



How to Improve the Job Performance of Teachers in Private Universities?

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ABSTRACT

As educational change continues, teacher job performance has become a key element of change. Teacher job competence plays an important role in driving job performance. Improvement in teacher job performance will enhance the quality of education and teaching. For this reason, we used college teachers as our research subjects, and the results showed that teacher competence significantly and positively predicts job performance and sense of organizational support. Sense of organizational support partially mediates the positive effect between teacher competence and job performance. Meanwhile, self-efficacy moderated teacher competence and job performance. The findings of this study deepen our understanding of and provide guidance on the mechanisms influencing the relationship between teacher competence and job performance. These findings have important implications for improving educational quality and promoting pedagogical innovation and teacher development.

Keywords: Teacher Competence; Job Performance; Organizational Support; Self-Efficacy

1. Introduction

With the gradual increase in the expansion scale of colleges and universities, the competition in the higher education market has become more and more intense, and private colleges and universities, as a product of the marketization of higher education, have become an important part of the higher education business and an important force in promoting education reform (Li, 2023). However, the quality of private colleges and universities still has a big gap with public colleges and universities (Guo et al., 2019). Studying teacher competency in private colleges and universities is conducive to promoting the effectiveness of teaching in private colleges and universities and cultivating high-quality teachers, revealing the key factors of the differences in the performance of teachers in private colleges and universities (Gómez & Valdés, 2019), and thus contributing to the enhancement of the quality of education in private colleges and universities (Manzoor et al., 2021).

How to improve the professional quality ability of private teachers, enhance the ability of teachers' scientific research and innovation, promote the reform of personnel system, and improve the quality of personnel training in colleges and universities is crucial (Wang et al., 2019; Warisno & Hidayah, 2022). The main factors affecting employee performance are: beliefs, leadership support, environment, cultural organization, and work competence (Nguyen, 2020). Some studies have shown that teacher competence is a prerequisite for promoting teacher job performance (Štaškeviča, 2019). Therefore, there is a need to improve governance in private higher education (Paricahua et al., 2022).

In organizational relations, a good external environment helps to improve employee performance (Iis, 2022). These resources can include training opportunities, support services, career development opportunities, and compensation packages (Elstad et al., 2011). When organizations provide employees with a sense of support, employees will be more engaged in their work and produce greater value. This confirms the principle of reciprocity in social exchange theory, where individuals maintain relationships by providing value and

rewards (Cropanzano et al., 2017). Social exchange theory has been widely used in explaining exchange and interaction between organizations and employees, especially in organizational and occupational settings ((Romani & Carneiro, 2020). In the meantime, intrinsic motivation within individuals can enhance teachers' self-confidence and optimism, prompting them to be more confident in enhancing their human behavior. It can be seen that teachers' job performance is not determined by a single factor, but is the result of a combination of external environmental factors and internal psychological processes. Therefore, this paper will explore the influence of teachers' competence on job performance from internal and external factors.

Sense of organizational support and self-efficacy are two important factors that affect job performance (Setyawan & Hayati, 2020). Based on this, this study included organizational support and self-efficacy as a research mechanism to investigate the impact of teacher competency on job performance. Therefore, this study proposes the research questions as follows research hypotheses: H1: Private teacher competency significantly positively influences job performance to have an impact; H2: Private college and university teacher competency has a significant positive impact on the sense of support of the private organization; H3: The sense of support of the private college and university organization positively influences job performance; H4: The sense of support of the organization mediates the role of the teacher in the sense of competency and job performance in private colleges and universities; and H5: Self-efficacy sense has a moderating role in teachers' competence and job performance in private colleges and universities.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory is one of the most influential paradigms in organizational behavior (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Widely applied in explaining exchanges and interactions in interpersonal relationships, especially within organizational and professional settings (Sungu et al., 2019), it encompasses various social processes, including interpersonal commitment, trust, fairness, procedural and distributive justice, and collectivism. Recent studies have also highlighted the role of emotions and self-efficacy in social exchange (Cook et al., 2013).

Eisenberger et al. (1986) posited that high levels of organizational support lead to employees perceiving more organizational support and potentially aspiring to contribute more to the organization. Moreover, a well-functioning performance evaluation system in organizational relationships fosters an atmosphere of mutual trust, effective communication, and cooperation (Tziner, 2002). Social Exchange Theory emphasizes the exchange of resources between individuals and organizations. For teachers in private universities, these resources might include training opportunities, support services, career advancement prospects, and compensation (Elstad et al., 2011). The theory focuses on the concept of reciprocal relationships, where individuals maintain relationships through offering value and returns (Ko & Hur, 2014; Lambe et al., 2001). In the educational environment, how private university teachers reciprocate the resources provided by their institutions through high-quality educational services is a critical question. A study on private university lecturers found that by providing support, motivation, and career development opportunities, private universities can enhance teachers' job performance and job satisfaction (Basalamah & As'ad, 2021). Social Exchange Theory also involves the perception of organizational support by individuals and their willingness to produce more job performance for a long-term reciprocal relationship (Zhang & Liu, 2022). Inequity exchange, another key concept in Social Exchange Theory, involves one party giving more but expecting equivalent returns from the exchange (Le et al., 2023). In the context of private university teachers, exploring whether teachers feel an inequity between their efforts and returns and analyzing how this inequity affects their competence and performance is vital.

Applying the key concepts of Social Exchange Theory can deepen our understanding of the relationship between teacher competence and job performance in private universities in Ningxia, China. This theoretical framework not only helps explain the nature of these relationships but also provides targeted suggestions for improving job performance among private university teachers. Future research could delve further into this area, offering practical insights for educational management and policy-making.

2.2 Teacher Competence and Job Performance

A significant positive relationship exists between the competence of university teachers and their job performance (Guo et al., 2012; Ismayilova & Klassen, 2019). Wahyuddin (2016) found a correlation between teacher competence, emotional intelligence, and job performance, indicating that enhancing teacher competence and emotional intelligence can improve job performance. A study by Rahmatullah (2016) with 150 teachers in Indonesia found a significant correlation between teacher competence and job performance, with higher-performing teachers coming from continuous learning and competence enhancement. Castillo-Gualda et al. (2019) discovered that the dimensions of knowledge skills, interpersonal interactions, and ethical characteristics in the competence model of university teachers are particularly significant predictors of job performance. Based on these studies, this research infers that competent teachers influence job performance. Hence, this study proposes research hypothesis H1: Teacher competence in private universities in Ningxia, China, has a significant positive impact on job performance.

2.3 Teacher Competence and Organizational Support

There is a positive correlation between teacher competence and organizational support in universities, meaning that higher teacher competence leads to greater organizational support (Ridwan et al., 2020). Teacher competence can enhance the support provided by the organization (Wang et al., 2020). In private universities, where teachers often have fewer benefits and career development opportunities, the impact of teacher competence on increasing organizational support is significant (Ghavifekr & Pillai, 2016). There is a significant positive relationship between organizational support and job performance, and organizational support significantly mediates between teacher competence and job performance (Farooqi et al., 2019). Specifically, teacher competence can improve the perception of organizational support, which in turn positively impacts job performance.

Therefore, this study proposes research hypothesis H2: Teacher competence in private universities in Ningxia, China, significantly positively influences organizational support; research hypothesis H4: Organizational support in private universities in Ningxia, China, has a significant mediating role between teacher competence and job performance.

2.4 Organizational Support and Job Performance

The positive relationship between organizational support and job performance has been confirmed in many studies, with organizational support directly impacting job performance (Susita et al., 2021). Kumar et al. (2018) argued that organizational support has a significant positive effect on employee job performance, especially in supportive leadership and employee engagement. Research by Karaalioğlu and Karabulut (2019) also found that organizational support significantly positively influences employee job performance, with job satisfaction playing a mediating role between organizational support and job performance. Chen et al. (2014) noted that organizational support can positively enhance job performance, with organizational esteem and trust playing a significant role in how organizational support impacts job performance. Jiang et al. (2020) discovered that organizational support significantly positively affects both employee job performance and creativity.

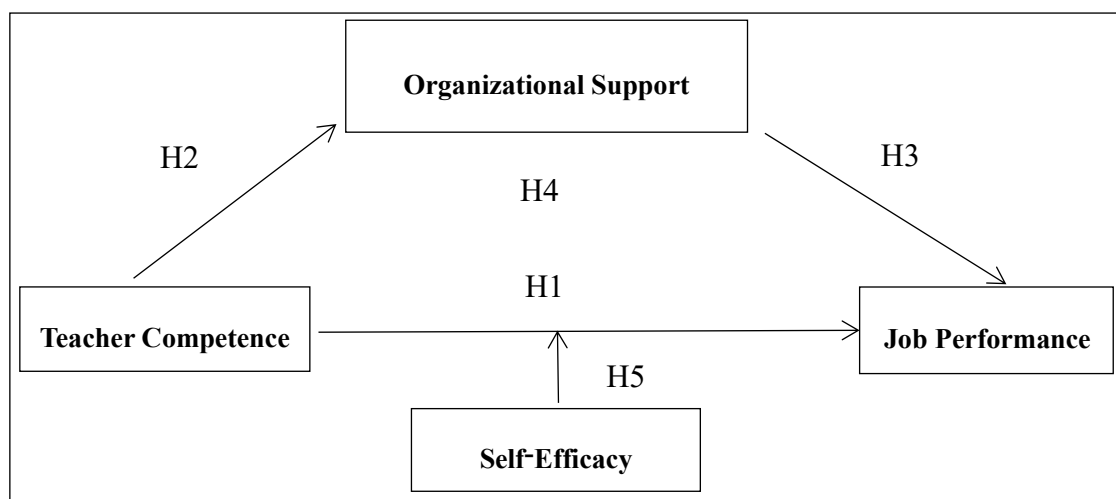
Therefore, this study proposes research hypothesis H3: Organizational support among teachers in private universities in Ningxia, China, significantly positively impacts job performance.

2.5 The Moderating Role of Self-Efficacy in the Relationship Between Teacher Competence and Job Performance

Carter et al. (2018) found a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and job performance in the workplace, indicating that higher self-efficacy leads to better job performance. Rossiandy and Indradewa (2023) demonstrated that self-efficacy could enhance employee job performance, playing a role in the relationship between employee work motivation and job satisfaction. Moreover, a study by Song et al. (2018) found a significant positive relationship between teacher competence and job performance, with self-efficacy playing an important role between teacher competence and job performance. Self-efficacy influences people's choice processes, where a positive sense of self-efficacy fosters positive commitments and reflects in behavioral choices, ultimately promoting the development of competence (Green, 2020). Thus, self-efficacy plays a significant moderating role in the impact of teacher competence on job performance and positively contributes to improving employee job performance.

Therefore, this study proposes research hypothesis H5: Self-efficacy among teachers in private universities in Ningxia, China, moderates the relationship between teacher competence and job performance.

In summary, this study organizes the research framework as shown in Figure 1. Figure 1. Research framework



3. Research Method

3.1 Study Subjects and Testing Phases

This study selected full-time faculty members teaching at private universities in Ningxia, China, as its subjects, focusing primarily on those engaged in teaching and research activities. A comprehensive survey was conducted among teachers from four private universities in Ningxia. Farrokhi and Mahmoud (2012) state that convenience sampling is a common method in social research, facilitating the selection of subjects and aiding in the investigation of specific characteristics of interest. Therefore, to better explore the relationships between various research variables, this study employed convenience sampling.

In the first phase, a preliminary survey was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. In June 2023, 320 questionnaires were distributed, and after discarding 44 invalid responses, 276 valid responses were obtained, resulting in an 86.250% response rate.

In the second phase, the formal questionnaire was distributed from October to November 2023. A total of 650 questionnaires were distributed to teachers at private universities in Ningxia using convenience sampling. After eliminating 66 invalid responses, 584 valid responses were obtained, resulting in an 89.850% response rate.

3.2 Research Instruments

3.2.1 Teacher Competence Scale

This study used a locally developed questionnaire, the Higher Education Teacher Competence Scale by Cao (2018), to measure teacher competence in four dimensions: basic competence, teaching competence, research competence, and innovation competence. The scale consists of 21 items: 5 for basic competence, 6 for teaching competence, 5 for research competence, and 5 for innovation competence. A Likert 5-point scale was used for scoring, with all items scored positively.

3.2.2 Job Performance Scale

This study adopted the Higher Education Job Performance Scale developed by Chen et al. (2015). The scale measures research and teaching performance in university teachers, comprising 11 items: 6 for research performance and 5 for teaching performance. A Likert 5-point scale was used, with all items scored positively.

3.2.3 Organizational Support Scale

The organizational support questionnaire primarily drew from Tang and Hu (2017)'s Teacher Organizational Support Scale. It includes three dimensions: work support, interest concern, and value identification, with each dimension featuring 5 items, totaling 15 items, on a Likert 5-point scale.

3.2.4 Self-Efficacy Scale

The study adopted the widely used Self-Efficacy Scale by Schmitz and Schwarzer (2000), which has been proven to have good reliability and validity. It contains 10 items related to an individual's confidence when facing setbacks or difficulties, such as "I can always find a way to solve problems when faced with difficulties." A Likert 5-point scale was used.

3.3 Data Processing and Analysis

After the pilot survey, the study used SPSS for item analysis, exploratory factor analysis, and reliability analysis. The formal questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS for sample background description, common method bias, descriptive analysis, and correlation analysis. AMOS was used for data convergence validity, model fit, and structural equation modeling. Bootstrap sampling was employed to test for mediation effects, and PROCESS Model 1 was used to examine moderating effects.

3.4 Research Ethics

During the study, measures were taken to protect the personal and sensitive information of participants, ensuring they were aware of the measures used to protect their private information and records, and under what circumstances and who would access their private information and records. All participants voluntarily participated in the study, and their privacy, feelings, and personal will were fully considered. Considering their privacy rights, participants in the research report were anonymized; considering their feelings and willingness to participate, if they felt uncomfortable or unwilling during the study, they could stop and withdraw at any time. In terms of informed consent, the researchers strictly followed the essential elements that must be included in an informed consent form, explaining the purpose and process of the study to the participants, inquiring about their willingness to participate, and then asking them to sign the informed consent form on the spot.

4. Research Results

4.1 Preliminary Analysis Results

In the item analysis, the t-values for the items on the Teacher Competence Scale, Job Performance Scale, Organizational Support Scale, and Self-Efficacy Scale all exceeded the standard criterion of 3.00. The correlations between the items and total scores were above the standard criterion of 0.4, and the p-values were significant, indicating that no items needed to be deleted. The Cronbach's Alpha for the Teacher Competence Scale was 0.953, for the Job Performance Scale 0.937, for the Organizational Support Scale 0.932, and for the Self-Efficacy Scale 0.952. Factor loadings for each item on the scales were above 0.4, with KMO values ranging from 0.945 to 0.967, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant. The cumulative total variance explained was 72.044%, 71.156%, 71.211%, and 69.678%, respectively. Thus, the four scales selected for this study had good reliability and validity, meeting the research needs.

4.2 Sample Background Description

This study obtained 584 valid survey responses. In terms of gender, there were 309 females (42.910%) and 275 males (47.090%). Regarding educational background, 53 respondents had a doctorate (9.070%), 66 were doctoral students (11.300%), 362 had a master's degree (61.990%), and 103 had a bachelor's degree or other qualifications (17.640%). In terms of professional titles, there were 46 professors (7.880%), 54 associate professors (9.240%), 405 lecturers (69.350%), and 79 teaching assistants (13.530%). Regarding years of service, 308 had 0-10 years (52.740%), 190 had 10-20 years (32.530%), and 86 had over 20 years (14.730%).

4.3 Common Method Bias

In accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, this study was conducted with the voluntary cooperation of all subjects who signed informed consent forms, fully considering their privacy and will, and informing them that they could refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time (Goodyear et al., 2007). When distributing questionnaires, participants were informed that they could provide data anonymously, reducing concerns about how to answer questions and minimizing the potential for common method bias.

The study used Harman's single-factor test to assess the issue of common method bias. The factor analysis results indicated a KMO of 0.961 (>0.8) and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p < 0.001$). The unrotated factor analysis extracted 10 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, and the first factor explained 33.037% of the variance (<50%), suggesting no serious common method bias (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

4.4 Convergent Validity and Model Fit

For the Teacher Competence Scale, the standardized regression weights of each item ranged from .727 to .802. The composite reliability (CR) value for basic competence was .877, with an average variance extracted (AVE) of .588; for teaching competence, the CR was .904, AVE .612; for research competence, the CR was .881, AVE .598; and for innovation competence, the CR was .875, AVE .583. The model fit indices were ideal: RMR=0.029, CFI=0.985, GFI=0.955, NFI=0.960, TLI=0.983, IFI=0.986, PNFI=0.837.

The confirmatory factor analysis of the Job Performance Scale showed standardized regression weights ranging from 0.754 to 0.815. For the research performance dimension, the CR value was 0.911 and AVE 0.629; for teaching performance, the CR was 0.890 and AVE 0.619. The model fit indices were ideal: RMR=0.025, CFI=0.989, GFI=0.975, NFI=0.979, TLI=0.986, IFI=0.989, PNFI=0.765.

The confirmatory factor analysis of the Organizational Support Scale showed standardized regression weights ranging from 0.705 to 0.798. For the work support dimension, the CR value was 0.874 and AVE 0.580; for interest concern, the CR was 0.872 and AVE 0.576; for value identification, the CR was 0.860 and AVE 0.552. The model fit indices were ideal: RMR=0.033, CFI=0.982, GFI=0.962, NFI=0.963, TLI=0.978, IFI=0.982, PNFI=0.798.

The confirmatory factor analysis of the Self-Efficacy Scale showed standardized regression weights ranging from 0.761 to 0.824, with a CR value of 0.949 and AVE 0.651. The model fit indices were ideal: RMR=0.023, CFI=0.986, GFI=0.967, NFI=0.979, TLI=0.982, IFI=0.986, PNFI=0.761.

4.5 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

Table 1 presents the results of the descriptive statistics and correlation analysis for the research. The descriptive statistics indicated that teacher competence (average = 3.231), job performance (average = 3.270), organizational support (average = 3.279), and self-efficacy (average = 3.189) were all above average. Overall, the 548 university teachers who participated in the survey showed good levels of teacher competence, job performance, organizational support, and self-efficacy.

Correlation analysis revealed significant positive correlations between teacher competence and job performance ($r=0.762$, $p<0.001$), organizational support ($r=0.658$, $p<0.001$), and self-efficacy ($r=0.312$, $p<0.001$). Job performance was also significantly positively correlated with organizational support ($r=0.681$, $p<0.001$) and self-efficacy ($r=0.348$, $p<0.001$). Organizational support was significantly positively correlated with self-efficacy ($r=0.206$, $p<0.001$).

Table 1. Results of Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

Variable	M	SD	Teacher Competence	Job Performance	Organizational Support	Self-Efficacy
Teacher Competence	3.231	0.699	1			
Job Performance	3.270	0.793	0.762***	1		
Organizational Support	3.279	0.676	0.658***	0.681***	1	
Self-Efficacy	3.189	0.905	0.312***	0.348***	0.206***	1

Note1: *** $p<0.001$

Note2: Data source: Organized by this study

4.6 Structural Equation Modelling

In this study, Root Mean Square Residual (RMR), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and Incremental Fit Index (IFI) were used to determine the ideal fit of the model. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Indicators of Model Fit

Common indicators	RMR	CFI	GFI	NFI	TLI	IFI
Standard of Determination Value	<0.05	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9
	0.016	0.989	0.981	0.980	0.984	0.989

Note: Data source: Organized by this study

Based on the path analysis results, teacher competence significantly positively influences job performance (standardized path coefficient = 0.699, $p < 0.001$); teacher competence significantly positively influences organizational support (standardized path coefficient = 0.825, $p < 0.001$); organizational support significantly positively influences job performance (standardized path coefficient = 0.332, $p < 0.001$). The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. SEM Path Analysis Results

Path	Unstandardized Path Coefficient	S.E.	C.R.	p	Standardized Path Coefficient
Organizational Support ← Teacher Competence	0.779	0.053	14.816	$p<0.001$	0.825
Job Performance ← Organizational Support	0.367	0.092	3.990	$p<0.001$	0.332
Job Performance ← Teacher Competence	0.728	0.090	8.131	$p<0.001$	0.699

Note: Data source: Organized by the study

4.7 Bootstrap Test

The Bootstrap sampling method was used to test the mediation effect, setting the number of samples to 5000 times. The results showed that the mediation effect of teacher competence → organizational support → job performance is significant (standardized coefficient = 0.274, $p = 0.001$ with a 95% confidence interval between 0.131 and 0.500 not including 0). The model's direct effect is also significant (standardized coefficient = 0.699, $p < 0.001$ with a 95% confidence interval between 0.441 and 0.879 not including 0), and the total effect is significant (standardized coefficient = 0.973, $p = 0.001$ with a 95% confidence interval between 0.915 and 1.024 not including 0), indicating that the mediation model is a partial mediation.

Table 4. Bootstrap Test Mediation Effect Results

Path	Standardized Coefficient	Lower	Upper	<i>p</i>
Direct Effect	0.699	0.441	0.879	<i>p</i> <0.001
Teacher Competence → Organizational Support → Job Performance	0.274	0.131	0.500	0.001
Total Effect	0.973	0.915	1.024	0.001

Note: Data source: Organized by the study

4.8 Test of Moderating Effects

This study used Model 1 in PROCESS 4.1 to test for moderating effects. As shown in the table, in Model 1, teacher competence had a significant positive predictive effect on job performance ($B = 0.842$, $p < 0.001$). In Model 2, teacher competence significantly positively predicted job performance ($B = 0.829$, $p < 0.001$); self-efficacy significantly positively predicted job performance ($B = 0.110$, $p < 0.001$); the interaction term of teacher competence and self-efficacy had a significant positive predictive effect on job performance ($B = 0.064$, $p = 0.016$), indicating that self-efficacy moderates the relationship between teacher competence and job performance.

Table 5. Test of Moderating Effect of Self-Efficacy

	Model 1				Model 2			
	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	3.140	0.185	16.929	0.000***	3.133	0.181	17.269	0.000***
Gender	0.111	0.042	2.616	0.009**	0.108	0.041	2.615	0.009**
Academic Qualifications	-0.045	0.024	-1.891	0.059	-0.050	0.023	-2.165	0.031*
Professional Title	0.000	0.042	0.012	0.991	0.001	0.041	0.021	0.983
Length of Service	0.035	0.045	0.775	0.438	0.041	0.044	0.926	0.355
Teacher Competence	0.842	0.031	27.237	0.000***	0.829	0.035	23.579	0.000***
Self-Efficacy					0.110	0.024	4.546	0.000***
Teacher Competence* Self-Efficacy					0.064	0.027	2.426	0.016*
R^2	0.591				0.610			
Adjusted R^2	0.587				0.605			
<i>F</i> Value	166.877***				128.632***			

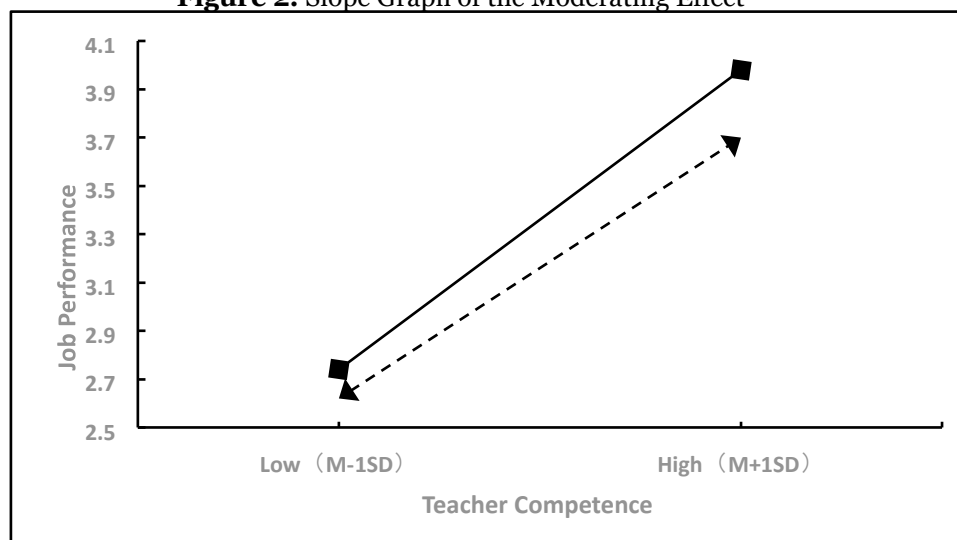
Note1: * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

Note2: Job performance as the dependent variable

Note3: Data source: Organized by the study

As shown in Figure 2, compared to teachers with low self-efficacy ($B = 0.771$, $t = 23.153$), teacher competence has a stronger predictive effect on job performance for teachers with high self-efficacy ($B = 0.887$, $t = 17.690$).

Figure 2. Slope Graph of the Moderating Effect



5. Research Conclusions

Based on the research results, this study found that teacher competence in private universities in Ningxia, China, has a significant positive impact on job performance, thereby confirming Hypothesis 1 (H1). This finding

is consistent with the results of Karim et al. (2021) and Zubaidah et al. (2021). Teachers with higher competence possess a high level of professional knowledge and teaching skills, which enables them to effectively impart knowledge and improve students' academic performance, thereby creating a foundation for improved job performance (Murkatik et al., 2020). Therefore, the enhancement of competence enables teachers to better adapt to complex educational environments and more effectively fulfill their teaching and administrative duties, thus achieving more significant positive performance in their work.

The study also found that teacher competence in private universities in Ningxia, China, significantly positively affects the perception of organizational support, thus confirming Hypothesis 2 (H2). This result aligns with findings by Ridwan et al. (2020). Teachers with higher competence are often more likely to be provided with professional development and training opportunities. Organizations may provide these teachers with more training resources, opportunities for academic research, and funding for educational projects. The provision of these opportunities is perceived as recognition of teachers' competence, thereby enhancing their perception of organizational support. Therefore, teachers with high competence, due to their outstanding performance and professional abilities, are more likely to be recognized and supported by the organization, leading to a higher level of organizational support.

The study discovered that organizational support significantly positively impacts job performance among teachers in private universities in Ningxia, China, hence validating Hypothesis 3 (H3). This result is in line with the studies of Ridwan et al. (2020) and López-Cabarcos et al. (2022). Social Exchange Theory emphasizes that social behavior is based on reciprocal relationships, meaning individuals engage in social behavior to receive returns (Sungu et al., 2019). In organizations, teachers perceiving organizational support can be viewed as an investment by the organization, and their excellent performance at work can be seen as a return (Zhang & Liu, 2022). Therefore, teachers who perceive organizational support may be more inclined to repay the organization by improving their job performance.

Furthermore, the study found that organizational support plays a mediating role in the relationship between teacher competence and job performance in private universities in Ningxia, China, thus supporting Hypothesis 4 (H4). This finding is similar to that of Muliadi and Idris (2022). Teacher competence involves various abilities, such as basic competence, teaching competence, research competence, and innovation competence (Cao Zhifeng, 2018). According to Social Exchange Theory (Ko & Hur, 2014), teachers with stronger abilities imply more contributions to the organization, leading to more resources and support from the organization. When teachers perceive the support provided by the organization, which may include various resources such as training, work resources, information, etc., it provides a positive work environment that enables teachers to better address work challenges, thereby improving job performance (Yildirim & Turan, 2020).

The study also found that self-efficacy moderates the relationship between competence and job performance in private universities in Ningxia, China, confirming Hypothesis 5 (H5). This result is similar to that of Chien and Hu (2009). Self-efficacy is an individual's belief and confidence in their own abilities (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 2002). When teachers have high self-efficacy, they are more likely to believe they have sufficient competence to meet challenges in their work. This strengthened belief can make teachers more determined and confident when facing task demands, thereby more effectively translating their competence into actual job performance.

6. Research Contributions

In-depth investigation into the relationship between teacher competence and job performance in private universities enhances overall teacher quality, improving their personal professional knowledge. This enables them to stand out in the competitive field of education and feel fulfilled in their roles (Rahmatullah, 2016). Training and management of teachers in private universities have become urgent issues in the field of education. This study's exploration offers vital references for private universities, aiding in the development of more scientific and effective teacher training and development programs. This, in turn, improves the quality and standard of education in China's private universities. Therefore, the practical significance of this study lies in providing references for solving current training and management issues in private universities, where teacher competence is a key factor in improving educational quality.

7. Research Recommendations

7.1 Strengthen Teacher Competence Training

First, universities should identify teachers' training needs in professionalism, teaching, and organization through competence assessments. Teacher competence can be evaluated through regular surveys, individual assessments, or professional development plans. Second, personalized training plans should be created based on teachers' training needs, including offline training such as professional seminars, regular internal and external training, and sharing experiences with teachers from other universities, and online training including the establishment of online learning platforms for continuous access to training resources and promoting learning sharing. Third, universities can establish reward mechanisms for teachers who actively participate in training, encouraging more teachers to engage in competence development.

7.2 Optimize Organizational Support Mechanisms

First, universities can enhance teachers' job satisfaction by improving classroom facilities, office environments, providing necessary teaching resources, and streamlining management processes. Second, schools can establish open communication channels, enabling teachers to communicate effectively with management across levels, report issues, and seek solutions. Third, universities can set up professional psychological teams to provide mental health support and positive emotional guidance to teachers, helping them cope better with work-related stress.

7.3 Focus on Teacher Self-Efficacy

First, universities can create a platform for teachers to share their successful teaching cases and experiences, with features for liking and commenting. This helps build a positive competitive atmosphere among teachers, enhancing individual self-efficacy. Second, universities need to provide opportunities for teachers to engage in academic research, teaching design, and curriculum reform projects, encouraging active participation and rewarding outstanding teachers with certificates and bonuses. Such active involvement can increase teachers' confidence in their professional abilities.

8. Research Limitations and Future Directions

This study used four private universities in Ningxia as the research sample, so the generalizability of the results may be limited by geographical factors. Future research could consider expanding the sample range to include more private universities in different regions, enhancing the external validity of the study.

The study used convenience sampling, which may lead to sample selection bias. Future research might consider using more diverse sampling methods, such as random sampling or stratified sampling, to improve the reliability and representativeness of the results.

The data in the study relied mainly on teachers' self-reports, which may be influenced by subjective factors. Future studies could consider combining objective data, such as student evaluations or academic performance, to more comprehensively assess teachers' competence and job performance

9. Acknowledgement

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