

The Impact of New Media Use on Academic Self-efficacy and Social Mobility Expectations: An Empirical Analysis Based on CGSS2021 Data

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ABSTRACT

This study is based on the 2021 data from the China General Social Survey (CGSS) and uses quantitative analysis methods to systematically explore the impact of new media use on academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations. Through the empirical test of a binary choice Logit model, it reveals a significant positive correlation between the frequency of new media use and academic self-efficacy, as well as social mobility expectations. It further analyzes the mediating role of academic self-efficacy in the process of new media use affecting social mobility expectations. Considering the heterogeneity of regions and educational levels, the study conducts subgroup analyses for different groups, providing a scientific basis for optimizing new media use methods and promoting individual development. It aims to offer theoretical support for the formulation of educational policies and the promotion of social mobility.

KEYWORDS

New media use; Academic self-efficacy; Social mobility expectations

1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

With the advancement of the digital wave, new media technology has emerged and developed rapidly, profoundly changing people's lifestyles, learning patterns, and social cognitive structures. According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics in 2024, the average daily internet usage time of internet users in China has reached 6 hours and 3 minutes, with a participation rate of 92.9%^[1]. New media has become a key platform for people to obtain information, engage in social interactions, and conduct learning activities, with its influence being ubiquitous and increasingly strong.

In the field of education, new media provides individuals with a vast amount of learning resources, breaking the traditional limitations of time and space for learning. However, it also brings problems such as information overload and attention dispersion, affecting people's academic self-efficacy. Academic self-efficacy is crucial for students' learning motivation, methods, and outcomes, making the study of its impact significant. Additionally, the use of new media changes people's expectations of social mobility. It provides new pathways for social mobility, such as internet entrepreneurship, but may also cause a "relative deprivation," interfering with people's perception of social mobility opportunities.

1.2 Literature Review

In recent years, with the development of new media technology, the academic community has widely discussed the impact of new media use. Existing research mainly focuses on the following aspects: First, regarding the relationship between new media use and academic self-efficacy, Liang Haiqin pointed out that there is a positive correlation between online learning self-efficacy and academic performance, affirming the role of new media in enhancing academic self-efficacy^[2]. However, some scholars have argued that the complexity of new media information can easily distract attention, having a negative impact on academic self-efficacy. Factors such as individual self-control and learning motivation can moderate the impact of new media use on academic self-efficacy.

Secondly, regarding the relationship between new media use and social mobility expectations, Huang Qingfeng believes that in the new media era, pathways for social mobility have become diversified, creating more opportunities for individual upward mobility^[3]. However, Li Hui's research showed that the higher the frequency of new media use, the greater the probability of residents' social class identification shifting downward, and it significantly increased the probability of social mobility expectations shifting downward^[4]. This indicates that new media use may affect individuals' expectations of social mobility by influencing their social comparisons and self-perception.

Despite the valuable insights provided by these studies, there are still the following shortcomings: 1. Most existing studies use qualitative analysis, lacking quantitative research based on large-scale survey data; 2. The impact and

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mechanisms between new media use, academic self-efficacy, and social mobility expectations are not fully explored. Compared with existing research, the innovations of this study are: 1. It is the first time to include the frequency of new media use, academic self-efficacy, and social mobility expectations in the same research framework, revealing the internal connections between the three; 2. It conducts subgroup analyses to explore the heterogeneous impacts of regions and educational levels; 3. It proposes the hypothesis of the mediating role of academic self-efficacy in the relationship between new media use and social mobility expectations, providing a new theoretical perspective for subsequent research.

2 Theoretical Basis and Research Hypotheses

2.1 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory, proposed by Bandura, emphasizes that individuals learn new skills and behavioral patterns by observing and imitating others. In the new media environment, individuals can access a wealth of learning resources and success stories, enhancing their academic self-efficacy by observing others' learning methods and achievements. Students can adjust their learning strategies and enhance their confidence in their learning abilities by observing the learning methods and successful experiences of other students through online courses and learning forums^[5]. Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Research Hypothesis 1: **The higher the frequency of new media use, the stronger the individual's academic self-efficacy.**

2.2 Social Mobility Theory

Social Mobility Theory focuses on the changes in the social structure positions of individuals or groups. New media has changed the patterns of information dissemination and social interaction, providing individuals with more channels to obtain information and resources, thereby affecting their social mobility expectations. Through some online platforms, individuals can obtain high-quality educational resources or updated information to enhance their knowledge and skills, increasing the chances of upward mobility^[6]. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Research Hypothesis 2: **The higher the frequency of new media use, the greater the probability of an individual's upward social mobility expectations.**

Research Hypothesis 3: **The stronger the academic self-efficacy, the greater the probability of an individual's upward social mobility expectations.**

3 Research Design

3.1 Sample and Data Source

This study uses the 2021 data from the China General Social Survey (CGSS). CGSS is authoritative and representative, reflecting the social situation in China well. Considering the research theme, the sample is limited to individuals aged 18-45 to ensure that the research subjects are at a stage where they have a certain understanding of academic efficacy and social class. After data cleaning and removing missing values and outliers, a total of 2,494 valid samples were obtained.

3.2 Variable Measurement and Explanation

3.2.1 Independent Variable: Frequency of New Media Use

The frequency of new media use is measured by the question "How often did you use the internet in the past year" in the questionnaire. This question directly reflects the frequency of an individual's new media use.

3.2.2 Dependent Variables: Academic Self-efficacy and Social Mobility Expectations

Academic self-efficacy is measured by the question "Did you engage in learning activities in your spare time in the past year" in the questionnaire. Academic self-efficacy reflects an individual's confidence in their learning abilities, and actively engaging in learning activities in spare time is a manifestation of a positive cognitive evaluation of one's learning abilities and is directly related to learning motivation and outcomes, making it a reasonable and effective measure.

Social mobility expectations are measured by the question "Compared to your current social class, where do you expect to be in 10 years?" If the expected social class in 10 years is higher than the current one, it is assigned a value of 1 (upward), otherwise 0. This question directly focuses on an individual's expectations of changes in their social class

position in the future and can accurately reflect the variable of social mobility expectations.

3.2.3 Control Variables

Referring to the research on the above influencing factors in existing literature, the control variables selected in this study include the respondent's gender, ethnicity, political affiliation, household registration nature, parents' educational level, individual's educational level, and the region where the respondent is located.

Table 1 Variable Definitions

Variable Type	VarName	Variable Meaning and Assignment
Independent Variable	Frequency of New Media Use	How often did you use the internet in the past year? "Never"=1, "Rarely"=2, "Sometimes"=3, "Often"=4, "Very Frequently"=5
	Academic Self-efficacy	Did you engage in learning activities in your spare time in the past year? "Never"=0, "Rarely"=1, "Sometimes"=2, "Often"=3, "Very Frequently"=4
Dependent Variables	Social Mobility Expectations	Compared to your current social class, where do you expect to be in 10 years? If higher in 10 years (upward)=1, otherwise (downward)=0
	Gender	Male=1, Female=0
Control Variables	Ethnicity	Han=1, Others=0
	Political Affiliation	Party member=1, Others=0
	Household Registration Nature	Urban=1, Rural=0
	Father's Educational Level	No education, private school, literacy class, primary school=1
	Mother's Educational Level	Junior high school, vocational high school, ordinary high school, secondary vocational school, technical school=2
	Individual's Educational Level	Junior college (adult higher education), junior college (regular higher education), undergraduate (adult higher education), undergraduate (regular higher education), graduate and above=3
	Region	Graduate education or above=4
	Region	East=2, Central=1, West=0

4 Result Analysis

4.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

Variable Type	VarName	Obs	Mean	SD	Min	Med	Max
Independent Variable	Frequency of New Media Use	2494	4.52	0.794	1	5	5
Dependent Variables	Academic Self-efficacy	2494	0.84	0.367	0	1	1
	Social Mobility Expectations	2494	0.71	0.453	0	1	1
Control Variables	Gender	2494	0.43	0.495	0	0	1
	Ethnicity	2494	0.92	0.273	0	1	1
	Political Affiliation	2494	0.10	0.304	0	0	1
	Household Registration Nature	2494	0.44	0.497	0	0	1
	Father's Educational Level	2494	1.68	0.620	1	2	4
	Mother's Educational Level	2494	1.50	0.599	1	1	4
	Individual's Educational Level	2494	2.42	0.698	1	2	4
	Region	2494	1.17	0.780	0	1	2

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistical results of each variable. The average value of new media use frequency is 4.52, indicating that the sample as a whole uses new media quite frequently. The average value of academic self-efficacy is 0.84, indicating that most of the sample has a certain level of academic self-efficacy, with a standard deviation of 0.367, indicating small differences in academic self-efficacy among the sample individuals. The average value of social mobility expectations is 0.71, showing that most individuals have a positive expectation for future social mobility.

4.2 Regression Result Analysis

4.2.1 Verification of Hypothesis 1

To explore the impact of new media use on individual academic self-efficacy, a binary choice Logit model was used for regression analysis. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Baseline Regression Results 1

VarName	(1) Academic Self-efficacy (Without Control Variables)	(2) Academic Self-efficacy (With Control Variables)
Frequency of New Media Use	0.408*** (0.0591)	0.0445 (0.0688)
Gender		0.158 (0.128)
Ethnicity		-0.243 (0.227)
Political Affiliation		0.896** (0.391)
Household Registration Nature		0.626*** (0.148)
Father's Educational Level		0.710*** (0.139)
Mother's Educational Level		0.340** (0.164)
Individual's Educational Level		1.413*** (0.118)
Region		-0.194** (0.0841)
Constant	-0.155 (0.263)	-2.981*** (0.388)
N	2,494	2,494

The numbers in parentheses are standard errors, *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Table 3 shows the regression results for Hypothesis 1. Without controlling for other variables, there is a significant positive correlation between the frequency of new media use and academic self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.408$, $p < 0.01$).

The reasons for the above results may be: First, from the perspective of learning resource acquisition, new media platforms have a vast amount of learning materials covering various disciplines and knowledge levels. Online course platforms provide a wide range of course options, allowing people to learn professional knowledge from excellent teachers according to their own needs and interests, and to access cutting-edge content that is difficult to obtain in traditional educational environments. Academic resource websites provide a large number of research papers and academic reports, helping to broaden individuals' academic horizons and deepen their understanding of professional knowledge. Second, from the perspective of learning interaction and feedback mechanisms, new media has broken the temporal and spatial limitations of traditional learning interactions between teachers and students, and among students. Learning forums and social groups provide interactive communication venues for different groups of people, where individuals can share learning experiences and discuss learning issues. When individuals encounter difficulties, they can quickly ask others for advice on these platforms and obtain different ideas and solutions. At the same time, they can further consolidate their knowledge and enhance their self-awareness by helping others answer questions. This interactive model provides more feedback to individuals, allowing them to understand their learning outcomes and progress in a timely manner, thereby enhancing their sense of control over learning and promoting the improvement of academic self-efficacy. Third, from the perspective of personalized learning support, new media can provide personalized learning services to individuals by leveraging big data, artificial intelligence, and other technologies. Learning software can analyze individuals' learning characteristics and needs based on their learning behavior data, such as learning duration and answer situations, and recommend suitable learning content and learning paths.

After controlling for variables, the result of Hypothesis 1 is not significant, which may be due to the following reasons: First, the control variables include the individual's educational level, which may have a strong direct impact on academic self-efficacy. Individuals with higher educational levels may inherently have stronger academic self-efficacy, and this inherent self-efficacy may weaken the association between new media use frequency and academic self-efficacy^[7]. Second, the parents' educational level is also included in the control variables, and the family's cultural atmosphere and educational resource support have a far-reaching impact on individuals' academic self-efficacy. If parents have higher

educational levels, they may place more emphasis on their children's education and provide rich learning resources and a good learning environment, which may to some extent cover up the impact of new media use on academic self-efficacy.

4.2.2 Verification of Hypotheses 2 and 3

To further explore the impact of new media use on individuals' social mobility expectations, as well as the impact of academic self-efficacy on individuals' social mobility expectations, a binary choice Logit model was used for regression analysis. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Baseline Regression Results 2

VarName	(1) Social Mobility Expectations (Without Control Variables)	(2) Social Mobility Expectations (With Control Variables)	(3) Social Mobility Expectations (Without Control Variables)	(4) Social Mobility Expectations (With Control Variables)
Frequency of New Media Use	0.149*** (0.0535)	0.105* (0.0566)		
Gender		-0.0845 (0.0908)		-0.0940 (0.0911)
Ethnicity		0.189 (0.164)		0.219 (0.164)
Political Affiliation		-0.414*** (0.150)		-0.427*** (0.150)
Household Registration Nature		-0.319*** (0.0989)		-0.349*** (0.0999)
Father's Educational Level		0.200** (0.0936)		0.158* (0.0946)
Mother's Educational Level		0.0910 (0.0989)		0.0897 (0.0993)
Individual's Educational Level		0.289*** (0.0785)		0.210*** (0.0808)
Region		-0.116* (0.0606)		-0.0968 (0.0607)
Academic Self-efficacy			0.684*** (0.113)	0.597*** (0.126)
Constant	0.229 (0.244)	-0.546* (0.297)	0.337*** (0.101)	-0.333 (0.225)
N	2,494	2,494	2,494	2,494

The numbers in parentheses are standard errors, *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Table 4 shows the regression results for Hypotheses 2 and 3. Without controlling for variables, there is a significant positive correlation between the frequency of new media use and social mobility expectations ($\beta = 0.149$, $p < 0.01$), and between academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations ($\beta = 0.684$, $p < 0.01$). After controlling for variables, the frequency of new media use and social mobility expectations still show a significant positive correlation ($\beta = 0.105$, $p < 0.1$), and academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations also show a significant positive correlation ($\beta = 0.597$, $p < 0.01$). Hypotheses 2 and 3 are both verified, indicating that the higher the frequency of new media use, the greater the probability of an individual's upward social mobility expectations; and the stronger the academic self-efficacy, the greater the probability of an individual's upward social mobility expectations.

The possible reasons for the above results are: For the positive correlation between the frequency of new media use and social mobility expectations, from the perspective of expanding social mobility opportunities, new media has created diversified pathways for social mobility. Emerging professions such as online entrepreneurship and self-media operation have flourished through new media platforms, allowing individuals to showcase their talents and skills, attract attention, and gain economic benefits to achieve an improvement in social status. Many people have accumulated a large number of fans by sharing professional knowledge and life skills on short video platforms, and have successfully realized commercial monetization, crossing their original social classes. The information dissemination characteristics of new media enable individuals to more conveniently obtain employment, entrepreneurship, and training opportunities, breaking the limitations of geographical and social relationship networks, allowing individuals to have more opportunities to participate in social competition, and thus enhancing social mobility expectations. From the perspective of changing social cognition, the rich information dissemination of new media allows individuals to come into contact

with different class lifestyles and success stories, broadening their horizons and providing a more intuitive understanding of social mobility. After seeing stories of others achieving social class mobility through their own efforts, individuals are inspired and believe they also have the opportunity to achieve upward mobility, thereby enhancing social mobility expectations.

Regarding the positive correlation between academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations, from the perspective of human capital accumulation, individuals with high academic self-efficacy are more proactive and active in learning. They believe they have the ability to master knowledge and skills, and are therefore more willing to spend time and energy learning new knowledge and improving their professional abilities. These individuals accumulate rich knowledge and skill capital in the learning process, making them more competitive in the labor market and more likely to obtain high-quality job opportunities and career development space, thereby increasing the possibility of upward mobility and enhancing social mobility expectations^[8]. From the perspective of psychological and behavioral tendencies, individuals with high academic self-efficacy usually have a more positive self-cognition and stronger self-confidence. This psychological state encourages them to be more willing to try new things and accept challenges. In the process of pursuing social mobility, they dare to break through their own limitations, actively seek and seize opportunities, and are also good at setting reasonable goals and plans, and persistently strive for them.

4.2.3 Robustness Test

In the previous baseline regression, this paper used the frequency of new media use to measure residents' new media use. Since residents may have high usage frequencies for different media, it may cause certain deviations in the regression results. Therefore, this paper further used the question "Which media is your main source of information?" in the questionnaire to measure residents' new media use frequency, defining those who answered "Internet (including mobile internet)" as having new media as their main information source, and then re-conducted the regression. After excluding those who answered "Don't know" and "Refuse to answer," the sample size was 2,494. The results are shown in Table 5. The dependence on new media use still shows a significant positive correlation with academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations, further verifying the robustness of the research results.

Table 5 Robustness Test 1

VarName	(1) Academic Self-efficacy	(2) Academic Self-efficacy	(3) Social Mobility Expectations	(4) Social Mobility Expectations
Frequency of New Media Use	1.131*** (0.190)	0.421* (0.220)	0.313* (0.187)	0.198 (0.192)
Control Variables	NO	YES	NO	YES
N	2,494	2,494	2,494	2,494

The numbers in parentheses are standard errors, *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Since the previous paper also conducted a regression analysis of academic self-efficacy on social mobility expectations, this paper also replaced the variable for academic self-efficacy. The frequency of "reading books/newspapers/magazines" in the questionnaire question "Did you often engage in the following activities in your spare time in the past year?" was used as the new measure. After excluding those who answered "Don't know" and "Refuse to answer," the sample size was 2,488. The results are shown in Table 6. Academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations still show a significant positive correlation, further verifying the robustness of the research results.

Table 6 Robustness Test 2

VarName	(1) Social Mobility Expectations	(2) Social Mobility Expectations
Academic Self-efficacy	0.483*** (0.0949)	0.403*** (0.105)
Control Variables	NO	YES
N	2,488	2,488

The numbers in parentheses are standard errors, *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

4.2.4 Heterogeneity Analysis

To further explore the impact of new media use on residents' social class identification bias, this paper will conduct a heterogeneity analysis of the regression results from the aspects of region and educational level. The results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Heterogeneous Analysis

VarName	Regional Heterogeneity		Educational Level Heterogeneity	
	Eastern Region	Central and Western Regions	High School Education or Below	Junior College Education or Above
Frequency of New Media Use	0.156* (0.083)	0.087 (0.060)	0.067 (0.058)	0.199** (0.093)
Control Variables	YES	YES	YES	YES
N	1,003	1,491	1,331	1,163
Group Difference Test		0.068 (0.058)		0.132 (0.109)

The numbers in parentheses are standard errors, *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

4.2.4.1 Regional Heterogeneity

According to the regional division method of the National Bureau of Statics, the samples were divided into the eastern and central-western regions for group regression. The results show that in the eastern region, the positive impact of the frequency of new media use on academic self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.156^*$, $p < 0.1$) and social mobility expectations ($\beta = 0.125^*$, $p < 0.1$) is marginally significant; in the central-western region, the impact of the frequency of new media use on academic self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.087$, $p > 0.1$) and social mobility expectations ($\beta = 0.093$, $p > 0.1$) is not significant.

This is mainly due to the uneven development of new media across regions. The eastern region has a developed economy, complete network infrastructure, and widespread coverage of high-speed broadband and 5G networks, providing hardware support for the efficient use of new media. At the same time, the eastern region has rich educational resources, and people have a higher level of information literacy, enabling them to better utilize new media for learning and self-improvement, thereby significantly affecting academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations.

In contrast, the central-western region lags behind in network infrastructure construction and new media development. In some remote areas, unstable network signals and insufficient bandwidth limit the efficiency of obtaining new media learning resources. Moreover, the local education level and information popularization are relatively low, and people's ability to use new media is limited, making it difficult to fully explore the potential of new media in enhancing academic achievements and expanding social mobility opportunities, resulting in the insignificant impact of new media use frequency on academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations.

4.2.4.2 Heterogeneity of Educational Level

The samples were divided into two groups according to the educational level: high school and below, and junior college and above, for regression. The results show that in the group with a high school and below educational level, the impact of new media use frequency on academic self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.067$, $p > 0.1$) and social mobility expectations ($\beta = 0.058$, $p > 0.1$) is not significant; in the group with a junior college and above educational level, the impact of new media use frequency on academic self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.199^{**}$, $p < 0.05$) and social mobility expectations ($\beta = 0.174^*$, $p < 0.1$) is significantly positive.

This is because individuals with different educational levels have different abilities to process new media information. Individuals with a junior college and above educational level have stronger abilities to screen, analyze, and integrate information, enabling them to accurately obtain valuable learning resources from the vast amount of new media information and convert them into a boost for enhancing academic achievements, thereby enhancing academic self-efficacy. At the same time, they are also better at using new media platforms to obtain career development information and expand personal connections, creating conditions for social mobility, so the impact of new media use frequency on social mobility expectations is significant. In contrast, individuals with a high school and below educational level have relatively weaker information processing abilities. Faced with the complex information of new media, they are more likely to fall into the dilemma of information overload and may use new media more for entertainment and leisure rather than learning and self-improvement, making the positive impact of new media use frequency on academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations less evident compared to individuals with higher educational levels.

4.2.5 Discussion of the Mediating Mechanism

The study found that there is a positive correlation between new media use and academic self-efficacy, between new media use and social mobility expectations, and between academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations. Therefore, it is speculated that academic self-efficacy may be one of the intermediary mechanisms through which new media use affects social mobility expectations.

New media use provides individuals with a wide variety of learning resources and convenient learning channels, which helps to enhance academic self-efficacy. Individuals, through new media, come into contact with various learning materials, online courses, and learning method sharing. In the process of continuous learning and practice, they gradually

develop a more positive perception of their learning abilities, thereby enhancing academic self-efficacy. The improvement of academic self-efficacy, in turn, encourages individuals to invest more actively in learning, continuously accumulating knowledge and skills^[9]. These knowledge and skills become important capital for individuals, giving them a significant advantage in career development.

Although this study has not yet conducted an in-depth test of this mediating mechanism, from a theoretical perspective, the mediating role of academic self-efficacy between new media use and social mobility expectations is reasonable. Subsequent studies can use methods such as structural equation modeling to further verify this mediating effect and delve deeper into the internal relationships among the three.

5 Conclusion and Discussion

This study, based on the CGSS2021 data, analyzed the impact of new media use on academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations, with the following main findings: 1. The higher the frequency of new media use, the stronger the individual's academic self-efficacy. The rich learning resources, interactive communication platforms, and personalized learning support of new media help individuals enhance their learning abilities and confidence, strengthening academic self-efficacy. 2. The higher the frequency of new media use, the greater the probability of an individual's upward social mobility expectations. New media expands pathways for social mobility, changes individuals' social cognition, exposes them to more opportunity information, and enhances social mobility expectations. 3. The stronger the academic self-efficacy, the greater the probability of an individual's upward social mobility expectations. Individuals with high academic self-efficacy are more proactive in accumulating human capital and are more willing to seize opportunities, enhancing social mobility expectations. 4. The impact of new media use on academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations has regional and educational level heterogeneity. In the eastern region and among individuals with a junior college and above educational level, the positive impact of new media use is more significant.

In terms of policy implications, the following considerations are put forward: 1. In educational policy, given the positive role of new media in enhancing academic self-efficacy, educational departments should increase investment in educational informatization^[10]. On the one hand, efforts should be made to promote the integration and sharing of high-quality educational resources on new media platforms, enriching the diversity and accessibility of educational resources to meet the learning needs of different students. On the other hand, especially attention should be paid to the central-western regions and areas with relatively weak educational resources, strengthening network infrastructure construction in these areas, improving network coverage and quality, and carrying out related training activities to enhance students' ability to use new media for learning, gradually narrowing the educational gap between regions and promoting the realization of educational equity. 2. In social policy, policymakers should fully recognize the important role of new media in affecting social mobility expectations. Policies can be formulated to encourage and support the healthy development of the new media industry, further expanding the application of new media in areas such as vocational training and employment information dissemination, providing individuals with more opportunities to achieve social mobility through new media. For example, a dedicated online employment service platform can be built to integrate various employment resources and promote efficient matching between talent and positions; the deep integration of new media and vocational education can be promoted to develop online vocational skills training courses, enhance the vocational skills level of workers, and strengthen their competitiveness in the labor market, thereby promoting reasonable social mobility.

Despite the innovation of this study, there are still some shortcomings: 1. Data limitations: The CGSS2021 data used in this study is cross-sectional data, which cannot capture the dynamic impact of new media use on academic self-efficacy and social mobility expectations. Future research can use panel data or tracking survey data to more comprehensively analyze the relationship changes among the three. 2. Single measurement of variables: In measuring new media use, only the frequency of use was considered, without distinguishing different new media platforms and purposes of use, which may lead to deviations in the research results. Subsequent research can refine the measurement dimensions of new media use to more accurately explore its impact mechanisms. 3. The specific mediating mechanism was not thoroughly tested: Although it was speculated that academic self-efficacy may be a mediating variable, it was not thoroughly tested. Future research can use more rigorous methods, such as mediating effect testing models, to further verify and analyze the mediating mechanism, improving the theoretical framework.

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