

Impact of Turnover Intention on Work Engagement Among Primary and Secondary School Music Teachers: A Moderated Mediation Approach

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Abstract

Work engagement refers to the sustained and active involvement of primary and secondary school music teachers. This study investigated music teachers in Chongqing, examining how turnover intention influences work engagement and exploring the moderating and mediating roles of self-efficacy and educational background (specifically, whether teachers were trained in normal schools). Using a turnover intention scale, a self-efficacy scale, and a work engagement scale, the study found that (1) self-efficacy partially mediates the relationship between turnover intention and work engagement, and (2) educational backgrounds in normal schools moderate this mediation. These findings shed light on the mechanisms through which turnover intention affects work engagement and provide a basis for strategies to enhance the work engagement of primary and secondary school music teachers.

Keywords: *Primary And Secondary School Music Teachers, Turnover Intention, Work Engagement, Self-Efficacy, Educational Background in A Normal School.*

Introduction

In recent years, primary and secondary school teachers' work engagement has become a significant topic in the research on teacher workforce development. High work engagement positively impacts individuals and organizations (Bakker, 2022). It is characterized by a teacher's sustained active involvement in the classroom and a positive mental state (Hakanen, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2006). Teachers with high work engagement demonstrate energy and resilience, remain dedicated even in challenging situations, and recognize the importance of their roles (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá & Bakker, 2002). They are enthusiastic, optimistic, and passionate (Bakker & Bal, 2010), adopting a proactive attitude toward their organizations while respecting and supporting coworkers. Such teachers often help others enhance work efficiency, consistently strive to improve their expertise and achieve satisfying performances. Previous research has shown that teachers' work engagement is related to organizational identification (Sharma & Kumar, 2024), job satisfaction (Toropova, Myrberg & Johansson, 2021), and is closely associated with turnover intention (Mulang, 2022; Jaharuddin & Zainol, 2019). The time and energy teachers devote to their jobs correlate with their turnover intention (Eldor & Shoshani, 2017), which refers to their subjective intent to leave their current organizations or positions and seek new jobs after careful consideration (Mobley, 1977). The key predictor of teacher turnover is turnover intention (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand & Meglino, 1979). Empirical studies have demonstrated its negative impact on various aspects, including teachers' engagement (Fu, Pan, Zhang & Cheng, 2022), professional identity (Weiss, Bottling & Karner, 2023), and work performance (Guan, Yang & Li, 2023). Addressing teachers' turnover intentions and reducing turnover is crucial for building a stable teaching workforce (Palma-Vasquez, Carrasco & Tapia-Ladino, 2022). Enhancing teachers' engagement is essential for fostering student interest in learning and improving teaching quality. Considering these findings, this study explored the relationship between turnover intention and work engagement among primary and secondary school music teachers.

Regarding the mediation mechanism of the impact of turnover intention on work engagement, previous research has demonstrated that higher turnover intention leads to lower self-efficacy (Li, Xue, Hou, Du,

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Ning & Li, 2020). According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, work engagement can be influenced by improving self-efficacy and other mental states. Individuals with high self-efficacy are passionate and active in their work, whereas those with low self-efficacy often exert less effort (Paglis & Green, 2002). Research has revealed that teachers with higher turnover intentions frequently experience lower self-efficacy and work engagement levels (Arup & Bowles, 2016; López, Gómez & Pacheco, 2020). Self-efficacy refers to an individual's beliefs and judgments (Zimmerman, 1995) about his or her ability to accomplish tasks by mobilizing resources in a work environment. For teachers, it also encompasses their perception of their abilities and their influence on students, including learning behavior and competence (Liu & Kong, 2020). Self-efficacy significantly affects teachers' work ethic (Rahmawati & Sobri, 2021) and performance (Pari, 2022). These theories and findings indicate that self-efficacy may serve as a key mediator between turnover intention and work engagement. Consequently, Hypothesis 1 was proposed: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between turnover intention and work engagement among music teachers in primary and secondary schools.

According to social role theory, differences in educational backgrounds result in primary and secondary school music teachers trained in normal schools and their counterparts without such training having distinct perceptions of the ideal and practical roles of teachers. These differences influence their mentality, attitudes, and behaviors toward their occupations. Some scholars note that teachers without normal school training often find it challenging to identify with the teaching profession because of their educational backgrounds and prior work experiences, which frequently involve career transitions (Wang, 2021). This difficulty contributes to dissatisfaction with their socioeconomic status and leads to higher turnover intention (Zhou, 2020). Additionally, teachers trained in normal schools and those educated in regular institutions tend to focus on different aspects of the teaching profession (Wang, Zeng & Liang, 2023). The former prioritizes the profession's benefits, while the latter emphasizes fulfilling personal values (Lu, Jiang & Zhang, 2014). This disparity influences the self-efficacy levels of teachers who are trained in normal schools compared to those who are educated in regular institutions (Liu & Li, 2022). Teachers trained in normal schools are more inclined to embrace their profession and exhibit stronger identification with the teaching field than their counterparts without such training (Poteliūnienė, Karanauskienė, Kontautienė & Grajauskas, 2022). They demonstrate higher self-efficacy (Shang, 2022) and greater work engagement (Topchyan & Woehler, 2021). Whether a teacher has been trained in a normal school offers valuable insights when analyzing the impact of turnover intention on work engagement. This factor helps to elucidate the mechanisms underlying the effect of turnover intention on work engagement among primary and secondary school music teachers. Consequently, this study proposed Hypothesis 2: Educational background (specifically whether a teacher has been trained in a normal school) moderates the relationship between turnover intention and work engagement among primary and secondary school music teachers.

This study examined music teachers from primary and secondary schools in Chongqing to explore the mechanisms underlying the impact of turnover intention on work engagement. The objective was to provide empirical evidence to enhance the work engagement of these teachers and contribute to the development of an exemplary music-teaching workforce. Based on the discussions and hypotheses presented, a model was developed, as illustrated in Figure 1.

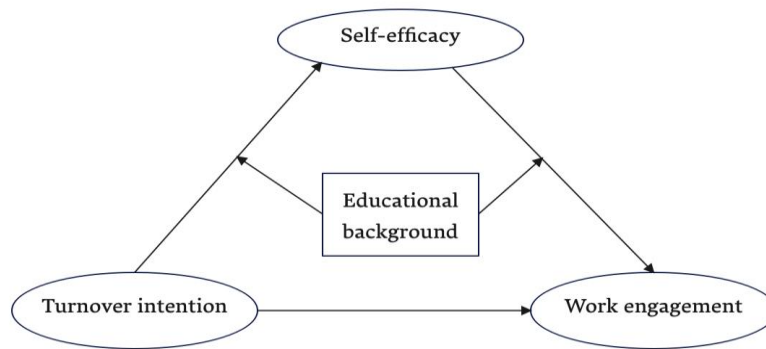


Figure 1. Hypothesized Model of Relationships Among Turnover Intention, Self-Efficacy, Educational Background, and Work Engagement of Music Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools

Methodology

Participants

A total of 332 music teachers from primary and secondary schools in Chongqing were selected through random sampling. The sample included 68 male teachers (20.5%) and 264 female teachers (79.5%). Regarding education levels, 34 teachers (10.2%) had qualifications below a bachelor's degree, 281 teachers (84.6%) held a bachelor's degree, and 17 teachers (5.1%) had qualifications above a bachelor's degree. In terms of age distribution, 112 teachers (33.7%) were aged 20-30, 118 teachers (35.5%) were aged 31-40, 75 teachers (22.6%) were aged 41-50, and 27 teachers (8.1%) were aged 51 years. Regarding teaching experience, 90 teachers (27.1%) had less than 6 years of teaching experience, 67 teachers (20.2%) had 6-10 years, 46 teachers (13.9%) had 11-15 years, 32 teachers (9.6%) had 16-20 years, and 97 teachers (29.2%) had more than 21 years of teaching experience. Additionally, 225 teachers (67.8%) had been trained in normal schools, whereas 107 teachers (32.2%) lacked such training (See Table 1).

Table 1. Basic Information about Participants

Demographic Variables	Category	Number of Participants	Percentage
Gender	Male	68	20.5%
	Female	264	79.5%
Educational Background	Below a bachelor's degree	34	10.2%
	Bachelor's degree	281	84.6%
	Above a bachelor's degree	17	5.1%
Age	20-30	112	33.7%
	31-40	118	35.5%
	41-50	75	22.6%
	51 and older	27	8.1%
Years of Teaching	Less than 5 years	90	27.1%
	6-10 years	67	20.2%
	11-15 years	46	13.9%
	16-20 years	32	9.6%
	21 years and older	97	29.2%
Training in Normal Schools	Yes	225	67.8%

	No	107	32.2%
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Research Instruments

Self-Efficacy Scale

The self-efficacy scale developed by Schwarzer et al. was used for measurement (Schwarzer, Bäßler, Kwiatek, Schröder & Zhang, 1997), With four items from this unidimensional scale retained. Each item was rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). In this study, the scale demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.802, indicating good internal consistency.

Work Engagement Scale

The work engagement scale developed by Schaufeli et al. was used to measure three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá & Bakker, 2002). A total of 11 items were included, with each item rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). In this study, the scale demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.882, indicating excellent internal consistency.

Turnover Intention Scale

The turnover intention scale developed by Konovsky et al. was used to measure turnover intention (Konovsky & Cropanzano, 1991). This unidimensional scale comprises three items, each rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). In this study, the scale exhibited a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.793, indicating acceptable internal consistency.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Amos 28 and IBM SPSS Statistics 30. A Harman's single-factor test was performed to assess common method biases. Descriptive statistical and correlation analyses were performed on the collected data. Structural equation modeling was applied to investigate the direct and mediating effects among primary and secondary school music teachers' turnover intentions, self-efficacy, and work engagement, as well as to validate a moderated mediation model of the relationships between these variables.

Results

Control and Testing of Common Method Biases

To enhance research rigor, procedural remedies were employed to control potential common method biases, and Harman's single-factor test was conducted to assess such biases. The procedural controls included randomizing the order of the questionnaire items and ensuring the anonymity of the responses. The results of Harman's single-factor test revealed three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, which was below the threshold, indicating that there were no significant common method biases in this study.

Convergent Validity, Composite Reliability, and Discriminant Validity

The reliability and validity of the three latent variables—turnover intention, self-efficacy, and work engagement, were evaluated through a confirmatory factor analysis. The factor loadings for the three latent variables ranged from 0.629 to 0.883, with the average variance extracted (AVE) ranging from 0.507 to 0.715, and the composite reliabilities (CRs) ranging from 0.802 to 0.883. All values satisfied the established criteria (Alarcón, Sánchez & De Olavide, 2015), confirming that the measurement of the three latent variables exhibited good reliability and validity (see Table 2).

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Dimension	Latent Variable	Unstd.	S.E.	T-value	P	Std.	SMC	CR	AVE
Leaving school	Turnover intention	0.714	0.066	10.768	***	0.629	0.396	0.802	0.577
Resigning from the current position		0.913	0.071	12.932	***	0.847	0.717		
Finding a new job		1.000				0.787	0.619		
Handle challenges with confidence	Self-efficacy	1.000				0.730	0.533	0.804	0.507
Remaining calm		0.875	0.072	12.202	***	0.738	0.545		
Ability to find solutions		0.822	0.074	11.046	***	0.664	0.441		
Ability to handle difficult situations		1.005	0.085	11.838	***	0.714	0.510		
Vigor	Work engagement	1.044	0.061	17.234	***	0.848	0.719	0.883	0.715
Dedication		1.071	0.059	18.046	***	0.883	0.780		
Absorption		1.000				0.804	0.646		

Note: *p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001.

A correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between turnover intention, self-efficacy, and work engagement. The results indicate that turnover intention is negatively correlated with the work engagement of primary and secondary school music teachers ($r = -0.443$, $p < 0.01$) and with their self-efficacy ($r = -0.270$, $p < 0.01$). In contrast, self-efficacy was positively correlated with work engagement ($r = 0.696$, $p < 0.01$). These correlation coefficients are considered acceptable. The AVE method was applied to assess the discriminant validity of the latent variables. The square roots of the AVEs for the three latent variables are all greater than the correlation coefficients between each pair of variables (see Table 3), indicating a moderate level of discriminant validity among the variables (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This finding provides the necessary foundation for further testing the study's hypotheses.

Table 3. Correlation Coefficients and Discriminant Validity Analysis

Latent Variable	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Turnover Intention	Self-Efficacy	Work Engagement
Turnover Intention	1.000	7.000	2.644	1.220	0.760		
Self-Efficacy	2.750	7.000	5.001	0.819	-0.270**	0.712	
Work Engagement	3.080	7.000	5.261	0.817	-0.443**	0.696**	0.846

Note: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001.

Testing the Moderated Mediation Model

Self-efficacy was incorporated into structural equation modeling, and a model was developed to outline the effects of turnover intention and self-efficacy on the work engagement of music teachers in primary and secondary schools (see Figure 2). The model fit was evaluated using various metrics, including the chi-

square divided by the degrees of freedom ($\chi^2/df = 2.329$), the goodness of fit index (GFI = 0.960), the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI = 0.931), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI = 0.962), the comparative fit index (CFI = 0.973), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA = 0.063), and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR = 0.040). The findings indicate that the model fit meets established criteria, indicating that the model that describes the effect of turnover intention and self-efficacy on the engagement of primary and secondary school music teachers fits well.

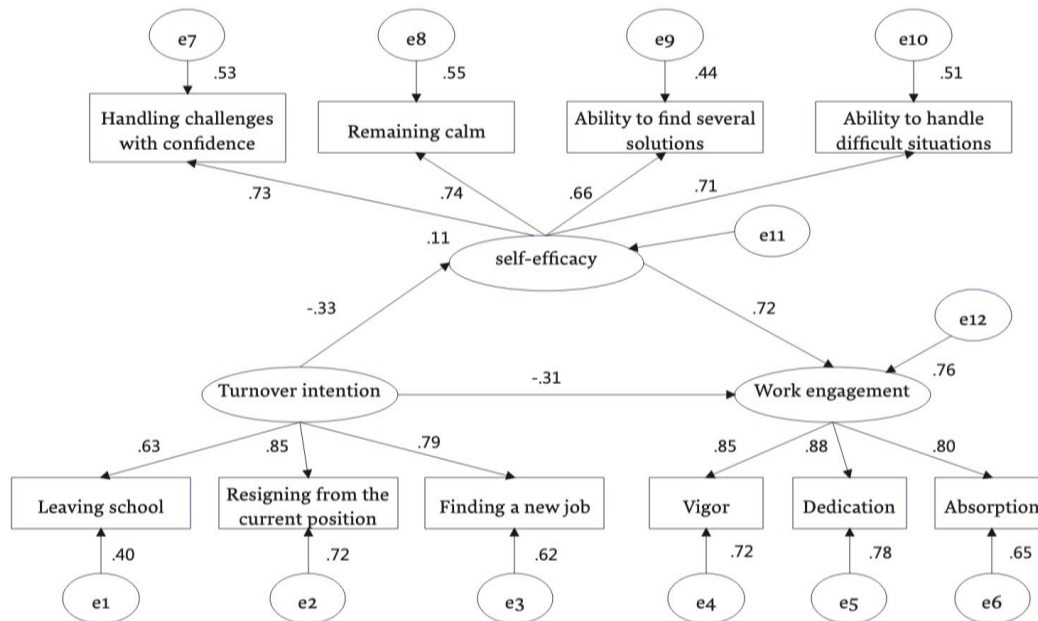


Figure2. Relationships between Turnover Intention, Self-Efficacy, and Work Engagement

The model demonstrates that the turnover intention of primary and secondary school music teachers negatively predicts their work engagement ($\beta = -0.31, p < 0.001$) and self-efficacy ($\beta = -0.33, p < 0.001$). Additionally, self-efficacy was found to positively predict work engagement ($\beta = 0.72, p < 0.001$). To verify the mediating role of self-efficacy, 5,000 bootstrap samples were drawn to estimate the bias-corrected 95% confidence interval and the percentile confidence interval of the mediating effect, with an estimate of -0.141. The bias-corrected 95% confidence interval ranged from -0.210 to -0.085 ($p < 0.001$), and the percentile confidence interval ranged from -0.208 to -0.084 ($p < 0.001$). As neither interval contains 0, the results confirm that self-efficacy mediates the influence of turnover intention on the work engagement of music teachers, supporting Hypothesis 1. As shown in Table 4, the total effect is -0.326, the direct effect is -0.185, and the mediation effect is -0.141, with the mediation effect accounting for 43.252% of the total effect, indicating partial mediation (Wen, Fan, Ye & Chen, 2016).

Table 4. Total Effect, Direct Effect, and Mediating Effect of the Hypothesized Model

	Point Estimation	SE	Z	Bias-corrected		P	Percentile		P
				Lower limit	Upper		Lower Limit	Upper	
Total Effect	-0.326	.044	-7.049	-0.416	-0.246	.000	-0.417	-0.246	.000
Direct Effect	-0.185	.034	-5.441	-0.258	-0.123	.000	-0.256	-0.121	.000
Mediation Effect	-0.141	.032	-4.406	-0.210	-0.085	.000	-0.208	-0.084	.000

*Note: Results of bootstrapping analysis using 5,000 samples.

Furthermore, participants were categorized based on whether they had received training in normal schools: 225 participants had undergone such training, while 107 had not. To examine the moderating effect of educational background on the mediation of self-efficacy between turnover intention and work engagement, 5,000 bootstrapped samples were drawn to estimate the bias-corrected 95% confidence interval and the percentile confidence interval. The bias-corrected confidence interval ranged from 0.003 to 0.331, while the percentile confidence interval ranged from 0.005 to 0.333. As neither interval included 0 and the p-values were 0.044 and 0.004, respectively ($p < 0.05$), the findings confirm that educational background moderates the mediating role of self-efficacy, supporting Hypothesis 2.

Discussion

A structural relational model was developed in this study, incorporating four variables: turnover intention, self-efficacy, work engagement, and educational background (specifically, whether participants had been trained in normal schools) of music teachers in primary and secondary schools. The findings confirmed that lower turnover intention leads to higher work engagement, which is consistent with the conclusions of previous research (Fu, Pan, Zhang & Cheng, 2022). Furthermore, the results demonstrated that turnover intention negatively influences self-efficacy, with self-efficacy mediating the relationship between turnover intention and work engagement. This mediation effect is moderated by educational background, offering further insights into the dynamics of these relationships.

Mediating Effect of Self-Efficacy

This study incorporated self-efficacy into structural equation modeling and revealed that self-efficacy partially mediates the relationship between turnover intention and work engagement. The findings indicate that the turnover intention of primary and secondary school music teachers influences their work engagement by affecting their self-efficacy. Building on previous research (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008), this study highlights that primary and secondary school music teachers with lower turnover intentions often exhibit higher levels of self-efficacy, enabling them to tackle challenges more effectively and enhancing their commitment to their work. This finding aligns with the conservation of resources theory, which posits that individuals with higher self-efficacy are better equipped to motivate themselves, address problems in the work environment effectively (Hobfoll, 1989), cope positively with workplace challenges, and approach their work with greater vigor. Therefore, relevant organizations should focus on the mental well-being of primary and secondary school music teachers, particularly regarding their turnover intention and self-efficacy. Establishing counseling institutes could help music teachers manage negative emotions and reduce turnover intention. Additionally, strategies should be implemented to enhance the participants' self-efficacy and enable them to recognize their value. This approach would foster greater passion for their work, enhance their sense of well-being, and promote improved engagement in their roles.

Moderating Effect of Educational Background

This study has demonstrated that educational background, specifically whether teachers were trained in normal schools, serves as a moderator in the mediation of self-efficacy between turnover intention and work engagement among primary and secondary school music teachers. The mediating effect of self-efficacy was more pronounced among teachers who were not trained in normal schools than among those who received such training. This indicates that educational background influences the mediation of self-efficacy in the relationship between turnover intention and work engagement. Furthermore, teachers' attitudes toward their roles are closely linked to the professional communities to which they belong. The educational background, specifically whether the teacher has been trained in a normal school, influences their professional development (Jegstad, Fiskum, Aspfors & Eklund, 2022) and attitudes toward the profession (Wang, Zeng & Liang, 2023). According to career construction theory, individuals require a series of behaviors and experiences related to their occupations to develop a comprehensive understanding of their roles (Savickas, 2002). Teachers without training in normal schools may face career transitions and must undergo specific stages to adjust to teaching roles. These teachers must have a stronger commitment to teaching and higher self-efficacy than those trained in normal schools to achieve strong work

performance and foster a positive understanding of the profession (Savickas, 2020). Music teachers who received training in normal schools tended to identify with their roles as educators more closely than those who did not (Lei & Li, 2021). To motivate teachers without educational backgrounds in normal schools, it is essential to enhance their self-efficacy and encourage them to invest more time and energy into teaching music. It is recommended that relevant organizations emphasize the development of teachers with and without training in normal schools and foster an environment where they can learn from and collaborate. Measures should be implemented to support music teachers from different educational backgrounds to ensure that they can participate in targeted training in education and teaching. The goal is to increase students' self-efficacy and work engagement, thereby promoting the overall development of music teachers in primary and secondary schools, regardless of whether they have received training in normal schools.

Research Significance

The theoretical significance of this study lies in its exploration of the combined impact of turnover intention, self-efficacy, and educational background (specifically training in normal schools) on the engagement of primary and secondary school music teachers. Although most previous studies have examined the independent effects of these variables on work engagement, few have integrated them within a single framework to assess their joint influence. This study further investigates the mechanisms underlying these effects, confirming the significant impact of turnover intention on work engagement and the role of self-efficacy. This study revealed that turnover intention and self-efficacy together influence work engagement, thus expanding the academic understanding of work engagement and enriching research on turnover intention and self-efficacy. Moreover, this study validates the moderating role of educational background in normal schools, which extends the application of both social role theory and career construction theory.

In addition, the study offers practical insights into improving work engagement among music teachers in primary and secondary schools. Education authorities should prioritize addressing teachers' turnover intention by implementing various measures to reduce it, such as managing teachers' workloads within reasonable limits, enhancing job satisfaction, and fostering a positive school environment. Furthermore, providing teachers with more opportunities for professional development is crucial for building their self-efficacy. High self-efficacy not only reduces turnover intention but also enhances work engagement. This approach strengthens the occupational commitment of music teachers and ultimately contributes to the healthy development of the music teacher workforce in primary and secondary schools.

Limitations of the Study and Prospects for Future Research

This study examined the impact of turnover intention on work engagement, identifying the mediating role of self-efficacy and the moderating effect of educational background in normal schools, thus constructing the internal mechanisms behind the influence of turnover intention on the work engagement of primary and secondary school music teachers. The limitations of this study and the prospects for future research are summarized in three aspects. First, this study was conducted in Chongqing, so further investigation is needed to determine whether the conclusions can be generalized to other regions. Second, this study is cross-sectional, which limits the ability to prove causality between the variables. Longitudinal research is necessary to strengthen these findings. Third, the impact of turnover intention on work engagement may be mediated or moderated by other factors. Future studies should explore additional mediating and moderating mechanisms to further validate the model proposed in this study.

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