Experience

The students were required to specify the number of previous work experience they have obtained.

The coding was less than 1 year = 1, 1 to 5 year = 2, more than 5 years = 3.

Example 5

Current Job Status

The participants were required to indicate the job status that they are currently employed.

The coding was no experience = 0, internship = 1, part-time = 2, full-time = 3, self-employed = 4, freelancer = 5. Multiple answers are allowed.

Example 6

Current Work Tenure

The students were required to specify their tenure in their current job.

The coding was less than 1 year = 1, 1 to 5 years = 2, more than 5 years = 3.

Example 7

Job Title

The participants were asked to indicate their current job position.

The coding was staff = 1, first-line manager = 2, middle-level manager = 3, high-level manager = 4, other options = 5.

Example 8

Type of Industry

The students were required to clarify the industry of their current company.

The coding was agriculture, forestry, fishing & animal husbandry = 1; mining & quarrying = 2; manufacturing = 3; electricity & gas supply = 4; water supply & remediation services = 5; construction = 6; wholesale & retail trade = 7; transportation & storage = 8; accommodation & storage = 9; information & communication = 10; financial and insurance = 11; real estate = 12; professional, scientific & technical services = 13; support services = 14;

Example 9

public administration & defense; compulsory social security = 15; education = 16; human health & social work services = 17; art, entertainment & recreation = 18; other = 19.

Company Type

The participants were asked to indicate the type of their company.

The coding was public institutions = 1, local ownership company = 2, foreign ownership company = 3, non-profit organization = 4.

Example
10

Salary Range

Finally, they were asked to include their monthly salary range.

The coding was below NT \$19,000 = 1, from NT \$20,000 to 40,000 = 2, from NT \$40,001 to 60,000 = 3, from NT \$60,001 to 80,000 = 4, from NT \$80,001 to 100,000 = 5, above NT \$100,001 = 6.

Use the currency symbols only when they are accompanied by a numeral.

Questionnaire Design

Common Method Variance (CMV)

CMV is the bias driven by the systematic measurement method. CMV problems matter when a questionnaire is completed by a single person and by following the same response format. Under such circumstances, the actual relationship among variables might be exaggerated or underestimated.

Therefore, to avoid the effects of CMV, the research questionnaire was designed for 5-point and 7-point Likert scale to effectively measure different variables (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Specifically, respondents were required to rate future work self

When you first use a term that you want to abbreviate in the text, present both the full version of the term and the abbreviation.

salience on a 7-point Likert scale. The other two variables, perceived control and proactive career behaviors, were rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

Additionally, the present study also performed Harman's one-factor analysis to detect any

potential bias driven by CMV. The rule of thumb is that if a single factor comprises of more than

50% of the covariance in future work self salience and proactive career behaviors, it indicates

that CMV does significantly affect the study's data (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Subsequently, all the

scale items were inputted in SPSS to conduct explanatory factor analysis and examine the

unrotated factor solution. As shown in Table 3.6, the analysis reported that the first factor

accounted for 20.73% of the variance in the variables, confirming the insignificance of CMV in

this study. Thus, CMV was not a significant threat in this study.

Use the percentage symbols only when it is accompanied by a numeral.

Table 3.6*Total Variance Explained*

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.03	39.069	39.069	3.73	20.73	20.73
2	1.90	10.583	49.652	3.67	20.42	41.15
3	1.42	7.88	57.53	2.94	16.38	57.53
4	.97	5.39	62.93			
5	.89	4.98	67.91			
6	.80	4.48	72.40			
7	.66	3.69	76.09			
8	.62	3.49	79.59			
9	.60	3.37	82.96			
10	.53	2.98	85.95			
11	.48	2.66	88.61			
12	.42	2.37	90.99			
13	.37	2.07	93.06			
14	.33	1.86	94.93			
15	.29	1.65	96.58			
16	.22	1.22	97.80			
17	.20	1.15	98.95			
18	.18	1.04	100.00			

Translation

All measure scales used in this study were originally developed in English. Given the background of this study was in Taiwan, the questionnaires were first translated into Chinese and then translated back to English using the back-translation technique of Brislin (1970) to ensure

the reliability and accuracy of the translation. Both of the translations were conducted by bilingual students from the Graduate Institute of Teaching Chinese as a second language.

Validity and Reliability

Face Validity

Face validity represents the degree to which the conceptual variables appear to be adequately measured by the measured variable. In other words, an instrument used in a study should measure what it intends to measure. The questionnaires measured future work self salience, and proactive career behaviors were purposefully designed and tested by Strauss, Griffin, and Parker (2012) for the purpose of measuring such variables. Moreover, the perceived control scale was also developed intendedly to measure people's perceived control in relation to future work selves by (Norman & Aron, 2003). Therefore, ideally, all instruments deployed in this study possess face validity. To further ensure their reliability in the Chinese version, both the focus group and the pilot test were conducted.

Focus Group

The focus group was conducted to have an in-depth understanding of Taiwanese final-year students' characteristics. Eight English-Chinese bilingual students in the group were expected to raise their opinions toward the measurement equivalence issue. That is, to evaluate whether the questionnaire fits the Taiwanese culture as well as the context of final-year students in Taiwan. Moreover, the originally developed English instruments in this study were translated into Chinese due to the sample's characteristics. Considering the possibility of translation misleading, the focus group was invited to make comparisons and propose modifications for the translated versions. Subsequent adjustments regarding the meanings of the translation were made

based on the advice given. Ultimately, the revised questionnaire was able to provide a consensus with the English versions.

Pilot Test

A pilot test of 55 participants was conducted before the official distribution of the questionnaire. The underlying purpose of the pilot test is to confirm the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Data for the pilot test were collected from final-year students who are highly capable of Chinese, including local Taiwan and international students at National Taiwan Normal University. The pilot-test students were then excluded from the final data collection. The correlation results and Cronbach alpha of future work selves, perceived control, and proactive career behaviors were provided in Table 3.7. Overall, the study witnessed positive correlations among the variables, suggesting that the study's hypotheses are expected to be

supported. Future work selves were positively associated with career planning ($r = .57, p < .001$), proactive skill development ($r = .35, p < .001$). Perceived control was also positively related to future work career planning ($r = .41, p < .001$) and proactive skill development ($r = .38, p < .001$). In addition, the values of reported Cronbach alpha of future work selves ($\alpha = .93$), perceived control ($\alpha = .81$), career planning ($\alpha = .79$), and proactive skill development ($\alpha = .70$) were all above 0.80 which was higher than the reference value of 0.70. Hence, the

measurements in this research had good reliability. A descriptive analysis was conducted on the participants. Detail statistics showed that 55 final-year students involved in the study were between 18 to 25 years old (51.8%, $n = 56$). The majority of them were students from public universities

Space mathematical copy as you would space words: a + b = c

Use italics for letters used as statistical symbols or algebraic variables (p. 170)

Do not use italics for Greek letters (p. 171)

Decimal Fractions:
*Use a zero before the decimal point in the numbers that are less than 1 when the statistic can exceed 1.
*Do not use a zero before a decimal fraction when the statistic cannot be greater than 1.
*When properly scaled, most data can be effectively presented with TWO decimal digits of accuracy.

Use an uppercase, italicized N to designate the number of number of members in the total sample .

(97.5%, $n = 40$). Furthermore, the pilot participants were highly educated, with 65.6% of whom were pursuing their Master's education whereas 21.8% were Bachelor students. It can be further inferred from the data set that at the time of the survey, over 50% of the students were either unemployed or employed as an intern with an approximate of one year of work experience (55.6%). Due to the low-level position they hold, they were mainly offered a range of salary either below NT \$19,999 (55.6%, $n = 18$) or from NT \$ 20,000 to 40,000 (33.3%, $n = 18$).

Table 3.7

Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations Among Study Variables

	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Expected Education	2.53	1.31							
2. Previous Work Experience	1.55	.70	.24						
3. Salient Future Work Selves	4.48	1.51	.12	.38	(.93)				
4. Perceived Control	3.51	.65	.09	.29	.69**	(.81)			
5. Career Planning	3.83	.71	.17	.25	.57**	.41**	(.79)		
6. Proactive Skill Development	3.91	.69	.13	.31	.36**	.39**	.67**	(.70)	

use asterisks for p values

use brackets around Cronbach alphas

Note. $n = 55$. Cronbach alphas are shown in the bracket.

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$. *** $p < 0.001$.

Table 3.8*Descriptive Analysis for the Pilot Test (N = 55)*

Item	Frequency	Percentage	Item	Frequency	Percentage
1. Gender			5. Major (n = 40)		
Female	33	60.0	Arts, Humanities, and Languages	25	62.5
Male	15	27.0	Social Science, Journalism	2	5.0
Other	7	13.0	Agriculture, forestry, fishing & animal husbandry	0	0
			Information & Communication Technology	0	0
2. Age			Engineering, manufacturing, and construction	0	0
Under 20	1	1.8	Law	0	0
From 21–25	29	51.8	Business & Management	12	30.0
From 26–30	22	39.3	Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and statistics	1	2.5
From 31–35	0	0	Medicine and Social Work Services	0	0
From 36–40	2	3.6	Education	0	0
Above 41	1	1.8	Service (Human health, social security, and transportation)	0	0
			Other	0	0

(continued)

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Table 3.8

Descriptive Analysis for the Pilot Test (n = 55) (continued)

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Item	Frequency	Percentage	Item	Frequency	Percentage
3. School Status (N = 40)			6. Job Status		
Private	1	2.5	Unemployed	22	55.0
Public	39	97.5	Internship	8	20.0
4. Expected Education			Part-time	5	12.5
Associate Bachelor	5	9.1	Full-time	4	10.0
Bachelor Degree	12	21.8	Self-employed	0	
Master Degree	36	65.6	Freelancer	1	2.5
Doctorate Degree	2	3.6			

Note. n = 55

Table 3.9*Descriptive Analysis for the Pilot Test (n = 18)*

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Item	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
1. Previous Work Experience (N = 18)			3. Industry Type		
1 year	10	55.6	Agriculture, forestry, fishing & animal husbandry	0	0
2-5 years	6	33.3	Mining & quarrying	1	5.6
More than 5 years	2	11.1	Manufacturing	0	0
			Electricity & gas supply	0	0
2. Highest Job Title (N = 17)			Water supply & remediation services	2	11.1
Staff	15	88.2	Construction	1	5.6
First-line Manager	0	0	Wholesale & retail trade	0	0
Middle Manager	0	0	Transportation & storage	0	0
High-level Manager	1	5.9	Accommodation & storage	0	0
Other	1	5.9	Information & communication	3	16.7
			Financial and insurance	2	11.1
			Real estate	0	0
			Professional, scientific & technical services	3	16.7

(continued)

Table 3.9

Descriptive Analysis for the Pilot Test (n = 18) (continued)

If you split the table, you should mention like this.

headings repeat on second page of the table

Item	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
4. Organization Type			Support services	0	0
Public Institutions	3	16.7	Public administration & defense, Compulsory social security	1	5.6
Local Ownership Company	7	38.9	Education	3	16.7
Foreign Ownership Company	7	38.9	Human health & social work services	1	5.6
Non-profit Organization	1	5.6	Art, entertainment & recreation	1	5.6
			Others (please specify)	0	0
5. Salary					
Below NT \$20,000	10	55.6			
NT \$20,001 to \$40,000	6	33.3			
NT \$40,001 to \$60,000	2	11.1			
NT \$60,001 to \$80,000	0	0			
NT \$80,001 to \$100,000	0	0			
Above NT \$100,001	0	0			

Currency

Content Validity

Content validity is the extent to which the contents of a measure adequately measure all aspects of a conceptual variable. Hypothetically, the instruments used in the current study were mature scales that have been examined for content validity in a variety of studies. Thus, content validity shall not be a problem in this research.

Convergent Validity

This study considered the convergent validity of the scales, which is the degree to which different measures within a construct are correlated. Therefore, **composite reliability (CR)** and **average variance extracted (AVE)** were employed as statistical reference values.

According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), the value of AVE is positively correlated to convergent validity. If its value is greater than 0.50, the convergent validity of the variables is acceptable. In terms of CR, a CR value that is higher than 0.60 reflects an acceptable convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Thus, if the study's variables report their CR values bigger than 0.6, convergent validity is confirmed.

According, the AVE and CR values of the scale measurements were shown in Table 3.10. The actual CR and AVE values in this study fell within the acceptable range, suggesting there was a good internal consistency in this study. Specifically, CR values of the three scales ranged from 0.77 to 0.907, which were greater than the standard point of 0.60 and AVE values exceeded 0.50.

When you first use a term that you want to abbreviate in the text, present both the full version of the term and the abbreviation.

Table 3.10*CR and AVE values of Future Work Self Salience and Perceived Control*

Use italics
for letters
used as
statistical
symbols or
algebraic
variables (p.
170)

Variable	No.	Error variance	Factor Loading	<i>t</i> Value	CR	AVE
Future Work Self Salience	1	0.88	0.81	9.53***	0.91	0.66
	2	0.73	0.84	8.83***		
	3	0.52	0.89	7.45***		
	4	0.86	0.80	9.71***		
	5	1.28	0.70	10.6***		
Variable	No.	Error variance	Factor Loading	<i>t</i> Value	CR	AVE
Perceived Control	1	0.23	0.80	9.39***	0.85	0.50
	2	0.15	0.88	7.22***		
	3	0.17	0.88	7.28***		
	4	0.32	0.53	11.17***		
	5	0.89	0.33	11.51***		
	6	0.39	0.62	10.89***		
Variable	No.	Error variance	Factor Loading	<i>t</i> Value	CR	AVE
Career Planning	1	0.19	0.84	7.69***	0.85	0.59
	2	0.17	0.82	8.12***		
	3	0.37	0.70	10.09***		
	4	0.38	0.68	10.22***		
Proactive Skill Development	1	0.49	0.53	10.82***	0.78	0.55
	2	0.17	0.83	6.72***		
	3	0.15	0.81	7.12***		

Discriminant Validity

The study evaluated the discriminant validity of its instruments by examining the square root of each variable's AVE values. Discriminant validity refers to the degree to which different measures from different constructs should not be highly related to each other. As suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981), the square root value should be higher than 0.50. Furthermore, according to Chin (1998), a construct's discriminant validity was proven only when its square root value of AVE was higher than its correlation coefficient with the other variables.

Table 3.11 specified the square root of AVE. As demonstrated in the table, the squared-root AVEs of future work selves (0.66), perceived control (0.50), career planning (0.59), and proactive skill development (0.55) were all above 0.5, which satisfied Fornell and Larcker (1981)'s condition. Moreover, according to Chin (1998), a construct has discriminant validity when its square-root of AVE is higher than the correlation between the construct and the other constructs in the framework. Data achieved in Table 3.11 revealed that the AVE of proactive skill development is 0.74 which is higher than the correlation between the variable and perceived control ($r = .52$), future work selves ($r = .58$), and career planning ($r = .23$). Other variables also exhibited similar square root AVE patterns. Thus, discriminant validity in this study was confirmed.

Use italics for letters used as statistical symbols or algebraic variables (p. 170)

Table 3.11

Values of Square Root of AVE

	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.Expected Education	2.53	1.51						
2. Previous Work Experience	1.92	.61	.21**					
3. Salient Future Work Selves	4.66	1.27	.13*	.14**	.81			
4. Perceived Control	3.49	.57	.13*	.07*	.60**	.71		
5. Career Planning	3.83	.56	.18**	.12**	.58**	.52**	.77	
6. Proactive Skill Development	4.10	.53	.20**	.22**	.30**	.23**	.46**	.74

Note. Bolded numbers indicate values of square root AVE

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Use hyphens

* a compound word with a number as the first element when the compound word precedes the term it modifies.

Given the cross-sectional design of this study, the hypothesized relationships, the study ran a CFA to gain an overall understanding of the discriminant validity of the measures of salient future work selves, perceived control, career planning, and proactive skill development. The study also performed 1-factor, 2-factor, 3-factor, and 4-factor models to test each model's fitness to data.

CFA on the measurement method was run to test the distinction degree of the variables to each other. The study measured the fit of each construct and measurement models based on the value of chi-square divided by the degree of freedom (χ^2 / df), standardized root-mean-square residual (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), normed fit index (NFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), incremental fit index (IFI), and goodness-of-fit index (GFI) against their reference points

When you first use a term that you want to abbreviate in the text, present both the full version of the term and the abbreviation.

to test the level of model fit. In order to be considered as an acceptable model fit, the χ^2 / df should be lower than three or two (Byrne, 1991), the RMR should be lower than 0.08 (MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996), the CFI should be greater than 0.90 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), the NFI and TLI should be above 0.95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), the IFI should be greater than 0.90 and closer to 1 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980), and the GFI should ideally higher than 0.90 (Bentler, 1990).

CFA for each construct was provided in Table 3.12. The **Chi-square values** of future work selves, perceived control, and career planning were accordingly 9.57, 1.63 and 5.75. Only that of perceived control lied within the acceptable range. The RMSEA value of perceived control (.05) was the only index below the suggested 0.08 whereas the values of future work selves and career planning were .19 and .14, respectively. However, the three constructs indeed showed a good model fit in terms of CFI, NFI, IFI, TLI, and GFI. Future work selves reported values of CFI = .94, NFI = .94, IFI = .94, TLI = .89, and GFI = .93. Perceived control also demonstrated acceptable goodness-of-fit indices with CFI = .99, NFI = .98, IFI = .99, TLI = .98, GFI = .98). At last, the construct of career planning (CFI = .97, NFI = .96, IFI = .97, TLI = .90, and GFI = .98) showed a good fit to data.

The CFA of proactive skill development reported that the model was saturated with the degree of freedom and chi-square equal to zero (Table 3.12). Therefore, the goodness-of-fit test was not available. Theoretically, the saturated model showed the perfect fit to data (Cheung &

Chan, 2004; **Cheung & Cheung, 20**

Authors with the same surname:

If multiple authors within a single reference share the same surname, the initials are not needed in the in-text citation; cite the work in the standard author-date format.

The study tested the goodness-of-fit of each theoretical measurement model. All the constructs were combined as a single latent construct under the one-factor model. In the two-factor measurement model, proactive career behaviors were separated as a second-order

construct with two dimensions (i.e., career planning and skill development). A three-factor model was designed to confirm validity among three different constructs of future work selves, perceived control, and proactive career behaviors. In a four-factor measurement, the study treated the two dimensions of proactive career behaviors as independent latent constructs. The outputs in Table 3.12 indicated that the four-factor model fitted the data well ($\chi^2 / df = 1.79$, RMSEA = .056, CFI = .95, NFI = .90, IFI = .95, TLI = .94, GFI = .91) Additionally, the four-factor model reflects a better data fitness than the one-factor model ($\chi^2 / df = 5.91$, RMSEA = .17, CFI = .68, NFI = .64, IFI = .68, TLI = .64, GFI = .69) or the three-factor model ($\chi^2 / df = 1.92$, RMSEA = .06, CFI = .94, NFI = .88, IFI = .94, TLI = .93, GFI = .90). The results confirmed the discriminant validity among the study's variable scales and it is, thus, appropriate for the study to use such scales to test the hypotheses.

Table 3.12

Goodness-of-fit Indices

	X2	Df	X2/df	RMSEA	CFI	NFI	IFI	TLI	GFI
Threshold			<3	<.08	>.9	>.95	>.9	>.95	>.9
Future work self	47.82	5	9.57	.19	.94	.94	.94	.89	.93
Perceived Control	14.66	9	1.63	.05	.99	.98	.99	.98	.98
Career Planning	11.507	2	5.75	.14	.97	.96	.97	.90	.98
Proactive Skill Development	.00	0			1.00	1.00	1.00		1.00
One-factor model	809.06	137	5.91	.17	.68	.64	.68	.64	.69
Two-factor Model	756.90	133	5.75	.13	.77	.73	.77	.73	.70
Three-factor Model	251.51	131	1.92	.06	.94	.88	.94	.93	.90

Four-factor Model	230.92	129	1.79	.06	.95	.90	.95	.94	.91
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Figure 3.3

CFA of Future Work Selves

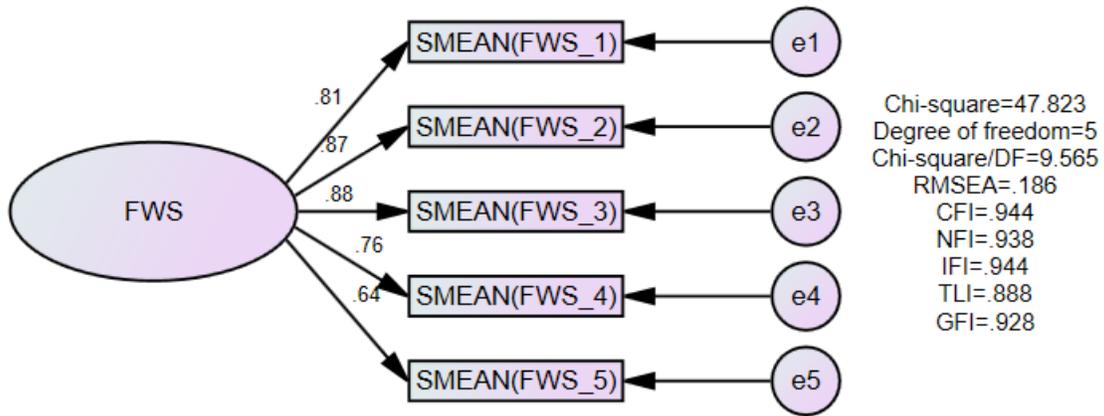


Figure 3.4

CFA of Perceived Control

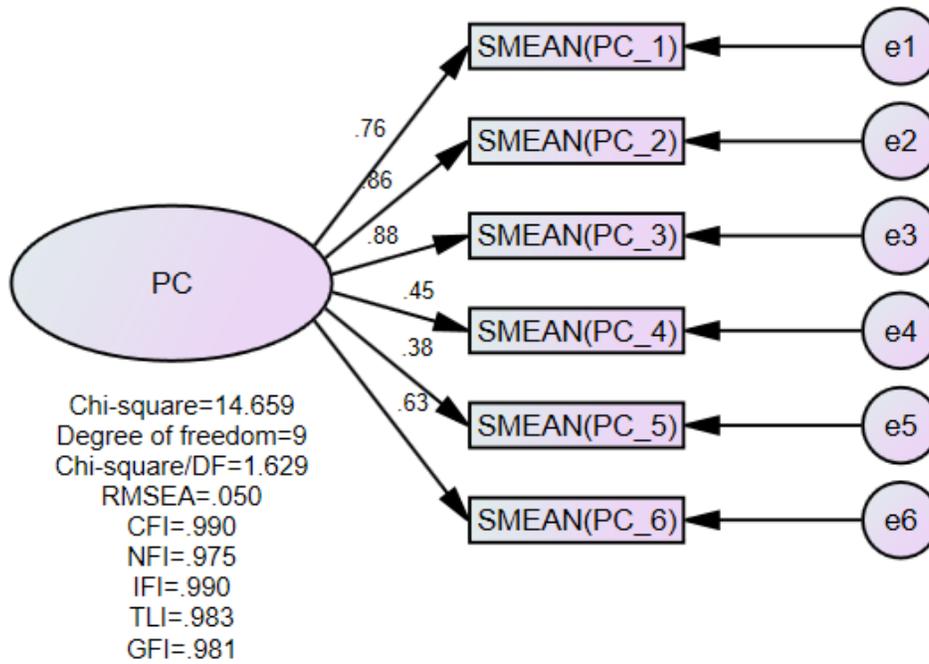


Figure 3.5

CFA of Career Planning

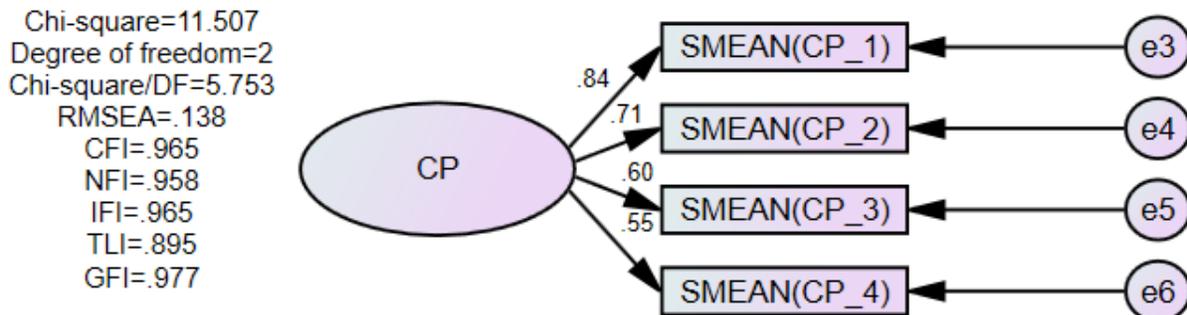


Figure 3.6

CFA of Proactive Skill Development

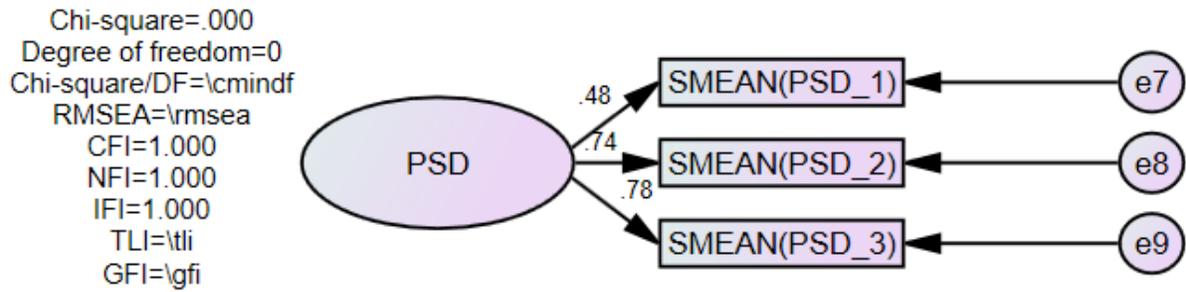


Figure 3.7

CFA of One-factor Measurement Model

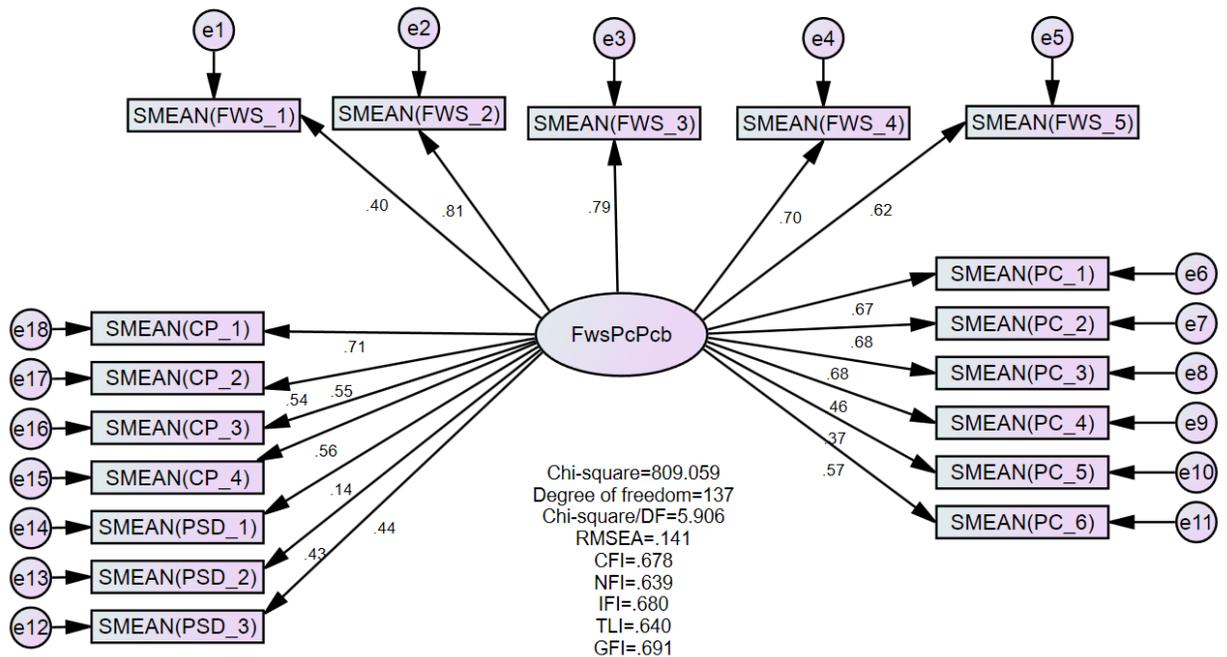


Figure 3.8

CFA of Three-factor Measurement Model

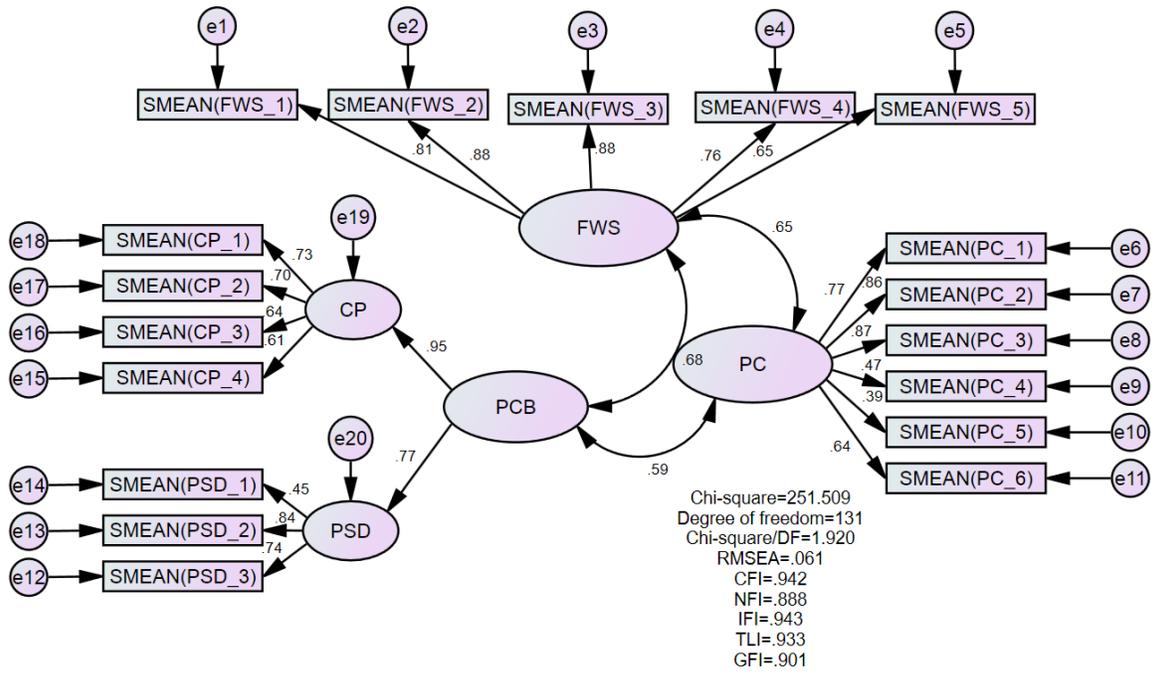
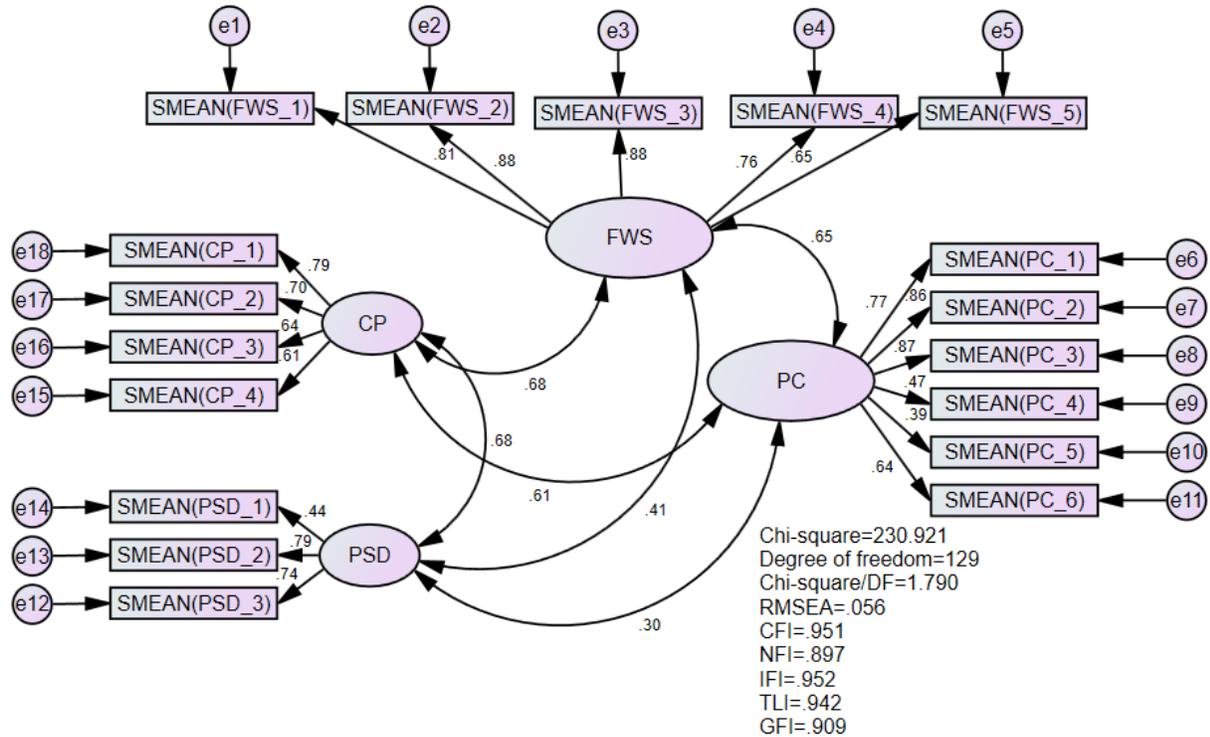


Figure 3.9

CFA of Four-factor Measurement Model



Questionnaire Distribution and Data Collection

This research selected subjects for data collection by incorporating convenience sampling and snowball sampling approach. Data were drawn from the author's relation network (i.e., friends, universities, etc.). First, the author chose from her network a pool of prospective subjects that are both having Chinese proficiency and are final-year students in Taiwan. Second, the author delivered the set of questionnaires to the respondents by using either a SurveyCake online form or a paper-based form. The link was sent to the participants through several channels including Facebook, personal and business email. The participants were required to click into the link to access the questionnaires. Before rating the scale, participants had been given a notice of the study's purpose and confidentiality for their best awareness and to encourage their complete

and accurate responses. Third, after completing the survey, respondents were encouraged to forward the questionnaires to others who share the same background as them.

Data Analysis

Descriptive Analysis

There were 14-item employed as the demographic information in this study. The information includes gender, age, nationality, education, school status, previous work experience, current work experience, organization status, job status, and salary. The underlying purpose of conducting descriptive analysis was to understand the characteristics and ideally identify a background pattern of the participants by analyzing frequency number and percentage distribution.

Spearman Correlation

The present study performed Spearman's correlation coefficient. Scholars consider Spearman as a special case of Pearson correlation which requires data to be measured on interval scales or as dummy-coded. Because the study decided to include education is an ordinal variable as a control variable, the use of Spearman correlation seems to be more appropriate as it can measure ordinal variables (Hauke & Kossowski, 2011).

Spearman correlation analysis propels to examine linear dependence between two variables; thus, it was adopted as a means to understand such a degree of linearity in this study. Spearman's correlation coefficient lies within a range of -1 to +1. When the coefficient is zero, no linearity can be expected between the examined variables. A positive correlation above 0 indicates that the examined variables move in the same direction. That is, they both decrease or increase in magnitude. When the correlation reaches +1, a total positive linear relationship is

achieved and the two variables in the relationship carry the same movement and the same magnitude. In contrast, the values of below zero up to -1 indicate a negative correlation between the two variables whose directions of movement are dissimilar. If one increases in magnitude, the other decreases. A value of -1 reflects a situation where the variables enjoy a perfect negative linear relationship.

Moreover, Yang (2006) classified the magnitude of correlation coefficient into three different categories. A correlation of less than 0.30 in magnitude represents a low correlation. If it ranges from 0.30 to 0.70, a moderate correlation exists between the two variables. At last, a value of above 0.70 indicates that the two variables are strongly and highly related to each other.

Regression-based Approach (PROCESS)

In this study, the author adopted PROCESS which is “a computational tool available for SPSS... that simplifies the implementation of mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis with observed (i.e., “manifest”) variables” to test the moderating effect (Hayes, Montoya, & Rockwood, 2017, p. 77). The study first chose a model number preprogrammed in PROCESS, which corresponded with the study’s research framework—Model Number 1. Subsequently, PROCESS automatically estimated “all the path coefficients, standard errors, *t*- and *p*-values, confidence intervals, and various other statistics” (Hayes, Montoya, & Rockwood, 2017, p. 77).

The statistical model of this approach is a linear equation where a dependent variable is measured as a weighted function of an independent variable, a moderator, and finally, the product of these two variables. The moderating effect in this equation is regarded as the conditional effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable (Hayes, 2012).

quote shortened with ellipsis

PROCESS calculates different values of future work selves on proactive career behaviors by estimating the conditional effect when the values of perceived control vary. Assuming that the slope is significantly different from 0 if perceived control is high and the conditional effect reports a positive higher value, it indicates that perceived control has a strengthening effect on the main causal relationship. In contrast, when perceived control is high and the value of conditional effect decreases, perceived control as a moderator further diminishes the facilitative effect of future work selves on proactive behaviors.

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS

Descriptive Analysis

Data were illustrated in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2. Out of 249 final-year students participating in this study, 71.5% were females who were from 21 to 25 years of age (66.7%). The majority of the respondents were Master students (67.9%) from public schools in Taiwan (65.5%) with less than six years of work experience (85.1%). At the time of the survey, 52% of them were unemployed whereas approximately 48% were either part-time or full-time staff. Of those who were working ($N=119$), 56.3% had been doing their job from one to five years under the role of staff (79%) from a local company (52.9%) with the monthly income below NT \$40,000 (49%).

Table 4.1*Descriptive Analysis of the Study (N=249)*

Items	Frequency	Percentage	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1. Gender			5. Expected Education		
Female	178	71.5	Associate Bachelor	4	1.6
Male	71	28.5	Bachelor	72	28.9
			Master	169	67.9
			Doctoral	4	1.6
2. Age			6. Major		
Under 20	2	0.8	Arts, Humanities, and Languages	22	8.8
21–25	166	66.7	Social Science, Journalism	21	8.4
26–30	49	19.7	Agriculture, forestry, fishing & animal husbandry	2	0.8
31–35	19	7.6	Information & Communication Technology	15	6
36–40	11	4.4	Engineering, manufacturing, and construction	9	3.6
Above 41	2	0.8	Law	1	0.4
			Business & Management	148	59.4
			Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and statistics	2	0.8
			Medicine and Social Work Services	4	1.6
			Education	6	2.4
			Service (Human health, social security, and transportation)	7	2.8
			Other	12	4.8

(continued)

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Table 4.1

Descriptive Analysis of the Study (continued)

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Items	Frequency	Percentage	Items	Frequency	Percentage
3. Nationality			7. Previous Work Experience		
Taiwanese	193	77.5	Less than one year	56	22.5
Chinese	31	12.4	From 1–5 years	158	62.7
Malaysian	5	1.2	More than five years	37	37.0
Vietnamese	3	1.2			
Ecuador	1	0.4	8. Current Job Status		
Hong Kong	2	0.8	Currently unemployed	130	52.2
Indonesian	1	0.4	Currently employed	119	47.8
Japanese	1	0.4			
Korean	1	0.4			
Macao	2	0.8			
Myanmar	1	0.4			
Singaporean	8	3.2			
4. School Status					
Private	86	34.5			
Public	163	65.5			

Table 4.2*Descriptive Analysis of the Study (N=119)*

Items	Frequency	Percentage	Items	Frequency	Percentage
9. Current Job Status			12. Industry Type		
Intern	18	15.1	Manufacturing	8	6.7
Part-time	46	38.6	Construction	5	4.2
Full-time	47	39.5	Wholesales & Retail Trade	11	9.2
Self-employed	4	3.4	Transportation & Storage	3	2.5
Freelancer	4	3.4	Accommodation & Storage	13	10.9
10. Current Work Tenure			Information & Communication	7	5.9
Less than one year	40	33.6	Financial and Insurance	15	12.6
1–5 years	67	56.3	Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	8	6.7
More than five years	12	10.1	Support Services	4	3.4
11. Job Title			Public Administration & Defense, Compulsory Social Security	6	5.0
Staff	94	79.0	Education	22	18.5
First-line Manager	8	6.7	Human Health & Social Work Services	3	2.5
Middle-level Manager	8	6.7	Art, Entertainment & Recreation	3	2.5
High-level Manager	4	3.4	Other	11	9.2
Other	5	4.2	13. Organization Type		
			Public Institutions	30	25.2
			Local Ownership Company	63	52.9
			Foreign Ownership Company	16	13.4
			Non-profit Organization	10	8.4

(continued)

Table 4.2.

Descriptive Analysis of the Study (N=119) (continued)

Items	Frequency	Percentage	Items	Frequency	Percentage
			14. Salary		
			Below NT \$20,000	52	43.7
			NT \$20,001- \$40,000	42	35.3
			NT \$40,001-60,000	19	16.0
			NT \$60,001-80,000	4	3.4
			NT \$80,001-100,000	2	1.7
			Above NT \$100,001	0	0.0

Spearman Correlation Analysis

Spearman correlation analysis and reliability tests were performed to provide insights about the relationship among variables and their internal consistency. The means, standard deviations, coefficients, and Cronbach alphas were demonstrated in Table 4.3. Statistically, the results indicated there was significant positive correlations among the variables. In terms of control variables, expected education positively influenced career planning ($r = .20, p < 0.01$) and proactive skill development ($r = .14, p < 0.05$). The number of previous work experience also showed a positive impact on the dimensions ($r = .18, r = .25, p < 0.01$). Salient future work selves were positively related to career planning ($r = .58, p < 0.01$) and proactive skill development ($r = .30, p < 0.01$). Perceived control as a moderator reflected a tendency to positively moderating career planning ($r = .52, p < 0.01$) and skill development ($r = .23, p < 0.01$). Moreover, the measurements of future work selves ($\alpha = .89$), perceived control ($\alpha = .81$), career planning ($\alpha = .79$), and proactive skill development ($\alpha = .71$) reported Cronbach alphas of above 0.70, illustrating that an acceptable level of internal consistency existed within the scales.

Table 4.3*Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations Among Study Variables*

	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Expected Education	2.53	1.51						
2. Previous Work Experience	1.92	.61	.21**					
3. Salient Future Work Selves	4.66	1.27	.13*	.14**	(.89)			
4. Perceived Control	3.49	.57	.13*	.07*	.60**	(.81)		
5. Career Planning	3.83	.56	.18**	.12**	.58**	.52**	(.79)	
6. Proactive Skill Development	4.10	.53	.20**	.22**	.30**	.23**	.46**	(.71)

use asterisks
for *p* values

Note. *N* = 249. Cronbach alphas are shown in the bracket.

* *p* < 0.05. ** *p* < 0.01.

Regression-based Approach

This study performed a regression analysis in SPSS to test the facilitative effect of future work selves on career planning and proactive skill development. First, the study controlled for expected education and previous work experience. Subsequently, salient future work selves were included to examine their effect on proactive career behaviors. The results shown in Table 4.4 demonstrated positive relationship significance, such that salient future work selves are positively related to career planning ($\beta = .56, p < .001$) and skill development ($\beta = .26, p < .001$). Thus, Hypothesis 1 and 2 were supported.

Hypothesis 3 and 4 proposed perceived control as a moderator positively accelerating the facilitative effect of salient future selves on career planning and skill development. For the two hypotheses to be supported, the interaction effects of perceived control must be positive and

significant. After performing the PRO capitalized
SE = standard error sults demonstrated significant interactions between perceived control and future selves on career planning ($B = .06, SE = .03, p < 0.05$) and on proactive skill development ($B = .08, SE = .035, p < 0.05$). The interaction effects were plotted at one standard deviation above and below the mean. The results further indicated that the relationship between the selves and career planning was significant as different levels of perceived control. When perceived control ranges from low value to high value, the main causal relationship is gradually strengthened ($B = .29, SE = .05, t = 6.44, p < .001$) (Table 4.6). Notwithstanding, the conditional effect of future work selves on proactive skill development is only meaningful when medium or high control is perceived (Table 4.7). When the level of perceived control is low, the interaction term does not yield any impact on the cause-outcome relationship ($B = .05, SE = .05, t = 8.30, ns$). Overall, Hypothesis 3 and 4 were supported.

Table 4.4

Regression Results of the Main Relationships

ns = not statistically significant

Variables	Career Planning		Proactive Skill Development	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Controls				
Expected Education	.16*	.94	.08	.02
Previous Work Experience	.10	.82	.17**	.14*
Independent Variable				
Salient Future Work Selves		.56***		.26***
R^2	.04	.34	.04	.11
<i>Adj. R²</i>	.04	.33	.05	.10
ΔR^2	.04	.29	.05	.06
F	6.37**	42.33***	5.91**	10.15***
ΔF	6.37**	108.65***	5.91**	17.82***

Use italics for letters used as statistical symbols or algebraic variables (p. 170)

Table 4.5

Moderating Effects of Perceived Control

Use italics for letters used as statistical symbols or algebraic variables (p. 170)

Variables	Career Planning				Proactive Skill Development			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Expected Education	.03	.06	.49	ns	.02	.06	.24	ns
Previous Work Experience	.01	.01	.60	ns	.02	.01	2.10	<.05
Salient Future WorkSelves	.24	.04	6.41	<.001	.12	.04	2.83	<.001
Perceived Control	.19	.04	4.91	<.001	.07	.04	1.65	ns
Salient Future Work Selves x Perceived Control	.06	0.3	2.1	<.05	.09	.03	2.45	<.05

Table 4.6

Conditional Effects of the Selves on Career Planning at Values of Perceived Control

Confidence Intervals in separate column

Perceived Control	Salient Future Work Selves to Career Planning					
	Indirect Effect	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI	
					<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Low = -.8957	.18	.05	3.89	<.001	.09	.27
Medium = .0319	.24	.04	6.47	<.001	.17	.31
High = .9594	.29	.05	6.44	<.001	.21	.39

Table 4.7

Conditional Effects of the Selves on Skill Development at Values of Perceived Control

Salient Future Work Selves to Proactive Skill Development						
Perceived Control	Interaction Effect	SE	t	p	95% CI	
					LL	UL
Low = -.8957	.05	.05	.83	ns	-.06	.15
Medium = .0319	.12	.04	2.89	<.01	.04	.21
High = .9594	.20	.05	3.79	<.001	.09	.31

Figure 4.1.

Interaction Plot of Perceived Control and the Selves on Career Planning

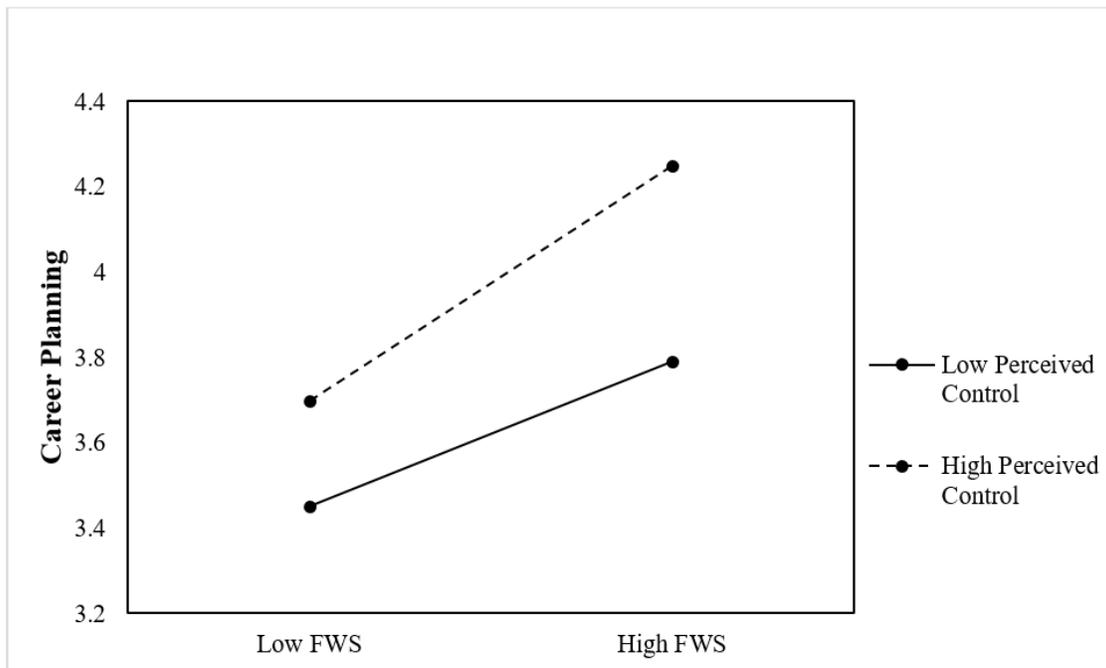
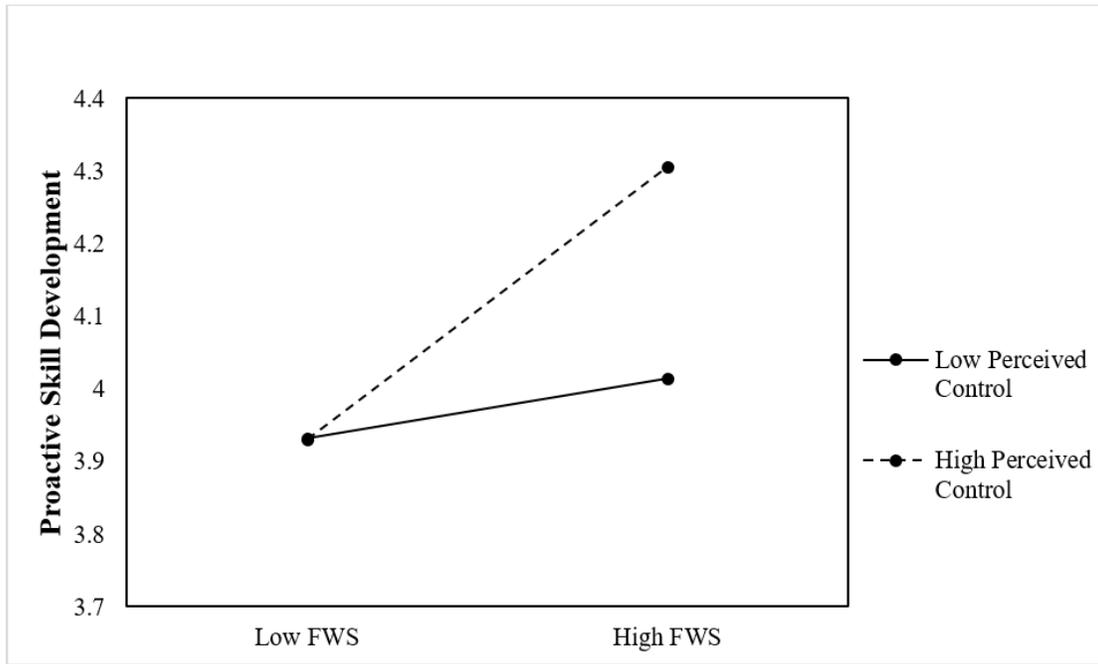


Figure 4.2

Interaction Plot of Perceived Control and the Selves on Proactive Skill Development



Result of Hypothesis Testing

Table 4.8

Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Result
H1 Salient future work selves are positively correlated to proactive career planning	Supported
H2 Salient future work selves are positively correlated to proactive skill development	Supported
H3 Perceived control strengthens the positive relationship between salient future work selves and career planning.	Supported
H4 Perceived control strengthens the positive relationship between salient future work selves and proactive skill development	Supported

CHAPTER V DISCUSSION

This chapter was written to discuss the research's findings, related theoretical and practical meanings, study limitations, and suggestions for future research.

The study found a positive association between salient future work selves and proactive career behaviors. The findings served as a foundation to explain individuals' engagement in risky proactive behaviors. Being proactive is, sometimes, considered a threat to the status quo; thus, behaviors as such might not always be heartedly welcomed by leaders and colleagues (Belschak et al., 2010; Frese et al., 2007). Not all supervisors appreciate voicing behaviors from their subordinates. Ironically, employees who voice often receive fewer promotions and lower salaries (Belschak et al., 2010). However, as suggested in this study, even when perceiving such negative consequences, individuals would still insist on their proactivity. The study argued that having salient selves allows them to be more susceptible to risks. Individuals with salient future selves are more likely to interpret such risks as necessary and meaningful. They prioritize their long-term development over the short-term pain; which in turn encourages them to engage in career planning and proactive skill development. Similarly, the final-year students in this study do willingly scarify their own time and efforts to conduct career planning and proactive skill developments mostly because they perceived such behaviors are beneficial for their career development although they expose to a greater possibility of not having enough time to fulfill class assignments or to complete graduation thesis.

The study discovered the strengthening role of perceived control on the main causal relationships. The findings were insightful as they provided additional information encouraging individuals to conduct proactive behaviors. Individuals with a salient future work self might feel insecure and hesitate to initiate proactivity because they are threatened by expected oppose from

their colleagues and supervisors for being proactive. From the lens of the identity-based motivation theory, their hesitation to act is a result of a distant goal setting and the expected encounter of extreme difficulties. A perception of outcome attainability, in this case, is informative for the individuals to continue making the way toward proactive behaviors as it communicates a can-do message and offers mental incentives to overlook the challenges ahead. Conversely, low perceived controllability would intensify any predicted obstacle and tear individuals down with depression and anxiety; thus, distracting their full attention to proactive behaviors. These individuals are more likely to avoid short-term painful situations and be conservative to change. In a similar vein, final-year students who set distant futures and associate the achievement of desired future states with unconquerable difficulty would not initiate proactive behaviors. Rather, they would focus on doing homework and finishing the thesis because they see clear benefits from doing so whereas students with high perceived control are more motivated to engage in the tradeoff between their academic results and their career development.

Theoretical Contribution

The present study is a response to the call for more research on autonomous motivation to proactivity. The pathway from future work selves is a form of autonomous motivation to proactive behaviors has not been widely appreciated (Strauss & Kelly, 2016). The scrutiny into this association contributes insights into this underdeveloped field by unveiling the non-utilitarian side of proactive career behaviors. Conventionally, proactive behaviors have been treated as utilitarianism, meaning that individuals are motivated to behave proactively because they perceive benefits associated with such behaviors (Parker et al., 2010). Nevertheless, proactive career behaviors are not purely pragmatic. Indeed, as proven in this research,

proactivity is significantly facilitated by future work identities. People willingly generate proactive behaviors as they find the pursue of their future selves is important and meaningful to their lives. The theory of motivational systems indicated that only goals that are self-set or adopted have motivational meaning. “Facilitation, not control, should be the guiding idea in attempts to motivate human” (Ford, 1992, p. 202). Thus, identity-congruent proactive behaviors might be unresponsive to rewards. Any practice that fails to appreciate such facilitation might yield short-term effects; however, they are likely to backfire in the long run. Indeed, attempts to incentivize such behaviors are proven to give rise to adverse effects (Strauss & Parker, 2014) and have deleterious consequences on intrinsic motivation (Ryan 1982).

Up till now, knowledge about how individuals can strengthen their proactive behaviors to achieve an aspired future is yet brought to light (Strauss & Kelly, 2016). The consideration of the moderating role of perceived control in this study thus provides solid evidence to unpuzzle this issue. Specifically, the adoption of motivational systems theory has allowed for a discovery of a combination of multiple factors (i.e., personal goals, agency beliefs, and emotions) or motivational forms, which are most powerful in stimulating change-oriented behaviors. Therefore, the use of the combination as such would enhance a more flexible motivation base to initiate, strengthen and sustain proactivity. It is noteworthy that future work selves alone do not always have behavioral meanings. Since motivation is only firmly established when a combination of personal goals, agency beliefs, and emotions are in place, the study endorsed that future work selves should not be examined as a stand-alone construct but instead, as a central construct in a conceptual model.

In a similar vein, the study expands the proactive motivation model introduced by Parker and colleagues, which hypothesizes that proactive behaviors are stimulated by can do, reason to

and energized to motivation (Parker et al., 2010). The model argues that each of the motivational forms plays an essential role in determining career proactivity. However, the authors failed to realize the intertwining effects among the motivational states. The similar conceptualizations between the model and the study's variables have enabled the identification of such interplay. Acknowledging that future work selves are classified as reason to motivation and perceived control encapsulates can-do and energized-to motivation, the study expands the proactive motivation model by suggesting that reason-to should act as a central factor and can-do and energized-to should induce additional effects as moderators in the motivational process to proactive behaviors.

Practical Contribution

The results showed that future work selves—an autonomous motivation can substantially promote career planning and proactive skill development. The bottom line, therefore, is how practitioners can foster individuals' salient future work selves.

Motivational systems theory highlights the importance of self-set or adopted goals. In this sense, it is important for career practitioners to keep in mind that no future self is allowed to impose on individuals without their volition. Since "about two-thirds of [Taiwanese] college students were undecided about their career futures" (Tien et al., 2005, p. 163), which, in turn, would discourage them to perform proactivity to conquer the career boundarylessness, Taiwanese government and universities should launch projects that tackle this critical phenomenon. The governmental parties can make use of three-phase intervention introduced by Taber (2015) to develop programs targeting at the facilitation of future work selves. In Phase 1, participants will be guided to orient their thoughts toward the future. Once the goal is achieved, the responsibility of the program is to help clients "make the future feel real" (Taber, 2015, p.

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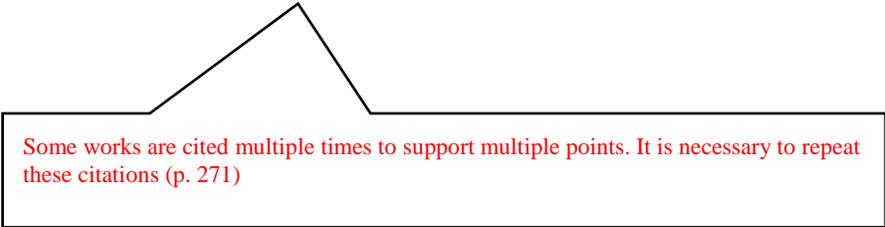
104) by exploring their aspired occupations and finalizing the future selves that are most likely to occur. The last phase emphasizes a sense of control towards the imagined future by facilitating meaningful engagement in planning. The goal of this stage is not to encourage individuals to pursue the identified future selves. Rather, it is to paint a big picture of how planning relates to the attainment of future selves. Lecturers can play active roles in promoting their students' proactivity by simply asking students to picture their future work selves (Strauss et al., 2012). Proactive career behaviors have important implications for individuals, especially final-year students who experience school-to-work transitions. Since a goal produces positive effects only when it is personal or at least personally adopted, final-year students are key agents to determine the effectiveness of a certain goal. That being said, Taiwanese students should be mindful when developing their goals or future work selves. The study suggested that the students should set goals that are within a proximal future as distant goals have been proven to cause goal disengagement or abandonment (Oyserman, 2015). Though it is unclear how to estimate optimal challenge, goals should be specific, challenging, yet attainable so that they remain motivating for individuals to pursue. Even in the case of failure, such goals are considered “intrinsic part of the process of pursuing [...] goal[s] than in circumstances where trivially easy or unrealistically difficult standards apply” (Ford, 1992, p. 212).

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The present study, by examining the interactive effect of future selves and perceived control, helps supervisors to design intervention and promote control perception that reassures employees additional information they can act on to generate proactive behaviors. Notably, the findings suggest that capitalizing on salient future work selves to motivate proactive career behaviors will only pay off when individuals have strong beliefs that they can work toward the future work selves. Thus, in order to secure a high level of career planning and proactive skill

development, organizations should not only help employees clarify their future selves, but also focus on enhancing their perception of control. For example, organizations should facilitate job autonomy, leadership support, and work climate as such job characteristics have been argued to promote can-do, energized-to and also reason-to motivation—the motivational states that shape proactivity (Strauss & Parker, 2014). In addition, autonomy support should be provided by managers. Autonomy supportive supervision encourages autonomous motivation (Strauss & Parker, 2014) and empowers employees with confidence and competence; thus, influencing perceived control and making the motivation to proactive career behaviors more likely (Parker et al., 2010).

Moreover, organizations should communicate the expected organization's future to employees as this allows employees to consider themselves as part of the vision; thus, aligning the organizations' goals with their future work selves and working toward the selves (Strauss & Parker, 2014) which in turn improves the self salience. An indirect way to cultivate individuals' future work selves is through the influence of organizational leaders. Leaders' communication of high expectations and confidence in employees has been proven as an effective way to affect the subordinates' self-views; thus, nourishing and inspiring future work selves (Strauss et al., 2012).



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Limitation

Despite the significantly supported hypotheses which were based on the well-developed motivational systems theory, this extant research contains a number of limitations that need further clarification. First, responses collected in this study were self-report. Given the nature of self-rating data, the findings are susceptible to common method variance in the effects of salient future work selves and perceived control on proactive planning and skill development.

However, the study did conduct the pre-prevention of CMV. For example, to avoid the effects from CMV, the research questionnaire was designed for 5-point and 7-point Likert scale to effectively measure different variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Specifically, respondents were required to rate future work self salience on a 7-point Likert scale. The other two variables, perceived control and proactive career behaviors, were rated on a 5-point scale. Additionally, Wall et al. (1996) argued that interaction effects are likely to be underestimated when common method variance is salient. Therefore, the observed moderating effect between salient future selves and perceived control in this study can be viewed as a meaningful finding to the main causal relationship. Moreover, confirmatory factor analysis reported that the three-factor model differentiating salient future work selves, perceived control, and proactive career behaviors was fitter to the data than a one-factor model integrating all indicators to a single latent variable. If the data were significantly distorted by common method variance, the one-factor model would have demonstrated a better fit to the data than would the three-factor model.

This study was a cross-sectional design. It, thus, limits the author's ability to precisely examine the direction of causality among the variables. The determined relationships in this paper might be reverse or reciprocal since a study of Guan et al. (2017) shown such possibility exists. The authors discovered that future work selves have a predicting power on career

exploration—another type of proactive career behaviors, given career adaptability as a mediator. Career exploration, in turn, through its influence on career adaptability, facilitates a reflection process that helps individuals revise and construe their future selves. Nonetheless, the concept of proactive career behaviors used in Guan et al.'s paper is not identical to the one employed in this study. While career exploration highlights the process of obtaining relevant information about the self or about the environment to achieve certain goals, the term in this study refers to attempts such as planning and skill development to develop one's self. Hence, the findings shown in their research might not be representative of this study's causality. In addition, thorough literature review argued that the hypothesized directions in the present paper not only were supported by motivational systems theory but also can be explained by career construction theory, self-regulation theory and identity-based motivation (Strauss et al., 2012) presenting a solid proof that departure from the established relationships is less likely.

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Despite efforts to diversify the data, the dominance of Taiwanese final-year respondents undermines the generalization of the study's findings. Commentators can argue that this study is highly specific to Taiwanese culture and thus, cannot be generalized to others. Indeed, according to social information processing theory, behaviors and attitudes are greatly dependent on social contexts. National culture, therefore, can have an impact on individual's proactive behaviors (Smale, et al., 2019). Considering Taiwan as a highly collectivistic and medium uncertainty avoidance culture (Samovar et al., 2013), people in Taiwan might have different interpretations of their future work selves, perceived control and proactive career behaviors from people who favor individualism or are low in uncertainty avoidance.

Direction of Future Research

The self-reporting nature of this study does not always come at a cost. To some extent, the use of self-ratings of proactive career behaviors is advantageous because individuals' records of their own proactive behaviors may be more delicate than records from supervisors or co-workers since they have more access to their contextual, historical, intentional and background information of their own behaviors (Jones & Nisbett, 1971). Moreover, peers and leaders might fail to capture many genuine proactive behaviors of the employees, and might only be attentive to proactive behaviors that are purposefully performed to impress others (Gao et al., 2011). Notwithstanding, reports from external parties offer a distinctive view of individuals' proactive career behaviors, which is independent of the self-reports; thus, being useful in assessing the behaviors. For this reason, future research should consider employing both self- and others-reports of proactive career behaviors.

As the nature of cross-sectional designs limits the study's ability to precisely predict the causality of the proposed relationships, future researchers should employ longitudinal designs to examine the relationships among future work selves, perceived control, and proactive career behaviors at different time frames. For example, future work can be divided into a two-wave study. The data collection of the first wave can be conducted when the subjects are still receiving an education. The second wave then starts after the participants are graduated and get employed. Estimates can be made to compare changes of the participants over times and a meaningful pattern of causality can be realized.

Given the potential of culture in influencing individuals' attitudes and behaviors, studies should take this factor into consideration. Extant literature suggests that countries low on in-group collectivism (i.e., individualistic nations) pay less attention to the well of the larger

collective group. Individuals from such cultures prefer social recognition, promotions, and competition (Khapova et al., 2012); thus, they might exerting greater effort in proactive behaviors as attempts to achieve their goals. Likewise, people who are high in in-group collectivism view themselves as deeply connected to the group. They are more likely to sacrifice their own needs for the group interests and for the attainment of collective goals (Haar et al., 2014). In these nations, it seems that career proactivity is less likely since it challenges the group harmony. In a similar vein, high uncertainty avoidance cultures are risk-averse; they take minimal risks and are resistant to change whereas their counterparts are more willing to take risks and always seeking for change (House et al., 2004). Thus, people from the very high-end would view proactivity as a threat to their status quo while the very low-end individuals enjoy taking initiatives and experiencing change.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH VERSION)

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE (CHINESE VERSION)