

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND LEARNING ABILITY OF TEACHERS AT GUANCHENG EXPERIMENTAL PRIMARY SCHOOL IN CHENGDU, CHINA

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Abstract: This study aimed to investigate the relationship between teachers' organizational support and learning ability at Guancheng Experimental Primary School in Chengdu, China. The valid sample data were 170 teachers from Guancheng Experimental Primary School. The research tools were the teachers' Perceived Organizational Support Questionnaire compiled by Ling & Yang et al. (2006) and the Learning Ability Questionnaire of Primary School Teachers compiled by Xu (2020). The results showed that the overall level of teachers' organizational support and learning ability was high at Guancheng Experimental Primary School in Chengdu. There were significant differences in teachers' organizational support and learning ability regarding teachers' gender, age, teaching age, and marital status. Teachers' organizational support and learning ability had a significant positive correlation. Based on the research results, analyze, discuss, and ultimately propose targeted recommendations.

Keywords: Guancheng Experimental Primary School, Organizational Support, Learning Ability

Introduction

Globalization brought competition from various industries and countries, and the quantity and quality of human resources were essential guarantees for a country's development. Constructing a learning society and learning schools became a consensus among countries worldwide. Cheng & Zhang (2022) indicated that the construction of the teaching staff was a support measure for educational reform and development and its fundamental aspect. The existence and development of education could not be separated from excellent teachers.

It could be said that without teachers, it would be impossible to discuss the realization and progress of education. With the promotion of global education reform, teachers' learning ability gradually became the focus of education policy, regarded as an essential way to improve schools, education quality, and teachers' academic achievements (Zhang, 2018).

With the increasing objective demand for teachers' quality and the gradual refinement of

educational policies and systems, primary and secondary school teachers had more and more opportunities to participate in teachers' learning ability projects at different levels. The Opinions on the Reform of Teaching Staff Construction issued in 2018 pointed out that building a high-quality, professional, and innovative teaching staff satisfactory to the Party and the people was the primary goal.

In 2019, "China Education Modernization 2035" also emphasized the construction of high-quality, professional, and innovative teachers as one of the essential strategic tasks of education modernization. These policies not only clarified the direction and determination of the country to promote the construction of teachers in the new period but also emphasized the critical role of teachers' professional development in the whole education cause (Yuan, 2019). During his visit to Tsinghua University, he emphasized that teachers were the main force of school development and the backbone of education and teaching. He noted that without high-level teachers, it was difficult to achieve high-level innovation achievements. It could be seen that the professional development of teachers directly affected the effectiveness of educational innovation and the cultivation of high-quality talents (Sun & Zheng, 2021).

In recent years, professional development gradually became a major criterion for evaluating the quality and value of primary school teachers. Indeed, it was necessary to find answers in research and practice on how school organizations could stimulate teacher development and enhance their learning abilities. Regarding the crucial issue of effectively carrying out teacher professional development, Sun (2018) pointed out that it should be based on teacher learning ability, as it was necessary for professional development. It was worth noting that teacher learning ability was different from teacher professional development, mainly because teacher professional development was often described as the process of teachers accepting new knowledge, skills, and values, which would improve the quality of services they provide to customers (Du, 2017).

Teachers' learning ability was considered a learning activity that teachers independently carried out to achieve educational and teaching goals better, including constantly summarizing and reflecting, acquiring new knowledge, cooperating with colleagues, and being brave in experimental innovation (Huo, 2009). This type of learning was a self-directed and ongoing social activity of teachers, related to the complex teaching environment in which they operated and linked to culture, social structure, economy, power, and other factors. However, the occurrence of teacher learning ability was not natural.

Relevant studies in management have shown that organizational support was closely related to the personal and professional development of its internal members (Zhang, 2022). Although the school had its particularity as an organization, it still had the commonness of ordinary organizations. That was, as an essential member of the school organization, the improvement of teachers' learning ability could not be separated from the support of the school organization (Wu & Wang, 2021). However, in previous studies, scholars focused more on the intrinsic driving force behind the improvement of teacher learning

ability, and few in-depth studies explored the actual relationship between teachers' organizational support and teacher learning ability. It provided a practical basis for the development of this study. Based on the above, this study took the primary school teachers of Guancheng Experimental School in Chengdu, China, as the research object, explored the relationship between teachers' organizational support and their learning ability, and finally drew relevant conclusions through empirical measurement and statistical analysis, to help primary school teachers and school administrators strengthen and optimize teachers' organizational support, to enhance teachers' learning ability better.

Research Objectives

(1) To understand the overall organizational support and learning ability of primary school teachers in Guancheng Experimental School of Chengdu, China, and to analyze the differences in organizational support and learning ability of primary school teachers with different demographic backgrounds (gender, age, teaching age and marital status).

(2) To explore the relationship between organizational support and the learning ability of primary school teachers at Guancheng Experimental School in Chengdu, China.

Literature Review

Research on Organizational Support

Organizational support originated from the social exchange theory, which held that the basic social behaviors of human beings could be explained from the perspective of reward and cost. In other words, the giver and the recipient exchanged resources to maximize their benefits (Homans, 1958). Eisenberger & Huntington et al. (1986) studied the overall perception and perception of employees towards the level of care and recognition of the organization based on this theory and proposed the concept of organizational support, which is explained as the overall cognition formed by employees' attention to the organization's efforts and concern for their happiness in their work. This concept mainly contained two core points: first, employees could feel the affirmation of their contributions by the organization. Secondly, employees could feel the concern and support of the organization for their interests. Ling & Yang et al. (2006), based on the existing research results and combined with the development background of China, put forward the definition of organizational support suitable for China's localization. Organizational support referred to the overall perception that employees could feel support from the organization, concern for profit, and agree with employees' values in their daily work. This proposition on organizational support has been widely recognized and adopted in domestic research. Jiang, Yu et al. (2014) believed that organizational support was the degree to which employees were considered and recognized by their organization. Employees could judge whether the organization's support was adequate based on the emotions reflected in the organization's evaluation

and feedback. If the emotion was positive, it was effective.

The dimension measurement of organizational support transitioned from one-dimensional to multi-dimensional. Eisenberg & Huntington et al. (1986) conducted in-depth research on perceived organizational support, compiling a questionnaire for measuring perceived organizational support. The employees of 9 enterprises were investigated using Likert's seven-point scale scoring method. Through a series of tests and amendments, it was proved that the questionnaire was one-dimensional. With the development of research, scholars explored the internal structure of organizational support to some extent. In addition, many scholars believed that organizational support was a multidimensional concept. Kraimer & Wayne (2004) proposed that perceived organizational support could be studied from three dimensions: environmental adaptation support, personal financial support, and career support. According to Allen (2001) perceived organizational support mainly covered three aspects: instrumental support, emotional support, and superior support. The research on the measurement of perceived organizational support started late in China, represented by the research on perceived organizational support by Ling & Yang et al. (2006). They fully considered the differences between China and Western countries, combining the characteristics of Chinese enterprises in their research to develop an organizational support questionnaire. The questionnaire divided organizational support into work support, value identification, and concern for profit. After empirical testing, a mature and structured questionnaire on organizational support was finally obtained, providing a certain reference value for the human resource management of enterprises and institutions in China. Scholars recognized this dimension division. Based on existing research results, Cui (2006) divided the organizational support of enterprise employees into four dimensions in her study: organizational atmosphere, work support, concern for profit, and personal development. Gao (2018) put forth the same viewpoint in the research. The research held that organizational support was a broad concept and studied individual organizational support from four aspects: colleague, superior, tool, and emotional support.

Fairness was one of the most critical factors in organizational support (Zhao, 2017). This concept covered aspects such as information fairness, distribution fairness, procedural fairness, and social fairness. Communication fairness referred to an equal relationship between the organization and employees, which included treating all employees equally, respecting and protecting legitimate rights and interests, and expecting employees to abide by the rules and regulations of the organization consciously. This equality and mutual respected relationship helped establish a healthy organizational atmosphere and encouraged employees to have a stronger sense of support for the organization. To a certain extent, the organization paid employees due compensation, reflecting respect for employees' value. This value could be roughly divided into the functional value of distribution results and the symbolic value of distribution results. Fair distribution results in employees generating more organizational commitment, enhancing their loyalty (Liu & Dai, 2019). Eisenberger & Rhoades (2001)

pointed out that when the organization gave employees more work autonomy and allowed them to arrange their work independently, it reflected their full trust in employees. This trust strengthened employees' sense of ownership, generating more organizational support. In short, by giving employees greater autonomy in their work, the organization stimulated employees' sense of responsibility and belonging, and then promoted the formation of organizational support. Chen & Yin (2009) reached the same viewpoint in their research. The research found that employees with high organizational support tend to show higher task and contextual performance. It meant the organization's sense of support for employees could effectively predict their performance level in task fulfillment and peripheral work. A high level of organizational support could help stimulate employee motivation and engagement, improving their overall work performance (Wang & Gai, 2019).

Research on Learning Ability

When it came to teacher learning ability, the first thing to understand was what teacher learning ability was. Scholars' interpretation of teacher learning ability mostly included two key words: self and ability. Cui (2014) defined teacher learning ability as the collective force that encouraged teachers to learn new knowledge, internalized and generated experience actively, dared to question and deny, and actively reflected and improved. Chen & Zhang (2014) found that teacher learning ability was a completely new concept that differed from teacher professional development. The research advocated that the development of teachers' learning ability should pay attention to the "school-based" path. It emphasized that teachers' learning ability referred to teachers' active pursuit of overall quality improvement under the support of the external environment, which was a unified process of teachers' personal professional development and personal growth.

Based on the viewpoint of teacher training, Chai (2018) defined teachers' learning ability as a series of abilities possessed by individual teachers to promote self-development, constituting an internal driving force to encourage teachers to reflect, criticize, and accept reconstruction voluntarily. This definition highlighted the relevance of teacher learning to the training process, emphasizing the autonomy and motivation of teachers in self-development and the ability to continuously promote individual growth and improvement in the training environment. All these studies emphasized that teachers' learning ability, as a comprehensive ability, aimed to improve teachers' performance in professional fields, highlighting its close relationship with the learning environment and theoretical framework.

According to Xu's (2020) research, teacher learning ability was the sum of the abilities exhibited by teachers for their professional growth. This power was concentrated in teaching practice and educational contexts, committed to promoting teachers' professional learning and development. It was divided into three aspects: learning motivation included educational ideals and desires, career and learning goal planning. Learning willpower included learning persistence and self-monitoring ability.

The ability to learn included situational comprehension, problem-solving, reflective enhancement, and reciprocal innovation.

Liang & Wu (2018) also divided teachers' learning ability into a learning power system and a learning operation system from the perspective of pre-service teacher training. From their point of view, learning motivation was subdivided into three aspects: the driving force of pre-service teachers to maintain the learning status, plan the learning path, and adjust the learning mechanism. The learning operation ability was also subdivided into three aspects: the pre-service teachers' ability to absorb and learn knowledge and skills, the ability to learn and use experience, and the ability to study and solve problems. This division was more detailed, highlighting the specific driving forces and operational elements of learning ability during the pre-service training stage of teachers.

In Xu's (2020) study, teacher learning ability was divided into three dimensions: learning drive, learning willpower, and ability to learn. Among them, learning drive referred to educational ideals and aspirations, career, and learning goal planning. Learning willpower specifically referred to learning persistence and self-monitoring. Learning ability referred to problem inquiry, situation understanding, reflection promotion, and reciprocal innovation ability. These detailed dimensions emphasized the multi-level and multi-faceted elements of teachers' learning ability, which helped understand and cultivate teachers' learning ability more comprehensively. Cui (2014) made an in-depth exploration of teachers' learning ability from the perspective of psychology. The research pointed out that teachers' learning ability was a positive internal driving force, which could be divided into acceptance, inquiry, generation, and reflection. These four abilities were interrelated and influenced each other, and finally, teachers' learning ability was effectively improved.

Akiba (2011) summarized the pre-influencing factors that could predict teachers' learning ability by comparing the monitoring contents of these three major projects. These factors included the main support of teachers' learning ability, that was, the support from education policy, school organization, and leadership. It also included the learning content and learning form of teachers' learning ability. Li & Hallinger et al. (2016), A study of 32 primary schools in Hong Kong, found that organizational factors such as cooperation, trust, communication, and school structure in schools affect the motivation of teachers to learn. From the perspective of social exchange theory, Liu thought that school leaders, teachers' trust, and teachers' initiative have a significant impact on teachers' learning ability and put forward that teachers' trust and initiative play an intermediary role between school leaders and teachers' learning ability. From the perspective of self-organization theory, Lang (2017) believed that open ideas, dialogue and communication, collaborative competition, and network interaction promote teachers' learning ability. Li & Dai (2018) argued that school leaders must provide supportive and shared leadership structures for teachers to establish a positive school culture and effective teacher learning abilities, thereby promoting school progress.

Research on the Relationship between Organizational Support and Learning Ability

In the investigation and analysis of primary and secondary school teachers in Hong Kong, Jack & Nicholas(2003) found that teachers' teamwork, participation in school decision-making, flexibility of work arrangement, and other factors were essential influencing factors of teachers' participation in learning activities. Hou (2017) found that the learning time, learning culture, and professional support provided by schools had an essential impact on improving the learning literacy of teachers. Chen (2014) pointed out that the effectiveness of teacher learning was not only related to the historical period and actual situation they were in but also constrained by various external factors. It was also intricately related to the teacher's identity and daily life. Zhao (2020) studied teachers' learning literacy based on teachers' working atmosphere and teachers' psychology and found that there was a significant positive correlation between teachers' internal drive and their professional consciousness, innovation, training support, and autonomy in the school atmosphere and teachers' learning ability, while there was a significant negative correlation between institutional fairness and performance evaluation and teachers' learning ability.

In management, relevant research has shown that organizational support was closely related to the development of its internal members (Guo & Chen et al., 2023). Although a school had its particularity as an organization, it still had the commonness of ordinary organizations. Teachers, as essential members of school organizations, could not improve their learning ability without the support of school organizations (Lin & Yin, 2018). Therefore, this study took the primary school teachers in Chengdu Guancheng Experimental School as the research object and started with the organizational support given by the school to teachers, discussed the actual relationship and influence of organizational support on teachers' learning ability, analyzed and discussed the research results, and put forward targeted suggestions to help educators and school administrators improve organizational support more systematically, to help teachers better complete their learning ability.

Methodology

The main subjects of this study were primary school teachers from Guancheng Experimental School in Chengdu, China. In the formal investigation stage, the school liaison staff distributed questionnaires to primary school teachers. One hundred seventy questionnaires were distributed, and the relevant data were statistically analyzed based on the recovered data.

This study used an organizational support questionnaire developed by Ling & et al. (2006). There were 15 items on the scale, and organizational support was divided into three dimensions: work support, value recognition, and concern for profit.

This study employed the primary school teacher learning ability questionnaire developed by Xu (2020) to investigate the teacher's learning ability from three aspects: learning drive, learning

willpower, and ability to learn. The questionnaire consisted of 27 items.

Results

Demographic Analysis of the Respondents

In this study, the primary school teachers of Guancheng Experimental School in Chengdu, China, were taken as the research objects, and 170 collected data were analyzed for demographic backgrounds, including the distribution of demographic backgrounds of teachers' gender, age, teaching age, and marital status. The sample size of this research object in different demographic backgrounds was as follows: regarding gender, there were 39 male teachers, accounting for 22.9% of the total sample size, and 131 female teachers, accounting for 77.1% of the total sample size. Regarding age, there were 80 teachers aged 30 and below, accounting for 31.8% of the total sample; 54 teachers aged 31-40, accounting for 31.8% of the total sample; and 36 teachers aged 41 and above, accounting for 21.2%. Regarding teaching age, there were 56 teachers with teaching age of 1-5 years, accounting for 32.9% of the total sample, 68 teachers with teaching age of 6-10 years, accounting for 40.0% of the total sample, and 46 teachers with teaching age of 11 years and above, accounting for 27.1% of the total sample. Regarding marital status, there were 114 unmarried teachers, 67.1% of the total sample, and 56 married teachers, accounting for 32.9%. Overall, there were many female teachers in the primary school teachers which were relatively evenly distributed regarding age and teaching age. Among them, teachers aged 30 and below and with teaching ages of 6-10 years were the backbone of the school, and unmarried teachers were the majority. It was worth noting that among the teachers in this school, young and middle-aged teachers accounted for a large proportion.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

(1) Descriptive statistical analysis of the current organizational support among primary school teachers

This study used descriptive statistical methods to conduct a statistical analysis of the current organizational support among primary school teachers. As shown in Table 1, the overall organizational support among primary school teachers was $M=3.59$, with M values ranging from 3.55 to 3.61 in each dimension. The overall level and dimensions were higher than the theoretical mean of 3, indicating that the overall level of organizational support among primary school teachers was high.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistical Analysis of the Current Organizational Support (N=170)

Dimension	Mean	SD
Work support	3.61	0.98
Value identification	3.59	0.90
Concern for profit	3.55	0.95
Overall organizational support	3.59	0.80

(2) Descriptive statistical analysis of the current learning ability of primary school teachers

This study used descriptive statistical methods to analyze primary school teachers' current level of learning ability. As shown in Table 2, the overall level of primary school teachers' learning ability in Guancheng Experimental School was $M=3.82$, and the M values of each dimension were 3.79-3.88. The overall level and each dimension were higher than the theoretical average of 3, indicating that the overall level of primary school teachers' learning ability was good.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistical Analysis of the Current Learning Ability (N=170)

Dimension	Mean	SD
Learn drive	3.80	0.78
Learning willpower	3.88	0.72
Ability to learn	3.79	0.70
Overall learning ability	3.82	0.64

Differential Analysis

This study used an independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA to analyze teachers' organizational support and learning ability differences among different demographic backgrounds (gender, age, teaching age, and marital status) in Guancheng Experimental Primary School.

There were significant differences in organizational support of teachers in Guancheng Experimental Primary School in Chengdu, China, regarding gender, age, teaching age, and marital status. There were significant differences in teachers' learning ability in Guancheng Experimental Primary School in Chengdu, China, regarding gender, age, teaching age, and marital status.

Correlation Analysis

This study used Pearson correlation analysis to analyze the relationship between organizational support and learning ability at Guancheng Experimental Primary School in Chengdu, China. As shown in Table 3, the overall correlation coefficient between the organizational support and the learning ability of teachers at Guancheng Experimental Primary School in Chengdu, China, was $r=0.738$, which reached a significant level ($p<0.01$). Overall, there was a significant positive correlation between organizational support and the learning ability of teachers at Guancheng Experimental Primary School, China.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis Between Organizational Support and Learning Ability of Primary School Teachers

	Correlation	Organizational Support
Learning Ability	Correlation Coefficient	0.738**
	P value	0.000

Discussion

Current Organizational Support and Learning Ability among Primary School Teachers

The results of this study showed that the overall level of primary school teachers' organizational support was good, and there was little difference among all dimensions, among which work support was the highest, followed by value recognition, and interest care was the lowest. This research result was consistent with the findings of Ji & Zhao (2021).

This study analyzed that teacher felt certain support and concern regarding the organization. It was a positive signal, as the organizational support from teachers played an essential role in improving teaching quality and teacher job satisfaction. Teachers could feel better support only when schools took comprehensive management measures to provide teachers with organizational support, ensuring that all dimensions were balanced. It was helpful for schools to understand teachers' needs and expectations better, further improve the organizational support system, and enhance teachers' overall work experience and the overall performance level of schools.

The results of this study showed that primary school teachers' overall level of learning ability was high. There was not much difference in various dimensions, among which learning willpower was relatively the highest, followed by the learning drive. Finally, the ability to learn was relatively the lowest. This research result was consistent with the findings of Xu (2020). This study suggested that this could not be achieved without the school's emphasis and support of the professional development of teachers. The school provided excellent learning resources and training opportunities for teachers, encouraged them to improve their professional competence continuously, and motivated them to develop their profession, further improving the quality of teaching.

Differences in Organizational Support and Learning Ability among Different Demographic Backgrounds among Primary School Teachers

This study showed a significant difference in primary school teachers' organizational support and learning ability regarding age. Teachers aged 31 to 40 had significantly higher organizational support than those aged 30 and below. The teachers' learning ability aged 31 and above was significantly higher than that of teachers aged 30 and below. This study's results were consistent with the existing research results (Yang, 2020). In this study, teachers aged between 31 and 40 were more mature and experienced and could better understand and feel the importance of organizational support provided by schools. Teachers of this age paid more attention to their career development and professional growth, and the demand for learning ability was more urgent. In addition, teachers aged 31-40 were the backbone of the school, and the school would provide them with more learning opportunities and resources to satisfy their desire to improve their professional ability (Guo, Chen, & Hu, 2023).

This study showed significant differences in primary school teachers' organizational support and learning ability regarding marital status, with unmarried teachers having significantly higher levels of organizational support and learning ability than married teachers. This research result was consistent

with existing research results (Wang & Gai, 2019).

In this study, unmarried teachers might be more flexible in career development, more able to focus on their learning and growth, and have more time and energy to devote to professional development, thus showing outstanding learning ability. In addition, unmarried teachers might be more sensitive to work support, and work might become the focus of their lives to a certain extent. Secondly, married teachers might face the dual pressures of family and occupation and must balance work and family. It might lead to their relatively less investment in study and work, thus scoring lower in teachers' organizational support and learning ability (Yang, 2020).

Relationship between Organizational Support and the Learning Ability of Primary School Teachers

The results of this study showed that there was a significant positive correlation between teacher organizational support and learning ability. This research result was consistent with Lin & Yin's (2018) findings. It meant that the stronger the school organization's support, the higher their learning ability. This study analyzed this.

First, a supportive working environment usually helped teachers better participate in learning. Good organizational support could create a positive and inspiring working atmosphere for teachers and make them more willing to participate in teaching and learning activities. Secondly, the organizational support provided by schools included training opportunities, professional development resources, and academic exchange platforms. When teachers feel this support, they might be more motivated to pursue new knowledge and upgrade their skills, thus enhancing their learning ability.

In addition, good organizational support helped promote cooperation and knowledge sharing among teachers, which might lead to more learning opportunities and experience exchange and help teachers improve their learning ability together. Finally, when teachers feel the care and recognition of the school, they might be more confident and willing to face new learning challenges. This self-confidence was crucial to improving teachers' learning ability and teaching quality. Overall, the positive correlation between teacher organizational support and teacher learning ability was a mutually reinforcing cycle, which helped to form a positive learning atmosphere and improve the overall level of teacher learning ability. Schools could continue strengthening organizational support to stimulate and support teachers' learning needs.

Conclusions

- 1) The overall level of teachers' organizational support at Guancheng Experimental Primary School in Chengdu, China, was high. The general level of teachers' learning ability was high.
- 2) There were significant differences in organizational support of teachers in Guancheng Experimental Primary School in Chengdu, China, regarding gender, age, teaching age, and marital

status. There were significant differences in teachers' learning ability regarding gender, age, teaching age, and marital status.

3) There was a significant positive correlation between teachers' organizational support and learning ability at Guancheng Experimental Primary School in Chengdu, China.

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