

A STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF TEACHERS AT XINYANG UNIVERSITY IN HENAN PROVINCE, CHINA

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Abstract: This study aimed to investigate the current level of teachers' organizational support and professional competence at Xinyang University in Henan Province, and to understand the differences in different demographic backgrounds to explore the relationship between teachers' organizational support and professional competence. Teachers played a vital role in the operation and development of private universities. The research used the teachers of Xinyang University of Henan Province as the research object and collected 294 sample data by questionnaire. It combined the research problems and objectives and made a corresponding statistical analysis of the collected data. The results showed that teachers had high organizational support and professional competence. There were significant differences in organizational support of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China, under different genders, teaching ages, and professional titles. Teachers of different teaching ages, educational backgrounds and professional titles had significant differences in professional competence. There was a significant positive correlation between organizational support and the professional competence of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China.

Keywords: Henan Xinyang University, Organization Support, Professional Competence

Introduction

In terms of school growth and improvement of teaching quality, a high-level teacher team was crucial. Universities not only needed to absorb outstanding teachers and professionals, but also needed to use advanced human resource management methods to maintain the faculty and staff and stimulate the enthusiasm, consciousness, and innovative spirit of all faculty and staff, which was very urgent and necessary (Ahmed et al., 2014). In the organizational structure of universities, education, scientific research, and management constituted the three pillars. In contrast, management constituted the key condition and foundation for the sustained and steady operation of universities and the smooth education

and scientific research of faculty and staff. A sound and efficient school administrative management structure could not only ensure the overall operation of universities but also control the overall development path of the school (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). In this study, studies explored a theme of administrative management, namely organizational support. The study on organizational support was first proposed by American social psychologist Eisenberger et al. (1986). When exploring the incentive strategy of employees, it found that in order to promote the relationship between employees and companies more effectively, it should not only consider it from the perspective of individuals but also study it from the perspective of companies. The sense of organizational support could give employees a sense of responsibility for organizational interests, a sense of belonging and emotional needs, and then enhance employees' loyalty to the organization. Teachers had a sense of organizational support, and they could feel the school's organization's attention to their professional support, interests, and values (Qi, 2016, Wang, 2018). Teachers in a unique social role had high expectations for a sense of belonging and dependence on the organizational environment. To realize this expectation, besides teachers' efforts, they also needed the assistance and attention of school administrators and education departments so as to fully grasp teachers' needs and give necessary support under the background and culture of the team. After sensing such support, according to the principle of mutual benefit and win, educators would use their professional skills and performance to give back to the school and achieve mutual benefit. The research on the organizational behavior of educational institutions and the psychology of educators had become more and more important, and the research on teachers' organizational support had attracted wide attention from academia and university management.

The theory of teacher competence has attracted a lot of attention in the education industry due to its influence on competency-based teacher education (CBTE) and human-centered teacher education (HBTE). Many Western scholars have focused on constructing teacher competency models and conducting related practical research (Medley, 1976; Tigelaar et al., 2004; Danielson, 2007). With time, there has been an increasing and in-depth theoretical exploration of the professional competence of university teachers. Teachers' professional competence was not only the basic premise for their educational activities but also an important criterion for schools to select and evaluate them. At the same time, it was also the key to improving the quality of education and achieving educational modernization, and it was a comprehensive element that could help teachers organize and perform teaching tasks more effectively (Wang, 2022; Wang, 2023). Therefore, identifying, researching, and enhancing the professional competence of teachers has become the main task of reforming human resource management in universities and promoting the comprehensive improvement of teachers' abilities.

Since the mid-1970s, China's private universities had gradually changed from slow growth to rapid expansion in the mid-1990s. In this process, they had gone through the initial stage, recovery

stage, and growth stage for nearly 20 years, and now they had become an indispensable part of China's higher education system (Hou, 2021). Driven by national policies, China's private universities as a whole showed a stable growth trend. China's private universities were gradually moving towards a sound, standardized quality improvement and the key stage of reform. However, the development of private universities has also encountered obstacles, unable to establish the brand advantage or unique school-running style to compete with public universities. Among these problems, such as the stability of teachers in private universities and the high turnover rate were still significant problems, and there was an urgent need to find effective solutions (Que et al., 2019). Therefore, scholars have begun to pay more attention to the group characteristics of teachers in private universities and have taken the changes in the professional psychological activities of teachers as a new research focus. For private universities in Henan Province, their operation and expansion depended on their quality of education, and the core of optimizing this quality was to establish an excellent team of teachers. However, private university teachers did not fully understand their abilities and responsibilities, which led to a lack of enthusiasm and independent thinking in their careers, thereby affecting the improvement of their comprehensive ability and literacy (Zhang, 2018). Obviously, it was crucial to explore the organizational support and professional competence of teachers in private universities in Henan Province. According to previous research, organizational support mainly focused on the psychological feelings of employees, which depended on whether the organization recognized the happiness and work value experienced by employees in their careers. Its main goal was to meet the needs of employees, create a high-quality working environment for them, enhance their positive cognition and experience of organizational support, and further stimulate their work enthusiasm (Qi & Yang, 2016; Jaiswal & Dhar, 2016). In the process of discussing organizational support, many scholars have also observed that effective organizational support could stimulate employees' innovative thinking and inner driving force, enhance employees' self-efficacy, and make them feel that they have the ability to be competent for various tasks, thus positively promoting the improvement of their vocational skills (Chen et al., 2017; Medina & Prieto, 2022).

Based on the above research, this study took the teachers in Xinyang University of Henan Province as the research object and studies the relationship between teachers' organizational support and professional competence through empirical research so as to effectively improve the feeling level of teachers' organizational support, promote the promotion of teachers' professional competence, and provide basis and reference for mobilizing teachers' enthusiasm and creativity and scientifically standardizing teachers' behavior.

Research Objectives

- 1) To investigate the current organizational support and professional competence of teachers at

Xinyang University in Henan Province, China.

2) To understand the differences in organizational support and professional competence among teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China, under different demographic backgrounds such as gender, teaching age, educational background, and professional title.

3) To explore the correlation between organizational support and professional competence of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China.

Literature Review

Research on Organizational Support of Teacher

According to the theory of social exchange, when individuals received assistance from others, they had a sense of responsibility to give back to each other, thus establishing a connection of exchange with each other. This kind of connection could be seen as a representative intra-organizational exchange relationship, namely organizational support (Settoon et al., 1996). Guo's research (2009) showed that teachers' organizational support essentially reflected their inner feelings and perception of the specific nature and depth of this support.

After synthesizing previous studies, Yao (2015) once again focused on young teachers in universities. In the course of her research, she defined the sense of organizational support of young university teachers. That was, teachers could directly feel the appreciation and assistance of their work, the affirmation of their academic achievements and values, and the protection of their actual rights and interests.

Wang (2017) 's survey object was also university teachers. She believed that university teachers could feel the assistance and care from schools during non-working periods, that was, organizational support. For example, when teachers face difficulties in life, school administrators or administrative agencies could make full use of humanistic care and provide necessary support.

After an in-depth study of relevant literature and previous scholars' theoretical viewpoints, Guo (2009) constructed a questionnaire suitable for the evaluation of organizational support of university teachers from five aspects: emotion, instrumentality, superior support, fairness and rationality, and colleague support. This questionnaire measures the performance of organizational support by measuring the comprehensive understanding of university teachers toward school support. Therefore, this study used this questionnaire to test the overall status of organizational support for teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China.

Different cultural backgrounds had varying degrees of impact on organizational support. The research viewpoint of Uchida et al. (2008) was that in the cultural environment of Asia, employees' sense of organizational support was most closely related to their work happiness. However, based on the cultural systems of Europe and America, the correlation between them was relatively weak.

According to Wang's (2018) research, factors such as teacher salaries, benefits, and resource support might have an impact on their sense of organizational support. If resource support were insufficient, the sense of organizational support of teachers would also be relatively reduced. Therefore, universities should focus on enhancing the resource support and compensation of teachers in order to enhance their sense of organizational support.

Research on Professional Competence of Teacher

Therefore, based on the connotation of competency, there were some differences in the expectations of various fields, institutions, and positions for their employees. Therefore, in order to accurately understand the concept of a teacher's professional competence, it was necessary to consider its professional role and unique attributes. Tigelaar et al. (2004) revealed that the professional competence of university teachers was the professional skills and concepts they demonstrated when dealing with diverse challenges and requirements.

Therefore, differences in the personality traits, values, and work environment of teachers themselves would have a significant impact on their professional competence. Hou (2017) emphasized that teachers' professional competence should cover all levels, such as academic knowledge, personal emotion, professional skills, and service awareness, and it could also be used as a standard to accurately divide and foresee the potential and stable action patterns of outstanding teachers and ordinary teachers.

The representative who focused on professional skills was Danielson (2007). His teacher competency model mainly included four aspects: planning and preparation, teaching, professional responsibility, and teacher environmental monitoring. However, some scholars hold different views, believing that a teacher's professional competence model should be constructed based on factors such as basic knowledge, professional abilities, and values required for individual teachers to complete teaching tasks (Stanley, 2001). In the following research, with the in-depth and meticulous discussion of professional competence, the two viewpoints were gradually integrated.

According to the existing research results, Cao (2018)'s study defined and measured the professional competence of university teachers from four dimensions, including basic competence, teaching competence, scientific research competence, and innovative competence, with a total of 21 measurement items. The scale had good reliability and validity. Therefore, this study used this scale to test the professional competence of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China.

In terms of demographic background research, due to differences in the professional abilities of teachers, their professional competence and this difference would change over time, experience, knowledge iteration, and accumulation, leading to a shift in the focus of their competence. Therefore, many scholars have found that the professional competence of teachers varies to varying degrees under various demographic backgrounds (Yi, 2018). Zhang (2012) conducted in-depth research on primary

school teachers, exploring the correlation between teacher's professional competence and performance. The results showed that there were significant differences in teachers' professional competence in such variables as years of education, gender, school nature and job level. However, there was no obvious difference in teachers' professional competence in terms of educational background and teaching items. The research by He & Zhao (2018), Wang et al. (2019) revealed that although most teachers' professional competence had reached an ideal state, their knowledge reserves were relatively weak. Difference test results showed that, such as gender, years of education, professional titles and educational level, teachers' professional competence differences reached a significant level. Therefore, based on the statistical results of the differences in demographic backgrounds, the research suggested that it should pay more attention to letting outstanding teachers show their role models and build a platform for expert and senior teachers to exchange experiences and share their specialties. At the same time, we attach great importance to the shaping and cultivation of teachers' positive personality and positive psychology.

Research on the Relationship between Teacher Organizational Support and Professional Competence

There was relatively little literature about the relationship between organizational support and professional competency. Next, the research on the relationship would be briefly combined. According to Western scholar Wayne et al. (2013) showed that the work environment and teaching atmosphere provided by schools to teachers were intuitive and substantial support. Once teachers perceived support, they would view their significant contributions to students and the school as feedback. In this process, teachers' professional qualities, skills, sense of achievement, and interpersonal systems would also be improved to a certain extent.

A study of 20 teachers and 353 students by Ahmed et al. (2014) found that the enhancement of teachers' teaching feedback ability could further promote the positive effect of teachers' perceived organizational support on their professional competence. At the same time, when teachers' professional competence level was high, they usually got more positive feedback from students, which also played a certain role in promoting teachers' sense of organizational support. It could be seen that this was a process of mutual promotion and a two-way effect.

Peng (2017) tested the influence of individual internal factors (competency) on customer service effect from an empirical perspective through quantitative research and verified the moderating role of organizational external factors (organizational support), thus further improving the application of competency theory in affecting individual performance and organizational external environment.

From the perspective of teachers' professional development, Wang & Liu (2018) emphasized that support for teachers from the social and school levels would help shape and stabilize teachers'

professional identity, strengthen teachers' awareness of independent promotion of professional development, and then promote the continuous enhancement of their professional competence.

Methodology

This study adopted a convenient sampling method to conduct a sampling survey of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China. The total number of in-service teachers in Xinyang University of Henan Province was 1265. According to Krejcie & Morgan (1970), when the total number of samples was 1265, the sample survey number was 294. During the survey phase, a total of 306 questionnaires were collected. After sorting, 294 valid questionnaires remained, and the effective return rate reached 96.08%.

The Teacher's Organization Support Questionnaire was used to test the current status of teacher's organization support at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China. In this study, the questionnaire on college teachers' organizational support designed and compiled by Guo (2009) was mainly used to test the overall feeling of college teachers' organizational support from schools. It included five dimensions: emotional support, instrumental support, superior support, fair and reasonable support, and colleague support, with a total of 20 items.

The Teachers' Professional Competence Questionnaire was used to test the current teachers' professional competence at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China. This study adopted the questionnaire on college teachers' professional competency compiled by Cao (2018), which included four dimensions: basic competency, teaching competency, scientific research competency and innovation competency, with a total of 21 topics.

Results

Demographic Analysis of the Respondents

In this study, 294 valid questionnaires were collected from teachers in Xinyang University, Henan Province, China, and the distribution of demographic backgrounds such as gender, teaching ages, educational background and professional titles were statistically analyzed. Among the gender variables, there were 128 males, accounting for 43.5%, and 166 females, accounting for 56.5%. The number of female teachers in the survey was slightly higher than that of male teachers. Among the variables of teaching ages, 72 people with 5 years or less, accounting for 24.5%, 78 people with 6-10 years, accounting for 26.5%, 91 people with 11-15 years, accounting for 31.0%, and 53 people with more than 15 years, accounting for 18.0%. The distribution of different teaching ages among the respondents was similar. Among the educational demographic backgrounds, there were 48 undergraduates or below, accounting for 16.3%, 166 masters, accounting for 56.5%, and 80 doctors, accounting for 27.2%. The number of teachers with master's degree was the largest among the respondents, which was basically

consistent with the current distribution of teachers' educational background in Xinyang University. Among the variables of professional titles, there were 61 teaching assistants, accounting for 20.7%, 105 lecturers, accounting for 35.8%, 82 associate professors, accounting for 27.9%, and 46 professors, accounting for 15.6%. There were many teachers with professional titles in the survey objects, and the distribution ratio of professional titles was consistent with the actual situation of the school.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

(1) The current level of organizational support for teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China

According to the descriptive statistical results in Table 1, the organizational support mean was 3.57, which met the high standard. In all dimensions, the mean of colleague support was the highest (M=3.88), followed by emotional support (M=3.74), instrumental support (M=3.45) and fairness and rationality (M=3.41). The mean of superior support was the lowest (M=3.37). Therefore, the current level of teachers' organizational support in Xinyang University of Henan Province, China was relatively high, that was, teachers in Xinyang University had a high overall evaluation of organizational support.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Organization Support (N=294)

Dimension	Mean	SD
Emotional support	3.74	0.915
Instrumental support	3.45	0.793
Superior support	3.37	0.896
Fairness and rationality	3.41	0.777
Colleague support	3.88	0.873
Overall organizational support	3.57	0.624

(2) The current professional competence of teachers at Xinyang University, Henan Province, China

According to the descriptive statistical results in Table 2, the overall occupational competence mean was 3.56, which met the high standard. In each dimension, the mean of basic competency was the highest (M=3.77), followed by innovation competency (M=3.72) and scientific research competency (M=3.46). The mean of teaching competency was the lowest (M=3.28). Therefore, the current professional competence of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China was relatively high.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Professional Competence (N=294)

Dimension	Mean	SD
Basic competency	3.77	0.785
Teaching competence	3.28	0.828
Scientific research competence	3.46	0.810
Innovative competence	3.72	0.900
Overall professional competence	3.56	0.656

Differential Analysis

Through Independent samples t-test and One-way ANOVA analysis, this study analyzed the differences between organizational support and professional competence of teachers with different demographic backgrounds at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China.

There were significant differences in organizational support among teachers from Xinyang University in Henan Province, China, who have different genders, teaching ages, and professional titles.

There were significant differences in the professional competence of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province of China of different teaching ages, educational backgrounds and professional titles.

Correlation Analysis

Through Pearson correlation analysis, this study explored the correlation between organizational support and professional competence of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China.

According to the correlation analysis results in Table 3, the correlation coefficient between the overall organizational support of teachers and the overall professional competence was 0.652, which meets the significant standard. Therefore, there was a significant positive correlation between organizational support and professional competence of teachers.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis between Organizational Support and Professional Competence of Teachers in Xinyang University

	Correlation	Professional Competence
Organizational Support	Correlation Coefficient	0.652**
	<i>P value</i>	0.000

Discussion

Discussion on Current Organizational Support and Professional Competence of Teachers at Xinyang College, Henan Province, China

According to descriptive statistical analysis, teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China had a high overall evaluation of organizational support, which was basically consistent with the research conclusion of Wang (2023). Teachers' perception of emotional support and colleague support in all dimensions had reached high standards, which reflected Xinyang University's emphasis on the construction of a humanistic environment, and teachers could feel respect, encouragement, and support from schools and colleagues in their work. In the survey, the scores of instrumental support, fairness and rationality, and superior support only reached the medium standard, which showed that teachers' perception of the above aspects still needed to be further improved and promoted.

According to descriptive statistical analysis, the current level of professional competence among teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China was relatively high. With the continuous development and deepening reform of higher education, As Yi (2018) pointed out, the construction of teachers in universities was also constantly improving, and the improvement of comprehensive quality and professional competence of college teachers was the main symbol. In the survey, the scores of basic competency and innovative competency were high, while the teaching competency and scientific research competency only reached the medium standard. The reasons may be that, first of all, the teaching and scientific research resources of the school could not meet the work needs of every teacher, such as the difficulty in applying for scientific research projects, limited teaching equipment and funds, etc., which limited the improvement of teachers' professional competency.

Discussion on Analysis of Differences in Organizational Support and Professional Competence of Teachers at Xinyang College, Henan Province, China

According to the analysis of gender differences, there was a significant gender difference in teachers' organizational support at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China. Male teachers' overall perception level of organizational support was higher than that of female teachers, and Wang et al. (2022) also obtained corresponding results. Specifically, male teachers had a higher level of perception of emotional support and instrumental support. The original intention may have been that, influenced by traditional social concepts, men would receive more recognition and attention at work and in society. This concept could not only enhance male teachers' professional self-confidence and sense of accomplishment but also enhance their perception of emotional support. In addition, influenced by individual personality and emotional characteristics, male teachers needed more urgent and active support for substantive resource assistance, and they would actively seek out and strive for instrumental support, so male teachers were more likely to perceive instrumental support. According to the analysis of the difference in teaching ages, there were significant differences in the teaching ages of teachers' professional competence at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China. The overall professional competence, basic competence and teaching competence of teachers with teaching ages of 11-15 years were significantly higher than those with teaching ages of less than 10 years. This research result was basically consistent with the findings of He & Zhao (2018). First of all, teachers' academic knowledge and teaching ability would be accumulated and improved with the increase in teaching ages. Secondly, the transformation of teaching professional competence and teaching concepts must be carried out in the process of career development, which is the process of teacher growth and the enhancement of their professional competence. Finally, teachers who have worked for a long time have a rich teaching age, have a more accurate understanding of school teaching objectives and students' learning needs, and have mastered more teaching methods and strategies. These factors have laid a solid foundation for

promoting the improvement of teachers' teaching competence.

Discussion on Analysis of the Relationship between Organizational Support and Professional Competence of Teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China

According to correlation analysis, there was a significant positive correlation between organizational support and the professional competence of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China. It showed that when teachers perceived a high degree of organizational support, their professional competence would also show an upward trend as a whole, which was consistent with the research results of Ahmed et al. (2014) and Cao (2023).

According to survey data, there was a varying degree of positive correlation between overall teacher's organizational support and various dimensions of professional competence, with the highest correlation being with research competence. The reason may have been that the core of teachers' work in universities was teaching. Scientific research tasks were prominent at present, and the provision of teachers' material resources and the assistance of policies and systems were more substantial support for the smooth progress of their teaching and scientific research tasks. This process was also significant for the training and development of teachers' teaching and scientific research competence. In addition, teachers' professional competence was positively correlated with all dimensions of organizational support to varying degrees, among which instrumental support was the highest. Firstly, instrumental support referred to the substantial resource assistance, professional training, and support provided to teachers in terms of team member allocation. The school's professional training for teachers helped them continuously update their knowledge and skills, which was beneficial for teachers to master methods and strategies to enhance their professional competence. Secondly, adequate material and human resources were conducive to better teaching and scientific research and gaining more successful experiences in practice. The acquisition of good psychological feelings provided positive feedback and motivation for the improvement of teachers' professional competence. Finally, encouragement and care from schools, superior leaders, and colleagues could enhance teachers' enthusiasm and happiness, making teachers devote themselves to career development and stimulating their autonomy in improving their professional competence. In a word, the relationship between teachers' organizational support and professional competence was two-way. According to this relationship and the professional characteristics of university teachers, society and schools could adjust the current organizational support content, strengthen the sense of identity and autonomy of teachers' professional development, and then promote the continuous enhancement of their professional competence.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1: The organizational support of teachers of Xinyang University in Henan Province

of China was high, and professional competence was high.

Conclusion 2: Under different demographic backgrounds, there were significant differences in organizational support and professional competence of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China.

(1) There were significant differences in organizational support among teachers from Xinyang University in Henan Province, China, who have different genders, teaching ages, and professional titles.

(2) There were significant differences in the professional competence of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province of China of different teaching ages, educational backgrounds and professional titles.

Conclusion 3: There was a significant positive correlation between organizational support and the professional competence of teachers at Xinyang University in Henan Province, China.

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