

A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENSE OF ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND YOUNG TEACHERS' DEDICATION IN Y PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN SHANDONG PROVINCE, CHINA

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Abstract: This study focuses on the relationship between sense of organizational support and young teachers' dedication in Y private colleges and universities in Shandong Province, China. A convenience sample of 268 young teachers from Y private colleges and universities in Shandong Province, China, was surveyed using questionnaires. Descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, one-way ANOVA and correlation analysis were used: 1). The sense of organizational support and dedication of young teachers at this school is moderately high. 2). There is no significant difference in young teachers' sense of organizational support by gender, age, education, title, type of subject taught, and years of experience. 3). In terms of the degree of dedication of young teachers, there is a difference in the degree of dedication of young teachers with different academic qualifications, but not with different genders, ages, titles, types of subjects taught, or years of experience. 4). There is a significant positive correlation between the variables of sense of organizational support and young teachers' dedication. The researchers concluded by discussing each finding and making relevant recommendations for the improvement of young teachers' dedication in Y private colleges and universities.

Keywords: Sense of Organizational Support, Dedication, Young Teachers

Introduction

The topic of employee engagement has accumulated a great deal of research over the last 30 years (Saks, 2006). Most of the previous studies focused on the conceptual connotation of engagement, the delineation of dimensions and the development of scales in different scenarios. In recent years, scholars have focused on the antecedent and consequential factors of engagement, such as the effects of organizational support and organizational fairness on engagement, as well as the role of engagement on work engagement, organizational commitment, and turnover tendency. Meanwhile, Allen, et.al.(2003), Maertz, et.al.(2007) concluded that the sense of organizational support significantly

reduces the rate of employee turnover, and at the same time, it can significantly enhance employees' sense of belonging and engagement. However, while research on engagement in organizational settings is flourishing (Bakker, Albrecht & Leiter, 2011; Sonnentag, 2003), research on engagement in education has not received the same attention (Klasse, Yerdelen, & Durksen, (2013).

According to Ling (2006), in the Chinese cultural environment, sense of organizational support is the employees' perceived organization's support for their work, caring interests and value recognition, which indicates that employees deeply feel the positive role of sense of organizational support. The sense of organizational support can enhance employees' dedication (Liang, 2014), and when employees feel the support, care and attention of the organization, they will work harder and create performance to return to the organization (Peng & Hu, 2019). Taking Chinese colleges and universities as the general environment, the improvement of college teachers' engagement (engagement) is the key to stimulate energy (Liu & Zhang, 2021). However, in 2015, Gallup, a world-renowned research organization, initiated a global survey on the level of teacher engagement in colleges and universities, and the results of the study showed that only 30% of college and university teachers have engagement, and a large proportion of college and university teachers lack engagement, which hinders the quality of student learning and hinders the progress of higher education (Ma, 2020). This indicates that low teacher engagement in higher education is a global problem. At the same time, empirical research on teacher engagement in higher education is still relatively limited throughout the field of teacher engagement research (Li, 2022). The number of studies on the current situation and characteristics of the sense of organizational support of the teacher community is similarly small (Xiang, 2022).

As of September 2021, according to a list published by the Chinese Ministry of Education, there are 153 general higher education institutions in Shandong Province, with 70 undergraduate institutions, including 25 private undergraduate colleges and universities, accounting for one-third of the undergraduate colleges and universities in Shandong Province. Among them, young teachers from private colleges and universities are becoming the mainstay of the faculty of private colleges and universities (Li, 2022), and the quality of their teaching is related to the overall quality of higher education in China (He, Jiang & Li, 2023). However, Zhou's (2023) empirical survey of more than three hundred young teachers in private colleges and universities in Shandong Province found that young teachers in private colleges and universities in Shandong Province had a low sense of fulfillment, a low sense of social identity, and that teachers lacked a sense of accomplishment at work. In this context, it is particularly necessary to study the issue of sense of organizational support and young teachers' dedication in private colleges and universities.

Research Objectives

- (1) To understand the current status of young teachers' gender, age, education, and years of

working experience in private colleges and universities in Y, Shandong Province, China.

(2) To understand the variability of young teachers' perceptions of organizational support and engagement across demographic contexts such as gender, age, education, and years of experience.

(3) To explore the situation of correlation between the variables of young teachers' sense of organizational support and dedication.

Literature Review

Research on Sense of Organizational Support

The concept of perceived organizational support was proposed by Robert Eisenberger, an American social psychologist, and is based on the principles of reciprocity, social exchange theory, reward, and organizational anthropomorphism, or POS theory (Zhao, 2020). The concept of perceived organizational support was proposed by Robert Eisenberger, an American social psychologist, and is based on the "principle of reciprocity", the "social exchange theory", the "principle of reward" and the theory of organizational anthropomorphism, or POS theory (Zhao, 2020). The POS theory provides a new perspective on the employee-organization relationship, as Robert Eisenberger (1986) argues that the concept of POS is: the employee's overall perceptions and beliefs about the organization, which are reflected in the organization's feelings about the employee's contribution and dedication, as well as the degree of concern for the employee's well-being and interests. The degree of concern for employees' well-being and interests. This definition largely corrects the notion in previous research that "employees should be committed to the organization" while ignoring the fact that "the organization should also be committed to the employees" and emphasizes the organization's concern and importance to the employees.

Millin (1997) argued that the sense of organizational support is the understanding, respect and support given by the organization to the employees on with the support derived from the information, training, hardware, etc., provided by the organization. Shore & Tetrick (1991) examined the relationship between the sense of organizational support, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and continuance commitment by using a validated factor analysis. The results of the study indicated that there were differences between the sense of organizational support and job satisfaction, affective commitment and continuance commitment, which were conceptually independent.

There are not many empirical studies on the sense of organizational support in China, and the conceptual studies on the sense of organizational support have not been able to reach unity so far (Liu, 2021). The main findings are as follows: Ling et al. (2001), using Chinese employees as their subjects, perceived that the sense of organizational support mainly comes from the work aspect and the life aspect; Xu Xiaofeng et al. (2005) pointed out that the sense of organizational support covers two key aspects: firstly, the extent to which employees perceive the organization's attention to the efforts and

contributions they make; and secondly, the extent to which employees perceive that the organization pays attention to their material and immaterial well-being.

In terms of the influencing factors of the sense of organizational support, scholars have mostly researched in terms of antecedents, outcomes and other perspectives. For example, Ronghai et al. (2004) derived six antecedent variables on the sense of organizational support through exploratory factor analysis: caring for employees' material quality of life, caring for employees' spiritual needs, carrying out regular or occasional training, providing comfort in the workplace, planning for career development, and providing safety and security. The articles on the outcome variables of the sense of organizational support are broadly classified into two types: first, the literature on the impact of the sense of organizational support on work attitudes, which mainly includes organizational commitment, satisfaction, responsibility, and dedication; and second, the literature on the impact of the sense of organizational support on the behavioral aspects of the sense of organizational support, which mainly includes work commitment, the tendency to leave the workplace, professional development, and so on.

Research on Dedication

Goffman (1959, 1960) used the term "Employee Engagement" to explain "Engagement", which is the behavior of employees who put their self and energy into their self-roles (Liang, 2014). Later in the 20th century, Kahn (1990) first proposed the concept of Employee Engagement through the method of interviews, and he believed that engagement can be viewed from the individual's commitment, cognition, and perception. (2014).

In the late 20th century, Kahn (1990) first proposed the concept of Employee Engagement by interviewing employees, and he believed that engagement can be reflected in the three states of an individual's engagement, cognition, and emotion. On the basis of Kahn's research, Maslach (1996) believed that engagement and job burnout are two opposites; engagement is an individual's energy-filled commitment to work, while job burnout is manifested in three aspects: emotional exhaustion, cynical and cynical attitudes, and a lack of job efficacy.

In China, many scholars analyze and study the theoretical results on the basis of foreign research combined with the actual situation in China, so as to be closer to the Chinese national conditions and more helpful to the guidance of Chinese enterprises and schools in the management of dedication. According to Feng (2017), employee dedication refers to the employee's dedication and love for their work is recognized by the organization, and their own and the organization's management style, organizational culture resonates, so that the employee is committed to voluntarily infecting other employees through their actions and making their own contributions to the development of the organization. Dong (2021) pointed out that dedication refers to the degree of psychological commitment to the organization and the work shown by the employee, the employee's high degree of dedication to the organization, the work will produce a high degree of positive, focused, enthusiastic emotions.

In the study of factors affecting engagement, Andy Parsley (2006) stated that the factors affecting employee engagement are: employee involvement, employee values, company reputation, communication mechanisms, career development opportunities, etc., while employee engagement affects the steady rise of company performance. Affective commitment of employees in enterprises and institutions positively affects engagement (Dong, 2021).

Among the articles that study the outcome variables of engagement, there are more articles on the correlation between engagement and turnover rate, job performance, job performance, etc. For example, Harter (2002) points out that employee engagement is positively correlated with customer satisfaction, productivity level, corporate profitability, and overall performance, and negatively correlated with employee turnover and accident rate; Schaufeli et al.(2000) confirmed the negative correlation between dedication and willingness to leave; Guo (2012) suggested that dedication has a facilitating role in the process of job performance improvement in the study of the relationship between job performance and dedication of college teachers.

Research on the Relationship Between Sense of Organizational Support and Dedication

Through combing through the relevant literature, it was found that the research on the relationship between the sense of organizational support and dedication is mostly carried out by employees, court officers, nurses, civil servants, college administrators and other research objects, and the research content is mediated by organizational commitment, psychological capital, organizational cultural identity or psychological security to develop the relevant research between the sense of organizational support and dedication.

For example, Liang (2014), targeting the employees of enterprises in the Pearl River Delta region, obtained the conclusion that the sense of organizational support has a significant positive effect on organizational commitment and dedication, and that enterprises should pay attention to improving the relationship between the organization and the employees, so as to promote the better development of the enterprise and the employees, and achieve a win-win situation.

Some scholars use psychological capital as a mediating effect to study the influence of sense of organizational support on employee engagement. Wang (2022) pointed out that sense of organizational support positively affects employee engagement; psychological capital partially and significantly positively affects employee engagement; psychological capital plays a mediating role in sense of organizational support and engagement.

There are also some scholars who conduct research on the relationship between sense of organizational support and employee engagement using organizational cultural identity and psychological security as mediating roles. For example, Yu (2020) pointed out that the sense of organizational support positively affects employee engagement, and the dimensions of organizational cultural identity play a mediating role in the relationship between the sense of organizational support

and the dimensions of employee engagement.

In the literature study with teachers as the object of study, Luo (2014) took the high-level talents of research universities in China as the object of study, and found that in some dimensions of the sense of organizational support, dedication and job performance, different levels of demographic variables have an impact on the three variables through independent sample test and ANOVA, therefore, as a control variable the demographic variables as a whole were subjected to a regression analysis, revealing that the interrelationship between sense of organizational support, dedication and job performance.

Although the above literature study can prove that there is a significant relationship between the two variables of organizational support and dedication, but through the process of reviewing the literature, the number of relevant literature on the relationship between organizational support and dedication with college teachers as the object of study is lacking, especially with young teachers in private colleges and universities as the object of study, research on the relationship between the sense of organizational support and dedication, there is still a certain gap in the literature. This paper focuses on young teachers in private colleges and universities as the research object and explores the relationship between the sense of organizational support and the degree of professionalism of young teachers as the starting point, so as to make academic exploration for the research on the degree of professionalism of young teachers in private colleges and universities in China.

Methodology

The research subjects of this paper are all young teachers in Y private colleges and universities in Shandong Province, China, with a total number of 891. The total number of the research subjects was obtained from the statistics of the Human Resources Department of Y private colleges and universities in Shandong Province, China. According to Morgan's table, 268 questionnaires need to be collected.

In this study, we selected the mature scales developed by our predecessors: the Sense of Organizational Support Scale by Zhang (2019) and the Dedication Scale by Leong (2014). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of all the scales were greater than 0.7, and the KMO values were greater than 0.8, with good levels of reliability and validity.

Results

Analysis of the basic situation of the sample

A total of 267 valid questionnaires were collected through the online questionnaire. The number of female teachers in the survey sample of young teachers in Y private colleges and universities in Shandong Province who participated in the survey was 148, which was more than 50% of the total number, and the number of male teachers was 119, which accounted for 44.4%.

In terms of age distribution, 38.6% of the teachers were between 26-30 years old, and there were 103 of them, 74 young teachers between 20-25 years old, accounting for 27.7%, 50 teachers between 31-35 years old, accounting for 18.7%, and 40 teachers between 36-40 years old, accounting for 15.0%.

In terms of education, most of the young teachers have master's degree, numbering 217, accounting for 81.3% of the total, 26 teachers with doctoral degree, accounting for 9.7%, 22 teachers with bachelor's degree, accounting for 8.2%, and the smallest number of teachers with specialist degree or below, only 2.

In terms of titles, the number of young teachers with the title of lecturer is the largest, with 131 teachers, accounting for 49.1% of the total number, the number of teachers with the title of assistant professor is 103, accounting for 38.6%, the number of teachers with the title of associate professor is 26, accounting for 9.7%, and the number of teachers with the title of professor is the smallest, with 7 teachers, accounting for 2.6%.

In terms of the types of subjects taught by the teachers, 124 teachers teach science and engineering subjects, the largest number, accounting for 46.4%, 89 young teachers teach liberal arts majors, which is 33.3% of the total, and the number of young teachers teach arts and sports majors is 54, which only accounts for 20.2% of the total.

In terms of the years of experience of young teachers, 127 teachers have 1 to 3 years of experience, which is 47.6% of the total sample, 66 teachers have less than 1 year of experience, which is 24.7% of the total sample, the number of teachers with 3 to 5 years of experience is 47, which is 17.6% of the total sample, and the least number of teachers with more than 5 years of experience is only 27, which is 10.1% of the total sample.

Descriptive Statistics of Young Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Dedication

As shown in Table 1, the overall mean of young teachers' sense of organizational support is 3.8965, which indicates that the level of young teachers' sense of organizational support is generally located in the middle to high level. As shown in Table 2, the overall mean of the level of dedication of young teachers is 3.9634, which indicates that the level of dedication of young teachers is generally located in the middle to high level.

Differential Analysis of Young Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Dedication in Relation to Demographic Factors

There is no significant difference in the demographic factors of young teachers' sense of organizational support in Y private colleges and universities in Shandong Province, while there is a significant difference in the part of demographic factors of young teachers' dedication. Among them, there is a significant difference in the overall level of dedication of young teachers with different academic qualifications, while there is no significant difference in the five demographic factors of

dedication of young teachers with different genders, ages, titles, types of disciplines taught, and different years of working experience.

Correlation analysis between two variables

In this study, Person correlation coefficient was used to analyze whether there is a correlation between the two variables. It was found that young teachers' sense of organizational support was positively correlated with dedication. The overall correlation is shown in Table 3.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Young Teachers' Perception of Organizational Support

Subject	N	Mean	SD
1. The school helps me when I have problems at work.	267	3.8427	1.25266
2. I do a good job and the school pays attention.	267	3.9064	1.18680
3. The school has provided me with fair opportunities for advancement.	267	3.9738	1.24878
4. The school is very supportive of my participation in work-related training or further studies.	267	3.9288	1.16278
5. The school provides me with good working conditions.	267	3.8539	1.19728
6. The school is willing to do all it can to help me maximize my work potential.	267	3.9551	1.10273
7. The school will agree to my reasonable request for improved working conditions.	267	3.8277	1.23859
8. The school strives to make my job fun.	267	3.9064	1.22422
9. The school values my contribution to its development.	267	3.8876	1.16113
10. If I resign, the school will retain me.	267	3.8689	1.19273
11. The school will be proud of my accomplishments in my work.	267	3.8277	1.16992
12. School leaders would be proud to have me as a member of their school.	267	3.9888	1.13549
13. The school values my opinion.	267	3.9326	1.19646
14. The school believes that the work I am doing now would be done just as well if someone else were doing it.	267	3.9101	1.22910
15. The school makes me feel like a valued member.	267	3.8689	1.12459
16. The school is very concerned about my living conditions.	267	3.8951	1.20629
17. The school will look after my interests when making decisions that affect me.	267	4.0562	1.17965
18. The school will ignore any complaints I have.	267	3.7978	1.15862
19. The school will consider how much I should be paid.	267	3.7715	1.22791
20. When funds are available, the university will consider increasing my compensation.	267	3.8876	1.23335
21. When I need special help, the school gives assistance.	267	3.9438	1.24477
22. The school rewards me for my extra labor effort.	267	3.8914	1.13696
Sense of organizational support	267	3.8965	1.00537

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Young Teachers' Dedication

Subject	N	Mean	SD
1. I am always motivated in my work.	267	3.9139	1.18420
2. I am passionate about my work	267	3.9850	1.20765
3. I am happy in an intense and stressful job	267	3.9625	1.18516
4. I am empowered and energized in my work.	267	3.9588	1.08743
5. My work inspires and motivates me	267	3.9775	1.19187
6. I am able to forget everything around me when I am working.	267	3.9888	1.10189
7. Every morning I'm excited about the work I'm about to start.	267	4.0075	1.27436
8. I am immersed in my work	267	3.9139	1.21553
9. I'm proud of what I'm doing.	267	3.9625	1.14974
professionalism	267	3.9634	1.01746

Table 3: Correlation analysis of perceived organizational support and dedication among young teachers

Dimension	Vigorous	Devotion	with single-hearted devotion	professionalism
Job support	.057**	.049**	.055**	.056**
value identity	.056**	.044**	.068**	.058**
concerned about sth.	.069**	.059**	.072**	.069**
Sense of organizational support	.062**	.052**	.065**	.062**

Note: *P<0.05; **P<0.01; ***P<0.001

Discussion

Current level of background information on the teacher population

Young teachers have higher educational levels and generally lower titles and years of experience, and the sample distribution is in line with reality. Overall, the level of perceived organizational support of young teachers in private colleges and universities in Y, Shandong Province, China, is generally located in the upper middle level, and the level of dedication is also generally located in the upper middle level, which is basically in line with the findings of Fan (2012), and Wang, & Qi (2023).

Differences in Young Teachers' Sense of Organizational Support and Dedication across Contextual Variables

There was no significant difference in the level of perceived organizational support among young teachers with different demographic factors, partially corroborating the findings of Li Xia & Shang Yuvan et al. (2013). There was no significant difference in the level of young teachers' dedication across gender and age, similar to the findings of Feng Weidong (2014), Zhang Siqi (2015), and Zhang Yuanting (2020); there was also no significant difference in the level of young teachers' dedication across title, type of subject taught, and years of experience, which was similar to the findings of Peng Yan (2020), Zhang Siqi (2015), and Ui Jieyang & Fan Xianglan (2022)'s findings were partially consistent; on the education variable, there was a significant difference in the level of dedication of

young teachers with different education levels, which was consistent with the findings of Li Zhi (2022) and Luo Anna (2017).

Correlation Analysis of Sense of Organizational Support and Dedication among Young Teachers

The study found through Pearson correlation analysis that there is a significant positive correlation between young teachers' sense of organizational support and dedication, and that there are different degrees of positive correlations between the sense of organizational support and the dimensions of dedication. As the level of young teachers' sense of organizational support increases, the level of dedication becomes higher and higher, and existing studies have reached the same conclusion (Wang & Teng, 2022; Zhao, 2016).

Conclusions

1) Demographic background information of young teachers in private colleges and universities in Y, Shandong Province, China, including their gender, age, education, and years of working experience the results of the analysis of the overall current situation show that the number of female teachers participating in the survey sample is higher than that of male teachers. The 26-30 age group has the largest number of young teachers, which is close to 40% of the total. Young teachers with master's degree were the most numerous, accounting for 81.3% of the total. The highest number of young teachers with the title of lecturer is 131. The highest number of young teachers teaching scientific and technical subjects. In terms of years of working experience, 127 teachers had 1 to 3 years of working experience, accounting for 47.6% of the total sample.

2) The overall level of young teachers' sense of organizational support and dedication in private colleges and universities in Y, Shandong Province, China, is in the middle to high level, with some room for improvement.

3) There is no significant difference in the demographic factors of young teachers' sense of organizational support in Y private colleges and universities in Shandong Province, while there is a significant difference in the part of demographic factors of young teachers' dedication. Among them, there is a difference in the degree of education on the degree of dedication of young teachers, and there is a significant difference in the dimension of dedication among young teachers with different degrees, with the highest level of dedication among young teachers with a specialized degree or below, and the lowest overall level of dedication among young teachers with a doctoral degree. There is no significant difference in any of the energetic and dedicated dimensions.

4) There is a significant positive correlation between the sense of organizational support and the dimensions of dedication of young teachers in Y private colleges and universities in Shandong Province. Among them, there are different degrees of significant positive correlations between job

support, value recognition, concern for interests and dedication overall and among the dimensions. This indicates that the stronger the sense of organizational support, the higher the degree of dedication of young teachers.

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