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RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ON PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' TURNOVER INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

To promote high-quality development in preschool education and explore the relationship between preschool teachers' perceived organizational support and turnover intention, a survey was conducted among 932 preschool teachers in Guangdong Province. The findings reveal that preschool teachers' overall perceived organizational support score is at a high level, while their turnover intention score is slightly below average. This indicates that certain achievements have been made through the nation's implementation of measures to further deepen the reform of preschool education. With perceived organizational support serving as a protective factor against preschool teachers' turnover intention, this study further explores the relationship between these two variables. These research findings have practical significance for kindergartens in improving preschool teachers' work happiness and reducing turnover rates.

KEYWORDS: *Perceived Organizational Support; Turnover Intention; Preschool Teachers*

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

To address the issues of "expensive and difficult access to kindergarten," the *Opinions* proposed that by 2035, three-year preschool education should be universally available, forming a complete preschool education management system, operational system, and policy guarantee system, providing more sufficient, accessible, and higher-quality preschool education for children (Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council, 2020). However, with the implementation of various policy documents and the "second-child" and "third-child" policies, capital continues to flow into the preschool education industry, leading to an increase in the number of kindergartens and intensifying competition between institutions. Currently, the decline in China's birth rate has resulted in numerous kindergartens facing a "closure wave." Combined with the unique occupational characteristics of preschool teachers that subject them to multiple pressures, and the uncertainty and insecurity in future career development faced by preschool education staff, psychological pressure and anxiety continue to increase, making the issue of preschool teacher turnover still severe. To improve these issues, this study aims to explore the relationship between preschool teachers' perceived organizational support and turnover intention.

In 1986, American social psychologist Eisenberger discovered that when employees perceive support from their organization, they receive motivation and encouragement, leading to positive work feedback. After conducting a series of research studies, he proposed the Organizational Support Theory (OST) and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Domestic scholar Ling et al. defined perceived organizational support (POS) as employees' perception and value recognition of how the organization views their contributions and cares about their interests as employees. In simple terms, it is the support perceived by employees from their organization (Ling, Yang, & Fang, 2006).

Wang (2020)'s interpretation of POS is similar, indicating that POS refers to the degree to which an organization values and maintains organizational membership, and the extent to which it demonstrates loyalty to employees and cares about their well-being. In addition to such emotional support, McMillin (1997) believed that instrumental organizational support should also be included to promote employees' work. Combining with scholar Zhao Qianqian's definition in her research, this study defines the connotation of POS as: preschool teachers' perceived degree of support

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from kindergartens, specifically their perception and views of the care for their interests, value recognition, and degree of help received from the organization, leadership, and colleagues (Zhao, 2021).

Regarding turnover intention, Porter & Steers (1973) pointed out that it is an avoidance behavior after experiencing a process of maladjustment. Huang (2004) considered turnover intention as labor mobility, including movement between regions, occupations, and industries, representing the inflow and outflow of personnel in a specific organization. Based on the above, "preschool teacher turnover intention" can be defined as: the psychological tendency of preschool teachers wanting to change jobs after experiencing dissatisfaction in kindergarten work, and the overall manifestation of the possibility of finding other employment before formal resignation.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed the questionnaire survey method, which involved distributing previously prepared and validated organizational support and turnover intention scales to preschool teachers in questionnaire form, collecting the completed questionnaires, and conducting statistical analysis after their careful completion.

2.1 Survey Subjects

This study targeted in-service preschool teachers in various regions of Guangdong Province. Using the Questionnaire Star platform, surveys were distributed to preschool teachers within Guangdong Province, collecting a total of 932 questionnaires. After eliminating invalid questionnaires, 856 valid samples remained. The study examined preschool teachers' basic information across 13 aspects, including gender, age, marital status, childbearing/child-rearing status, major of study, and teaching experience.

2.2 Research Tools

1. The *Perceived Organizational Support Questionnaire* used was developed by domestic scholar Ling Wenquan and colleagues (Xu, Che, Lin, & Zhang, 2005). This scale was written from three aspects: work support, value recognition, and interest concern. Response options ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," valued from "1" to "5," with lower scores indicating poorer perceived organizational support experienced by the preschool teacher.
2. The *Turnover Intention Questionnaire* used was developed by Professor Farh (Farh, Tsui, & Xin, 1998). This questionnaire is a one-dimensional scale with 4 items. Similar to the Perceived Organizational Support Scale, response options ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," valued from "1" to "5," with higher scores indicating higher turnover intention of the preschool teacher (Song, 2023).

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

3.1 Overall Situation of Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support

As shown in Table 1, preschool teachers' work support average was 4.17, value recognition average was 4.00, and interest concern average was 3.97, all greater than 3, indicating that preschool teachers' perceived organizational support is good.

Table 1. Overall Situation of Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support (N=856)

Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Work Support	1	5	4.17	0.64
Value Recognition	1	5	4	0.72
Interest Concern	1	5	3.97	0.75
Total POS Score	1	5	4.26	0.62

3.2 Overall Situation of Preschool Teachers' Turnover Intention

According to Table 2, preschool teachers' turnover intention is generally at a slightly below-average level. Although the mean turnover intention in this sample is slightly lower than the theoretical value of 3, due to the complexity and specificity of the preschool teaching profession, as well as low social status and high daily workload and work pressure, preschool teachers may still develop turnover tendencies in their work.

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Table 2. Overall Situation of Preschool Teachers' Turnover Intention (N=856)

Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Total Turnover Intention Score	1	5	2.9	0.77

3.3 Differential Analysis of Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

3.3.1 Age-based Differential Analysis of Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

As shown in Table 3, significant differences exist among different age groups in work support (F=10.051, p=0.000), value recognition (F=4.302, p=0.002), turnover intention (F=6.366, p=0.000), interest concern (F=5.940, p=0.000), and total POS score (F=6.705, p=0.000).

Table 3. Age Differences in Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

Item	Age: (Mean±SD)					*F*	*p*
	Under 25 (*n*=188)	26-30 (*n*=258)	31-40 (*n*=301)	41-50 (*n*=102)	51-60 (*n*=7)		
Interest Concern	3.84±0.68	3.87±0.77	4.12±0.74	3.96±0.80	4.14±0.38	5.940	0.000**
Work Support	4.00±0.61	4.08±0.66	4.32±0.61	4.25±0.60	4.57±0.53	10.051	0.000**
Value Recognition	3.85±0.68	3.98±0.68	4.09±0.75	4.05±0.74	4.43±0.53	4.302	0.002**
Total POS Score	4.10±0.64	4.21±0.61	4.38±0.61	4.27±0.60	4.57±0.53	6.705	0.000**
Turnover Intention	3.88±0.77	3.94±0.72	4.20±0.85	4.09±0.81	4.29±0.49	6.366	0.000**

Note: * p<0.05 ** p<0.01

3.3.2 Teaching Experience-based Differential Analysis of Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

As shown in Table 4, different teaching experience does not show significant differences in turnover intention (p>0.05), indicating no differences in turnover intention across different teaching experience levels. However, different teaching experience shows significant differences in interest concern (F=2.398, p=0.036), work support (F=4.027, p=0.001), value recognition (F=2.575, p=0.025), and total POS score (F=2.595, p=0.024).

Table 4. Teaching Experience Differences in Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

Item	Teaching Experience: (Mean±SD)						*F*	*p*
	1-5 years (*n*=467)	11-15 years (*n*=93)	16-20 years (*n*=50)	21-30 years (*n*=34)	Over 30 years (*n*=11)	6-10 years (*n*=201)		
Interest Concern	3.91±0.75	4.13±0.74	4.00±0.81	4.21±0.73	4.18±0.40	3.97±0.74	2.398	0.036*
Work Support	4.10±0.64	4.33±0.60	4.30±0.61	4.35±0.60	4.55±0.52	4.17±0.66	4.027	0.001**
Value Recognition	3.96±0.70	4.02±0.83	4.10±0.74	4.29±0.68	4.45±0.52	4.00±0.69	2.575	0.025*
Total POS Score	4.21±0.62	4.40±0.55	4.32±0.62	4.41±0.61	4.55±0.52	4.24±0.64	2.595	0.024*
Turnover Intention	3.99±0.79	4.14±0.87	3.94±0.89	4.35±0.69	4.18±0.60	4.06±0.78	1.968	0.081

Note: * p<0.05 ** p<0.01

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3.3.3 Childbearing/Child-rearing Status-based Differential Analysis of Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

As shown in Table 5, different childbearing/child-rearing status samples show significant differences in interest concern (F=9.528, p=0.000), work support (F=13.549, p=0.000), value recognition (F=7.370, p=0.000), total POS score (F=7.493, p=0.000), and turnover intention (F=6.838, p=0.000).

Table 5. Childbearing/Child-rearing Status Differences in Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

Item	Childbearing/Child-rearing Status: (Mean±SD)				*F*	*p*
	No children (*n*=384)	**One child (*n*=226)**	**Three or more children (*n*=23)**	**Two children (*n*=223)**		
Interest Concern	3.83±0.73	4.08±0.68	4.39±0.66	4.04±0.82	9	

Table 5. Childbearing/Child-rearing Status Differences in Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention (continued)

Item	Childbearing/Child-rearing Status: (Mean±SD)				*F*	*p*
	No children (*n*=384)	**One child (*n*=226)**	**Three or more children (*n*=23)**	**Two children (*n*=223)**		
Interest Concern	3.83±0.73	4.08±0.68	4.39±0.66	4.04±0.82	9.528	0.000**
Work Support	4.02±0.66	4.29±0.55	4.48±0.67	4.27±0.64	13.549	0.000**
Value Recognition	3.90±0.69	4.12±0.71	4.39±0.72	4.02±0.74	7.370	0.000**
Total POS Score	4.15±0.64	4.35±0.56	4.48±0.67	4.31±0.63	7.493	0.000**
Turnover Intention	3.91±0.74	4.11±0.84	4.30±0.76	4.17±0.82	6.838	0.000**

Note: * p<0.05 ** p<0.01

3.3.4 Position-based Differential Analysis of Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

As shown in Table 6, different position samples show no significant differences in value recognition. However, different positions show significant differences in interest concern (F=3.370, p=0.010), work support (F=4.237, p=0.002), total POS score (F=2.844, p=0.023), and turnover intention (F=2.454, p=0.044).

Table 6. Position Differences in Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

Item	Position: (Mean±SD)					*F*	*p*
	Middle Management (*n*=54)	**Lead Teacher (*n*=306)**	**Childcare Worker (*n*=147)**	**Assistant Teacher (*n*=323)**	**Principal/Vice Principal (*n*=26)**		
Interest Concern	3.78±0.79	4.02±0.73	4.07±0.78	3.88±0.73	4.15±0.73	3.370	0.010**
Work Support	4.07±0.64	4.19±0.66	4.31±0.62	4.09±0.63	4.38±0.50	4.237	0.002**
Value Recognition	3.98±0.74	4.05±0.70	4.04±0.78	3.93±0.70	4.27±0.60	2.291	0.058
Total POS Score	4.15±0.66	4.29±0.62	4.35±0.62	4.19±0.62	4.38±0.50	2.844	0.023*
Turnover Intention	3.87±0.70	4.02±0.76	4.16±0.92	4.00±0.79	4.31±0.62	2.454	0.044*

Note: * p<0.05 ** p<0.01

3.3.5 Marital Status-based Differential Analysis of Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

As shown in Table 7, different marital status samples show consistency in total POS scores. However, different marital status shows significant differences in interest concern (F=4.947, p=0.001), work support (F=5.246, p=0.000), value recognition (F=2.691, p=0.030), and turnover intention (F=4.131, p=0.003).

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Table 7. Marital Status Differences in Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

Item	Marital Status: (Mean±SD)					*F*	*p*
	Widowed (*n*=1)	**Other (*n*=1)**	**Married (*n*=522)**	**Single (*n*=320)**	**Divorced (*n*=12)**		
Interest Concern	5.00±null	4.00±null	4.05±0.75	3.84±0.72	3.67±0.98	4.947	0.001**
Work Support	5.00±null	4.00±null	4.24±0.62	4.05±0.66	4.25±0.62	5.246	0.000**
Value Recognition	5.00±null	4.00±null	4.06±0.72	3.91±0.70	4.00±0.74	2.691	0.030*
Total POS Score	5.00±null	4.00±null	4.30±0.62	4.18±0.63	4.25±0.62	2.346	0.053
Turnover Intention	5.00±null	4.00±null	4.11±0.81	3.91±0.76	4.33±0.65	4.131	0.003**

Note: * $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

3.3.6 Teaching Qualification-based Differential Analysis of Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

As shown in Table 8, different teaching qualification samples show no significant differences in value recognition and total POS score. However, different teaching qualifications show significant differences in work support (F=4.327, p=0.005), interest concern (F=4.161, p=0.006), and turnover intention (F=2.960, p=0.032).

Table 8. Teaching Qualification Differences in Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

Item	Teaching Qualification: (Mean±SD)				*F*	*p*
	Primary/Secondary School (*n*=40)	**Kindergarten (*n*=666)**	**None (*n*=146)**	**Arts (*n*=4)**		
Work Support	4.22±0.53	4.13±0.65	4.33±0.61	4.50±0.58	4.327	0.005**
Value Recognition	4.10±0.59	3.99±0.71	4.04±0.78	4.25±0.50	0.640	0.590
Interest Concern	4.17±0.64	3.92±0.75	4.12±0.74	4.25±0.96	4.161	0.006**
Total POS Score	4.30±0.52	4.23±0.63	4.37±0.61	4.50±0.58	2.460	0.061
Turnover Intention	4.05±0.75	4.00±0.79	4.20±0.84	4.50±0.58	2.960	0.032*

Note: * $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

3.4 Correlation Analysis between Perceived Organizational Support and Preschool Teachers' Turnover Intention

As shown in Table 9, the correlation coefficients 0.425, 0.390, 0.414, and 0.436 are all positive, indicating positive correlations between turnover intention and all four variables of perceived organizational support listed in the table.

Table 9. Relationship between Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

Item	Turnover Intention
Interest Concern	0.425**
Value Recognition	0.390**
Work Support	0.414**
Total POS Score	0.436**

Note: * $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

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3.5 Linear Regression Analysis of Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

As shown in Table 10, R=0.220, indicating that the three independent variables can explain changes in turnover intention, but only account for 22% of the total causes. According to the data F=80.256, p=0.000<0.05, indicating that at least one of work support, value recognition, and interest concern is correlated with turnover intention. The VIF values in the model are all <5, indicating no collinearity issues. Finally, all three variables show positive correlations with turnover intention.

Table 10. Linear Regression Analysis of Perceived Organizational Support on Preschool Teachers' Turnover Intention (N=856)

Item	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	*t*	*p*	Collinearity Diagnostics	
	B	**Std. Error**	***Beta***			**VIF**	**Tolerance**
Constant	1.586	0.165	-	9.602	0.000**	-	-
Interest Concern	0.234	0.046	0.220	5.058	0.000**	2.073	0.482
Value Recognition	0.156	0.047	0.140	3.339	0.001**	1.933	0.517
Work Support	0.216	0.055	0.174	3.889	0.000**	2.178	0.459
R^2	0.220						
Adjusted R^2	0.218						
F	F (3,852)=80.256, p=0.000						
D-W value	2.032						
Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention							

Note: * p<0.05 ** p<0.01

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Situation of Preschool Teachers' Perceived Organizational Support

This study shows that the mean values of each dimension and total score of preschool teachers' perceived organizational support are all above the theoretical value of 3, slightly higher compared to scholar Song Jiaxin's results, indicating an overall high level and suggesting that preschool teachers can perceive good organizational support with an upward trend. The *Guidelines* clearly state the need to improve the preschool teacher training system. With the implementation of the "second-child" and "third-child" policies, people's attention and emphasis on preschool education have gradually increased. With high competition between kindergartens and the negative impact of voluntary turnover on organizations, and given that increased perceived organizational support promotes preschool teachers' work status, leadership has begun to implement humanized management of teachers. Consequently, preschool teachers' perceived organizational support remains at a high level.

In this study, age, teaching experience, childbearing/child-rearing status, marital status, teaching qualification status, and position all showed significant differences in preschool teachers' perceived organizational support, indicating that these factors create differences in perceived organizational support. From the sample data obtained, preschool teachers are predominantly female, showing a "few male, many female" state. Women of different ages are influenced by gender roles at different age stages, being affected by marital status both before and during their career, while marital status has an indirect or direct relationship with childbearing/child-rearing status. Therefore, preschool teachers of different ages, marital status, and childbearing/child-rearing status show different needs for organizational support. Additionally, regarding differences in perceived organizational support based on monthly income, only value recognition showed significant differences (higher income corresponds to greater value recognition), while other items showed no significant differences. This result differs from scholar Song Jiaxin's findings (which showed significant differences in work support, value recognition, interest concern, and total POS score). However, it can be confirmed

that monthly income positively correlates with teachers' value recognition (i.e., their importance to and recognition by the kindergarten), consistent with Song Jiaxin's conclusions.

4.2 Situation of Preschool Teachers' Turnover Intention

The research shows that preschool teachers' mean turnover intention is 2.90, with a standard deviation of 0.77. The turnover intention is below the theoretical mean value of 3, indicating a slightly below-average level, but only 0.1 below the theoretical value, suggesting room for further reduction in turnover intention. Even with societal progress, technological development, and increasing attention and emphasis on preschool education, preschool teachers' salary and social status have not significantly improved. Due to the unique and complex nature of the preschool teaching profession and the imbalance between effort and reward, preschool teachers may develop turnover tendencies and possibilities in their work.

In this study, age, teaching qualification status, childbearing/child-rearing status, and position all showed significant differences in preschool teachers' turnover intention, indicating that these factors influence turnover intention. Comparing turnover intention scores across different age groups reveals that teachers aged "51-60" show the highest scores. This stage represents the transition from middle to old age, with declining physical capabilities, weaker learning and adaptation abilities compared to younger teachers, and approaching retirement age, hence the higher turnover intention. Data comparison shows that widowed teachers and those with three or more children have the highest turnover intention scores, followed by divorced teachers and those with two children, indicating that child-rearing responsibilities and family member loss may lead preschool teachers to consider resignation or job change. Additionally, kindergarten location and institution type show no significant differences in preschool teachers' turnover intention, indicating that teachers' intention to leave is not influenced by the kindergarten's location or whether it is public or private.

4.3 Relationship between Preschool Teachers' Turnover Intention and Perceived Organizational Support

The research indicates that all three variables of perceived organizational support show positive correlations with turnover intention, which contradicts many scholars' research conclusions and appears counterintuitive. However, considering the current development of the kindergarten industry and present survival pressures, this conclusion is not entirely unreasonable. Due to the industry's "closure wave" and kindergarten mergers, the actual demand for preschool teachers is declining. Combined with the long-standing mismatch between preschool teachers' salary and benefits and their job efforts, those in the preschool education industry are reassessing this career and its prospects, leading to increased turnover intention. When organizational leaders receive such signals from their staff, they implement measures to maintain organizational stability, such as improving salary and benefits and increasing attention to preschool teachers. However, in this broader environment, some teachers may have strong determination to leave, and although organizations recognize this and continuously improve their response measures, this results in a positive correlation between the three variables of perceived organizational support and turnover intention.

The *R* value of 0.220 indicates that interest concern, value recognition, and work support can explain 22% of the reasons for turnover intention, suggesting that other factors influence preschool teachers' turnover intention, with perceived organizational support being just one of them. With generational changes and profound global transformations, people's perspectives have begun to shift. Whether it's the declining birth rate, the social phenomenon of "kindergarten closures," or the formalism present in actual kindergartens and society's expectations of preschool teachers, all these factors increase teachers' psychological pressure and physical fatigue. Teachers increasingly feel anxious and disappointed with their current work, to the extent that increased organizational support cannot easily shake their turnover intention.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Build a Positive Kindergarten Organizational Atmosphere to Improve Preschool Teachers' Work Happiness

From the sample data obtained, preschool teachers are predominantly female, showing a "few male, many female" pattern. Therefore, with female teachers constituting the majority, kindergarten managers and preschool education workers should particularly emphasize the lubricating role of organizational atmosphere in work. A positive organizational atmosphere allows preschool teachers to work in a good social environment, thereby improving work efficiency. As the leader of a kindergarten, the principal should value teachers' demands and professional development, construct a fair and just promotion platform and a safe environment for expressing opinions. Managers can also

provide targeted growth development plans based on different age groups of teachers, as well as specific emotional and instrumental support for teachers at different age stages, to improve preschool teachers' work happiness in kindergartens.

5.2 Value Preschool Teachers' Professional Identity to Improve Their Job Satisfaction

During the recruitment process, kindergarten managers should value not only candidates' professional abilities but also their passion for the preschool education industry, specifically whether teachers have a sense of identity with preschool education rather than merely choosing this work for survival. If the latter is the case, teachers will find it difficult to experience happiness at work. Research shows that salary is a direct and intuitive indicator that allows preschool teachers to feel their value recognition from the kindergarten. Therefore, organizations should ensure preschool teachers' welfare benefits within their capabilities, with appropriate salary increases based on academic year conditions. Good compensation can reduce preschool teachers' economic pressure while enhancing their confidence and self-esteem, improving work efficiency.

5.3 Focus on Preschool Teachers' Development Needs and Increase Social Attention to Preschool Education

Beyond concerning themselves with preschool teachers' mental health, organizations should also address teachers' future development. They can combine interviews and lectures to understand the current development needs of their preschool teachers, provide them with targeted advice, and offer corresponding organizational support. The high-quality development of preschool education cannot be achieved by kindergartens alone but requires support and understanding from all sectors of society. Relevant government departments should increase the promotion and publicity of preschool education, gradually helping those with prejudices against preschool teachers understand the importance of preschool education for lifelong development. Additionally, reducing preschool teachers' burdens is key to maintaining industry vitality. We need to ensure preschool teachers have sufficient time and energy to see and care for children, helping them grow healthily, allowing preschool teachers to feel their efforts are meaningful and fulfilling.

Author Biography

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