

Factors Influencing Primary School Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction - A Mixed Method Study in Gongyi City, China

by Ka Bai

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of

Master of Arts (Research) (Education)

under the supervision of Dr Mun Yee Lai and Dr Keiko

Yasukawa

University of Technology Sydney
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

October 2025

Certificate of Original Authorship

I, Ka Bai, declare that this thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Arts (Research), in the School of Communication, and International Studies and Education, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

This research was supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship doi.org/10.82133/C42F-K220.

Signed

Ka Bai Production Note:
Signature removed prior to publication.

Acknowledgment

After two and a half years, I have finally completed my thesis. Along the way, I experienced moments of pain, confusion, and self-doubt, but step by step, I made it through. Looking back, this journey has been both exhausting and rewarding—it pushed me to my limits, but it also helped me grow in ways I never expected.

I would like to sincerely thank my supervisor, Dr Mun Yee Lai, for her continuous guidance throughout this journey. She not only offered me valuable academic advice but also cared about my overall well-being. Her patience and encouragement meant a lot to me. I also want to express my gratitude to my co-supervisor, Dr Keiko Yasukawa, for her insightful feedback and support, which helped shape and strengthen this thesis. Moreover, I want to thank UTS for providing all the resources and support I needed throughout this research. Being part of this academic community has been a privilege.

My deepest gratitude goes to my parents back in China. Thank them for always standing behind to provide both emotional and financial support. Without their love and support, I couldn't have made it this far.

I'm also deeply thankful to the participants in my study. Their willingness to taking part in the research gave its meaning and made it possible.

I gratefully acknowledge the expert editorial assistance of Dr Terry Fitzgerald for Chapters 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7. I am also thankful to Dr Gloria Angela Koh for her meticulous proofreading of Chapters 3 and 4. Finally, I extend my appreciation to Associate Professor Qian Chen for her invaluable advice throughout the quantitative data collection and analysis process. To everyone who walked with me in this journey—thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

Abstract

In primary and middle schools in China, each child is allocated to a class that has a teacher designated as a *banzhuren* who is responsible for managing and overseeing all aspects of that specific class of students. Due to the low levels of job satisfaction among *banzhuren*, there has been a rising number of complaints, and school leaders are increasingly facing challenges in appointing teachers to this role. This study employed a sequential, mixed quantitative and qualitative research method to explore the factors influencing *banzhuren*'s job satisfaction, the working dilemmas they face, and potential solutions for improvement.

The quantitative part examined relationships among *banzhuren*'s self-efficacy, burnout and job satisfaction by drawing on 624 primary school *banzhuren*s from Gongyi City (in Henan province of China) who participated in an online survey. The data were analysed through structural equation modelling. The results showed that (1) *banzhuren*'s burnout had a negative influence on their self-efficacy and job satisfaction; (2) *banzhuren*'s job satisfaction was positively influenced by self-efficacy; and (3) *banzhuren*'s self-efficacy could mediate the negative influence from burnout and thus enhance job satisfaction.

In the qualitative part, seven *banzhuren*s were interviewed about their work practices. The results indicated that (1) these *banzhuren*s bore more responsibilities and a wider job scope than subject specialist teachers; (2) the overwhelming workload and job responsibilities caused burnout, which further harmed their job satisfaction; and (3) other influences on their job satisfaction were stress, excessive non-teaching-related tasks, and insufficient reward.

Based on the overall findings, four potential solutions for enhancing *banzhuren*'s job satisfaction and professional development are proposed. First, a more reasonable career promotion path could be established for *banzhuren*s, making this position more attractive. Second, schools could provide a more supportive environment for work and professional

development for banzhurens. Third, a position of teaching assistant could be established to share the banzhurens' administrative load. Finally, school leaders could enhance banzhurens' job satisfaction by increasing their self-efficacy through improving their ability to communicate with school management teams.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1 Introduction	1
CHAPTER 2 Literature Review	5
2.1 Banzhurens.....	5
2.1.1 <i>The Historical Development of the Banzhuren System</i>	5
2.1.2 <i>Banzhurens' Working Conditions</i>	8
2.2 Job Satisfaction	11
2.2.1 <i>Definition of Job Satisfaction</i>	11
2.2.2 <i>Outcomes of Teachers' Job Satisfaction</i>	13
2.2.3 <i>Antecedents of Job Satisfaction</i>	14
2.2.4 <i>Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction and Intention to Leave</i>	16
2.3 Self-efficacy	18
2.3.1 <i>The Theory of Teachers' Self-Efficacy</i>	18
2.3.2 <i>Sources of Teachers' Self-efficacy</i>	21
2.3.3 <i>The Effects of Self-efficacy</i>	23
2.4 Burnout	25
2.4.1 <i>Definition of Burnout</i>	25
2.4.2 <i>Causes and Effects of Teachers' Burnout</i>	25
2.5 Chinese Culture and Teacher Morality	29
2.5.1 <i>Teacher Morality in Chinese Traditional Culture</i>	30
2.5.2 <i>Teacher Morality in Contemporary China</i>	33
2.6 Summary of the Chapter	36
CHAPTER 3 Methodology.....	37
3.1 Research Design.....	37
3.2 Recruitment of Participants.....	40
3.3 Quantitative Research	42

3.3.1 Research Framework and Hypothesis	42
3.3.2 Instruments Selection	43
3.3.3 Sample Profile	47
3.3.4 Data Analysis	48
3.4 Qualitative Research	58
3.4.1 Data Collection	59
3.4.2 The Participants	62
3.4.3 Data Analysis	63
CHAPTER 4 Quantitative Findings	66
4.1 Reliability and Validity Test.....	66
4.1.1 Cronbach's Alpha (α)	66
4.1.2 Measurement of the Model Construct Validity Test	68
4.2 Descriptive Analysis	71
4.3 Model Fit of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)	76
4.4 Multi-group Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Analysis of Variance	77
4.4.1 Multi-group Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MCFA)	77
4.4.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).....	81
4.5 Hypothesis Test	82
4.5.1 Structural Model Test.....	82
4.5.2 Mediation Effect Test.....	84
CHAPTER 5 Analysis of the Interviews	86
5.1 What Does a Banzhuren Do?	86
5.1.1 Working as the Students' Moms: The Daily Routines of Banzhurens	86
5.1.2 Differences Between Banzhurens and Subject Specialist Teachers	90
5.1.3 How To Be a Banzhuren?	92
5.2 Banzhurens' Self-efficacy	93
5.2.1 Self-Efficacy in Interpersonal Support.....	95

5.2.2 <i>Self-Efficacy in Management and Administration</i>	102
5.2.3 <i>Self-Efficacy in Instructional Strategy</i>	105
5.3 Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction	107
5.3.1 <i>Factors Contributing to Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction</i>	107
5.3.2 <i>Factors Impacting Banzhurens' Satisfaction: Heavy workload</i>	110
5.3.3 <i>Factors Impacting Banzhurens' Satisfaction: The Limited Benefits of Taking the Role of Banzhuren.</i>	117
5.3.4 <i>Teachers' Willingness to Continue Serving as Banzhurens</i>	120
5.4 Suggestions for Improving the Job Attraction of a Banzhuren	123
5.5 Conclusion to the Chapter	124
Chapter 6 Discussion and Findings	125
6.1 Introduction to the Chapter	125
6.1 What Are the Relationships Among Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction, Self-Efficacy and Burnout	126
6.1.1 <i>The Effects of Self-efficacy on Job Satisfaction</i>	126
6.1.2 <i>The Effects of Burnout</i>	128
6.2 What Are the Other Factors Influencing Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction?	131
6.2.1. <i>Students' Academic and Non-Academic Progress and Behaviours in Schools</i>	131
6.2.2 <i>Workload</i>	133
6.2.3 <i>Stress</i>	134
6.2.4 <i>Insufficient Reward</i>	138
6.3 Possible Ways to Improve Banzhurens Job Satisfaction	139
6.3.1 <i>Provide Better Work Environments and Support for Banzhurens</i>	139
6.3.2 <i>Establish a Professional Evaluation System for Banzhuren</i>	140
6.3.3 <i>Establish the Position of Teaching Assistant</i>	142
6.3.4 <i>Increase Banzhurens Self-Efficacy</i>	142
6.4 Summary of the Chapter	143

Chapter 7 Conclusion to the Thesis.....	145
7.1 Key Findings.....	145
7.2 Strengths and Limitations	147
7.3 Implications for Future Research.....	148
Reference	150
Appendix A - Questionnaire	174
Appendix B – Publications	176
Appendix C – Mplus Syntaxes	191

CHAPTER 1 Introduction

In primary schools in China, every class has a teacher designated as *banzhuren* (班主任), who has overall responsibility for and authority over all aspects of the students in their class. The term *banzhuren* is derived from Mandarin pronunciation and is often translated as classroom teacher, homeroom teacher, head teacher, or class teacher; however, a *banzhuren*'s responsibilities and scope of work extend far beyond what is commonly associated with these roles (Li et al., 2023). As stipulated in Regulations on the Work of *Banzhuren* in Primary and Middle Schools (中小学班主任工作规定) (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2009), *banzhurens* are selected from among the subject specialist teachers of a class. This selected teacher serves as both a subject specialist teacher and *banzhuren*, thus holding a dual role for the designated class.

The role of *banzhuren* exists to maintain the smooth and effective daily operations of a class, particularly in primary schools. Moreover, the expectations imposed by Chinese society on *banzhurens*, which are rooted in Chinese traditional culture and social values, imply that *banzhurens* are responsible for not only their students' academic performance but also their overall development (Nie & Xu, 2024). Specifically, the core responsibilities of a *banzhuren* include but are not limited to managing their students' moral development, fostering a positive classroom culture (which involves ensuring cleanliness, organisation, and decoration), facilitating effective collaboration and communication among the students, colleagues, and parents, and overseeing the students' academic performance (Liu et al., 2018). These responsibilities often come with heavy workloads and excessive daily working hours. Studies indicate that over 80% of *banzhurens* work more than 8 hours a day (Zhao & Liu, 2018), typically nearing 10 hours (Pan & Zhang, 2017).

With the heavy workload and the aforementioned responsibilities, banzhurens are facing a range of work-related stresses and feelings of helplessness (Geng, 2018). Their work-stress index is higher than average, which adversely affects their health, leading to physical problems such as insomnia, headaches, and chest distress (Song, 2022; Wang, 2022). Therefore, it is not surprising to find that banzhurens' job satisfaction is lower than that of subject specialist teachers (Yuan, 2019). Teachers' job satisfaction is related to their well-being, turnover rate, students' academic performance, and the long-term development of the education system (Fütterer et al., 2023; Ololube, 2006). Dissatisfied teachers generally exhibit weaker commitment to their work and are more inclined to quit their jobs, which is likely to affect their students' school performance (Essien & Gimba, 2017; Perrachione et al., 2008). As a result, novice teachers may hesitate to pursue teaching careers since they are inevitably assigned as banzhuren, especially if they are teachers of core subjects (Chinese language, mathematics, or English). It has been common for schools to encounter challenges in assigning teachers every school year because existing banzhurens express their reluctance to continue this role (Qin et al., 2021). Even worse, in some rural areas, the teacher turnover rate is steadily increasing (Zhou, 2015). If this issue remains unresolved, future generations may choose not to enter the teaching profession.

Burnout is a major determinant of teachers' intentions to leave the profession (Madigan & Kim, 2021). It has been highly discussed in studies concerning teachers' job satisfaction and/or intentions to resign (e.g., Molero Jurado et al., 2019; Okçu & Çetin, 2017). Teachers with high levels of burnout are more likely to feel dissatisfied with their jobs and more motivated to quit (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). In contrast, self-efficacy has been identified as a significant factor contributing to teachers' job satisfaction (Huang et al., 2020; Troesch & Bauer, 2017). Teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy tend to think more positively about

their work and are able to handle challenging work tasks more effectively, thereby contributing to their job satisfaction (Akomolafe & Ogunmakin, 2014).

Over the past decade, Chinese researchers have used numerous quantitative methods to examine banzhurens' job satisfaction from various perspectives (refer to Chen, 2020; Ding & Wang, 2018; Kuai & Zeng, 2016; Pan & Zhang, 2017). However, insights regarding the impact of burnout and self-efficacy on banzhurens' job satisfaction, such as what the relationships between these three factors are, remain scarce. Although previous studies offered solutions to enhance the work status and well-being of banzhurens, most of these recommendations originated from senior management of the government or the Education Ministry. These directives often overlook the practical realities and genuine needs of the banzhurens themselves. Suggestions for improving banzhuren's status—such as positive public media promotion, salary increases, and reduced teaching workloads (Geng, 2018; Qin et al., 2021; Wu, 2024)—are currently rooted in the national education system and thus require careful consideration by national policymakers. The critical question, however, remains: Do these systemic solutions align with the banzhuren's actual needs and desires? Can these proposed solutions effectively mitigate or alleviate teacher burnout? Additionally, an important limitation of previous studies on banzhurens' job satisfaction is the insufficient consideration of their real lived experiences and the neglect of the Chinese cultural context that shapes these experiences, which can lead to potentially incomplete interpretations and irrelevant solutions.

To address the aforementioned research gaps and gain a deep understanding of banzhurens' work status while practically enhancing their job satisfaction, this study employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate three research questions:

- (1) What are the relationships among banzhurens' job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout?

- (2) Are there factors beyond self-efficacy and burnout that also influence banzhurens' job satisfaction?
- (3) What are the possible ways to improve banzhurens' job satisfaction?

To answer the first research question, a quantitative method – teacher surveys and structural equation modelling – was used to explore the relationships between banzhurens' job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout. To answer the second research question, seven banzhurens were invited to face-to-face interviews to explore the factors affecting their job satisfaction. The third research question was addressed by synthesizing the results of both the quantitative and qualitative data to identify evidence-based methods for improving banzhurens' job satisfaction. The data interpretations were informed by a critical consideration of the banzhurens' lived experiences and the specific Chinese cultural context. This study aims to increase awareness of this significant group within the Chinese education system, encouraging greater consideration of their well-being.

This thesis comprises seven chapters. The second chapter provides a thorough review of (a) the historical development and current working conditions of banzhurens; (b) definitions, antecedents, and significance of teacher and banzhurens' job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout; (c) the cultural context shaping teacher/banzhuren morality in China. The third chapter details the research design, procedures, participants, data collection, and analysis methods for both the quantitative and qualitative components. Chapters 4 and 5 present detailed quantitative findings and qualitative analyses, respectively. Chapter 6 synthesizes these findings and discusses the identified relationships. The final chapter concludes with key insights, strengths, limitations, and implications for future research.

CHAPTER 2 Literature Review

This chapter presents the definitions, effects, and other essential information about the key terms and concepts associated with this study. It also introduces the four hypotheses for the quantitative component of this study, namely (1) Banzhurens' self-efficacy positively affects their job satisfaction; (2) Banzhurens' burnout negatively affects their self-efficacy; (3) Banzhurens' burnout negatively affects their job satisfaction; (4) Banzhurens' self-efficacy mediates the effect of their burnout on job satisfaction. More specifically, Section 2.1 focuses on the definitions, historical development, and current status of Chinese banzhurens. Sections 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 address the definitions, significance, antecedents, and outcomes related to teachers' job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout. Section 2.5 reviews the requirements for teacher morality from perspectives drawn from both traditional Chinese culture and modern contextual values.

2.1 Banzhurens

2.1.1 The Historical Development of the Banzhuren System

In the Chinese *Dictionary of Education* (Gu, 1998), the banzhuren is defined as “the teacher who is fully responsible for the students and the class work” (p. 15). According to the Regulations on the Work of Banzhuren in Primary and Middle Schools (中小学班主任工作职责) issued by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2009), banzhurens are selected from the subject specialist teachers of each class. Therefore, banzhurens hold a dual role at school, serving as both a subject specialist teacher and a responsible class teacher.

The occupation of banzhuren evolved from the classroom-based teaching system where students are grouped and taught in classrooms, which can be traced back to countries and regions in Europe in the early 16th century. In the 17th century, the educator Johann Amos

Comenius documented the classroom-based teaching system in his work *Pansophic School*, suggesting improvements such as primary school students being divided into grades or classes according to their age and academic performance and, if possible, each grade should have its own dedicated classroom to avoid interferences from the other grades (Zhang et al., 2022). Moreover, Comenius also suggested that students within one classroom should be divided into groups of ten, where the oldest or the most capable student in the group could be appointed as the group leader responsible for inspecting, supervising and helping other students (Ren, 1990). The group leader could be viewed as the earliest form of class teacher.

In 1862, the Qing government established the Beijing Tongwen Institute (京师同文馆), modelled after Western education systems, thus developing the classroom-based teaching system in China (Ning & Fang, 2020; Shang, 2003). The Beijing Tongwen Institute was an educational organisation where the students were taught through grade-based instruction and classroom-based teaching, and the educators were assigned to two main departments: the teaching department and the administrative department (Yu, 2023). The responsibilities of educators in the administrative department were similar to the administrative tasks of today's *banzhuren*, including completing administrative paperwork, supervising the students' learning, recording students' performance, and dealing with students' behavioural issues (Zhu, 1986). Following this, the Qing government established various levels of schools, including kindergartens, primary schools, junior high schools, high schools, and universities. It also issued a series of educational reform policies, such as the Universal Regulations on the Management of Various Schools (奏定各学堂管理通则) in 1904. These initiatives aimed to enhance China's grade-based teaching system and clarify the responsibilities of educators in managing students (Qu & Tang, 2007).

The term “banzhuren” first emerged in Primary School Instruction Guidelines (小学训导纲要) compiled by the Education Department of Suide County (Yulin City, Shaanxi Province) in 1942, which emphasised the responsibilities of banzhuren in students’ moral guidance (Education Research Institute of Shanxi Normal University, 1981). In 1952, after the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the Ministry of Education issued the Interim Regulations for Primary Schools (Draft) (小学暂行规程(草案)) and the Interim Regulations for Middle Schools (Draft) (中学暂行规程(草案)). This was the first time the establishment of the position of banzhuren was mentioned in the documents at the national level (Zheng, 2019). Specifically, the Interim Regulations for Primary Schools (Draft) (小学暂行规程(草案)) stipulated “小学各班采教师责任制，各设班主任一人，并酌设科任教师 (each class in primary school is to adopt ‘a teacher responsibility’ system where one banzhuren is assigned to each class, along with the appropriate numbers of subject specialist teachers)” (Editorial Office of the China Education Yearbook, 1984, p. 728). These two interim regulations not only marked the official creation of the position of banzhurens in primary and secondary schools in China, they also stipulated the selection methods and responsibilities of banzhurens. Since then, a series of educational policies have been issued that further regulate the role and responsibilities of primary and secondary school banzhurens.

The Notice on Further Strengthening School Food Management and Students’ Vision Protection (关于进一步加强学校伙食管理和保护学生视力的通知), issued by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health in 1960, pointed out that banzhuren should collaborate with students’ parents to foster correct reading and writing habits, thereby preventing detrimental learning habits (Editorial Office of the China Education Yearbook, 1984). In 1979, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security issued the Notice on the Trial Implementation of Banzhuren Allowances for

Public Middle and Primary School Teachers (关于在全国普通中学和小学公办教师中试行班主任津贴的通知), which proposed a distribution system for banzhurens' allowances. It also detailed their regulated responsibilities in areas such as classroom management, student development, interpersonal relationships (with students, leaders, and students' parents), and cooperation with out-of-class activities (Editorial Office of the China Education Yearbook, 1984). In 1993, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China issued Moral Education Guidelines for Primary School (小学德育纲要) to further emphasise the significant role of banzhurens in students' moral development. In 2009, the Ministry of Education issued the Regulations on the Work of Banzhuren in Primary and Middle Schools (中小学班主任工作要求) to provide clear provisions for banzhurens' selection, responsibilities, benefits, rights, training, professional development, as well as assessment and rewards/punishments. This document made the responsibilities and tasks of banzhurens' work more explicit and detailed, covering almost all aspects of school work. Through educational policies and work practices, the role of banzhuren can, in reality, be defined as a teacher who is in charge of a class, an organiser, a builder, and a leader of the communities of students and parents, and a vital person who helps and guides students' comprehensive growth and development (Qi & Huang, 2019).

2.1.2 Banzhurens' Working Conditions

Since implementing the banzhuren system, numerous Chinese scholars have conducted in-depth research on it from various aspects. To assist banzhurens in improving their job performance, the following six core competencies for being an effective primary school banzhuren were identified: research ability, a child-centred perspective, patience, innovative skills, coordination skills, and foresight (Liu, 2015). Among these six core competencies, patience emerged as the most frequently mentioned and valued competency by the participants in Liu's study. Built on the six essential competencies, The Framework of Banzhuren's

Professional Standards (Jiang, 2018) was developed to provide guidelines for banzhurens to effectively perform their duties. The standards are organised into four foundational categories, three core categories, and four ideal categories. The foundational standards are: adopting a student-centred approach, prioritising teacher ethics, emphasising capability, and committing to lifelong learning. The core standards are: class construction, student guidance, and communication and coordination. The ideal standards are: ethical integrity, excellent professional skills, leadership in professionalism, and educational innovation.

Due to banzhurens' work characteristics and the significant demands placed on them, they face four main career dilemmas. First, the heavy workload of banzhurens is of great concern. The Ministry of Education mandated that the class sizes in primary schools should not exceed 45 (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2006). In provinces with large populations, such as Henan—the site of this study—classes frequently exceed the national size standard. This over-enrolment inevitably increases banzhurens' workload, as managing more pupils demands additional time and effort (Li et al., 2017). Zhao and Liu (2018) found that over 80% of banzhurens work more than 8 hours a day. The average weekly work time for banzhurens is 49.52 hours, nearly 10 hours each workday, including teaching, lesson preparation, grading homework and exam papers, and communicating with students' parents (Pan & Zhang, 2017). In primary schools, official guidance advises organizing 26–30 teaching periods per week, with each period lasting for 40 minutes (Department of Education of Henan Province, 2023). Based on this, Banzhurens are typically expected to deliver a minimum of seven periods weekly, though the exact number varies by school and subject. However, research by Li et al. (2017) revealed a significant deviation where primary school banzhurens delivered an average of 14.75 teaching periods per week, a teaching workload that is 1.38 periods higher than that of subject specialist teachers. The heavy workload has squeezed

teachers' personal time, even leading them to be absent from their own families (Xu et al., 2023).

Second, banzhurens take on excessive expectations and responsibilities for students' education and development (Zhang, 2022). In the educational policies and documents issued after 1949 (the founding of the People's Republic of China), there is repeated emphasis on the significance of banzhurens in school students' education. This has the effect of promoting a perception among other teachers, such as subject specialist teachers and school leaders, that banzhuren is the only person in charge of students' overall development (Du, 2016). The phrase "One person responsible for all" is deeply embedded in the current banzhuren system, and its evolution into an implicit core value (Fu, 2016) has caused banzhuren to be seen as the main focus in the classroom, with students as a secondary priority and other subject teachers who play marginal roles in classroom management often regarded merely as resources to be utilised (Chen, 2007). Although banzhurens receive support from school leaders and other subject specialist teachers, their own perceptions of support from other sources, such as parents, health care providers and counsellors, are weak (Geng, 2018).

Third, scholars have pointed out that the boundaries of banzhurens' responsibilities are vague. For example, Zhang (2022) found that, in practice, banzhurens' work tasks are centred on responding to school assessments, managing daily class affairs, and paying attention to individual student development. However, except for the school assessments, the other work tasks are fragmentary, endless and hard to define. For the sake of students' development, an increasing number of trivial tasks effectively make banzhurens the students' "nanny", "coach", "manager", and "liaison" to varying degrees, leading banzhurens to feel confused about their primary role (She, 2021).

Finally, banzhurens' career development is not supported by state educational policies. The provision in the Regulations on the Work of Banzhuren in Primary and Middle Schools (中小学班主任工作规定) states that “教师担任班主任期间应将班主任工作作为主业 (during their tenure as banzhurens, educators should prioritise banzhurens' responsibilities as their main occupation)” (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2009). In other words, banzhurens are required to pay the most attention to achieving the comprehensive development of all the students in their class, followed by other responsibilities such as subject teaching. However, the teachers' professional promotion system focuses primarily on the performance and achievements in the subject teaching, rather than on the performance of banzhurens' “main occupation” (Feng, 2016). While the positive significance of emphasising the concept of banzhurens' “main occupation” is widely understood, it has fallen into an awkward position due to its mismatch with the current promotion path development of teachers (Geng, 2018).

2.2 Job Satisfaction

2.2.1 Definition of Job Satisfaction

Despite the significant amount of research on job satisfaction published since the 1930s, there is still no universally accepted definition of job satisfaction. This section will define job satisfaction, focusing primarily on the definition proposed by E. A. Locke (1969), who is frequently cited in research on this topic. Locke defined job satisfaction from a cognitive perspective (Judge et al., 2021): each person applies their own personal *values code* to every object in their life, which has been shaped by many factors, such as growth, environment and educational background, all of which help them determine what they need. People make value judgments on different objects according to their personal value code, consciously or subconsciously. People also embody basic emotions, such as pleasure or displeasure. A

pleasurable emotion is a consequence of achieving what someone treasures based on their value judgment; thus, emotion is an effect of value judgment. Locke (1969) therefore defined job satisfaction as “the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one’s job values (or goals)” (p. 316). In short, the source of one’s job satisfaction is the achievement of personal values.

Aspects of Locke’s (1969, 1976) theories can be seen in the definitions put forward by later researchers. For instance, Cranny et al. (1992) suggested that job satisfaction is “an affective reaction” (p. 1) resulting from the comparison of actual work outcomes with those expected. In contrast to Locke’s definition, Cranny et al. argued that people’s satisfaction stems from meeting expectations rather than achieving values. Evans (1997) defined job satisfaction as a state of mind determined by the extent to which an individual’s job-related needs have been met. For Evans, there are two components of job satisfaction: job comfort and job fulfilment. Job comfort concerns the extent to which individuals feel comfortable/satisfied with the conditions and circumstances of their job, even though this kind of comfort is not contributed to or constructed by themselves. Job fulfilment involves the assessment of how well they perform their job, and is quite similar to Locke’s value judgement. Locke’s (1969), Cranny et al. (1992) and Evans’s (1997) definitions are similar in that they all defined job satisfaction as a reaction or state of emotion, despite the antecedents of this emotion having some differences in their definitions.

Weiss (2002) argued that many existing definitions of job satisfaction, including Locke’s definition, treat job satisfaction as synonymous with both an “affect response” and an “attitude.” For Weiss, “affect” and “attitude” are different constructs, which need to be distinguished. He defined job satisfaction as an attitude, specifically, “a positive or a negative evaluative judgement one makes on their job or job situation” (p. 175), although evaluation is not synonymous with the affect response. He further argued that based on the theory of attitudes,

although the job attitude (satisfied or dissatisfied) is the result of the evaluative judgement, one's affective experiences at work, beliefs about the job, and behaviours may also be understood as different types of causes of the job evaluation.

Locke's (1969, 1976) and Evans' (1997) definitions of job satisfaction have been cited extensively in education research (e.g., Brezicha et al., 2020; Collie et al., 2012; Dreer, 2021; Toropova et al., 2021; Troesch & Bauer, 2017). Most of the quantitative studies in this field have mainly concentrated on teachers' overall job satisfaction; their methods are categorised as either a global measurement (e.g., Dreer, 2021; Jentsch et al., 2023; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Troesch & Bauer, 2017) or a multi-faceted measurement of several aspects of the teachers' job (e.g., Brezicha et al., 2020; Hinić et al., 2017).

In this study, my research goal was to measure the extent to which the participating banzhurens were satisfied with taking on the role of banzhuren (rather than that of a teacher or subject specialist teacher specifically) and whether they could make their own decisions and were willing to continue in the role of banzhurens. In other words, I measured these banzhurens' affective responses towards their jobs. Thus, the definition of job satisfaction in this study was extracted from Locke (1969, 1976) and Cranny et al. (1992) because this definition is closer to my research goal – assessing different aspects of the banzhurens' job and whether their value-judgements or work-expectations were being met.

2.2.2 Outcomes of Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Among teachers, higher job satisfaction usually indicates higher job performance, motivation and productivity and a lower attrition rate from their profession (Brezicha et al., 2020; Ololube, 2006). Therefore, job satisfaction is important not just for the teachers themselves but also for their schools, their students, and the education system as a whole. Perrachinoe et al. (2008) found that teachers who experience satisfaction at their schools and with their profession of

teaching were likely to remain in their positions. That is, teachers are less likely to quit when they perceive that their job realities meet their expectations (Madigan & Kim, 2021). Job satisfaction can also act as a mediator for other factors influencing teachers' attrition rates. For example, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) found that Norwegian teachers' job satisfaction was a key variable that mediated the effects of their feelings of belonging and their emotional exhaustion on their intentions to leave the profession. In Tanzania, too, the relationships between primary school teachers' organisational commitments and transformational and transactional leadership were partially mediated by job satisfaction (Nguni et al., 2006).

With regard to teacher performance and teaching effectiveness, Judge et al. (2001) found a moderate positive relationship between them. Student achievement increased when teachers' high-level job satisfaction produced stronger work commitments (Ronfeldt et al., 2013), and in Nigeria, students' academic performance in social studies were positively correlated to their teachers' job satisfaction (Essien & Gimba, 2017).

2.2.3 Antecedents of Job Satisfaction

Extensive research has indicated that the antecedents of teachers' job satisfaction include school conditions, leadership, job stress, salary, students' academic performance, self-efficacy, social support, and demographic factors, including gender and age. At the level of school organisation, social conditions in the school environment such as leadership style, the relationship between colleagues, and school culture can have stronger effects on teachers' job satisfaction than material conditions such as school facilities and instructional resources (Johnson et al., 2012). Toropova et al. (2021) found that student discipline, teachers' cooperation, and teachers' workload can significantly influence teachers' job satisfaction, compared with school material resources. Teachers are also likely to be more satisfied in

working environments that are appreciative of individual differences and treat them fairly (Zhao & Jeon, 2024) and are supportive (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

School leadership is also an important contributor to teachers' job satisfaction. A significant difference between principals' and teachers' views on teachers' participation in decision making can adversely affect the teachers' job satisfaction (Brezicha et al., 2020). In China, distributed leadership was shown to have a positive effect on teachers' job satisfaction (Liu et al., 2021). In Tanzania, transformational leadership had a positive effect on job satisfaction, while transactional leadership had a strong positive effect on teachers' commitment to stay in the profession (Nguni et al., 2006). The incentive mechanism for teachers in their work can also play a role, positively influencing both their job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Cheng et al., 2019).

At the personal level, studies have found that teachers with intrinsic motivation to enter the teaching profession (i.e., wanting to be a teacher) had significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than those without it (Liu and Onwuegbuzie, 2014). Teachers' self-efficacy has also been suggested as one of the most important contributors to job satisfaction. Naz (2017) measured the effects of five factors – self-efficacy, work goals, positive effect, goal support and work conditions on teachers' job satisfaction – and found self-efficacy to be the most significant factor. Teachers' self-efficacy can also play a mediating role in the relationship between job satisfaction and other factors such as the impact of student misbehaviour (Collie et al., 2012) and classroom management stress (Klassen and Chiu, 2010). Sökmen and Sarikaya (2022) found that self-efficacy can have a mediating effect on predicting primary school teachers' job satisfaction through emotional intelligence. Teachers' self-efficacy and its relationship with job satisfaction are discussed in more detail in Section 2.3.3.

Teachers with higher levels of workload-related stress have also been shown to demonstrate lower levels of job satisfaction (Collie et al., 2012). Von der Embse et al. (2016) found that due to the implementation of test-based accountability policies in the USA, teachers' test-specific stress increased, and their job satisfaction significantly lowered. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) examined the relationship between job satisfaction, burnout, and several other factors and found that burnout is the far strongest predictor of job dissatisfaction. The effect of burnout on job satisfaction will be further discussed in Section 2.4.2.

In terms of demographic factors, such as gender and age, studies in the contexts of both Nigeria (Ololube, 2006) and China (Wang et al., 2022) found that female teachers experience higher job satisfaction than male teachers, and teachers aged 31 to 50 experienced lower job satisfaction than those aged 20 to 30 and older than 50.

2.2.4 Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction and Intention to Leave

Chinese studies have revealed that participating banzhurens had a moderate level of job satisfaction (Chen, 2020; Kuai & Feng, 2016; Pan & Zhang, 2017; Yang, 2016), although only about 40% indicated their willingness to continually take up this role (Li et al., 2017; Qin et al., 2021). Banzhurens' job satisfaction is also reported as significantly lower than that of subject specialist teachers (Lin, 2020; Yuan, 2019). These results suggest that the position of banzhuren is not attractive and there are defects in the current banzhuren system. Despite such research, education policymakers have not implemented policies to improve banzhurens' work circumstances.

Investigations of banzhurens' job satisfaction have explored factors such as gender, age, educational background, marital status, and professional promotion, but with no consensus resulting. For instance, gender was found to have no significant effect on banzhurens' job satisfaction and intention to leave (Kuai & Zeng, 2016; Pan & Zhang, 2017; Yuan, 2019);

however, other studies revealed that male banzhurens had a significantly higher level of job satisfaction than females (Ding & Wang, 2018; Lin, 2020). Nevertheless, there are no existing reports on female banzhurens having higher levels of job satisfaction than male banzhurens.

While Pan and Zhang (2017) and Yang (2016) found that age had no effect on teachers' intentions to remain in the position of banzhurens, Ding and Wang (2018) and Yuan (2019) found it had a U-shaped impact: although an individual's willingness to be a banzhuren is likely to decrease with age, after reaching a certain age they may become more inclined to stay in the role. Banzhurens' educational background had no significant effect on their overall job satisfaction (Kuai & Zeng, 2016; Lin, 2020; Yang, 2016; Yuan, 2019). Married banzhurens had lower job satisfaction compared to those with other marital statuses (Pan & Zhang, 2017) and a higher intention to leave the role (Kuai & Zeng, 2016).

Researchers obtained very different results regarding the influence of banzhurens' professional promotion on job satisfaction. For instance, Pan and Zhang (2017) found that banzhurens with higher professional qualifications reported greater job satisfaction, whereas Ding and Wang (2018) and Kuai and Zeng (2016) found contrasting results, and Lin (2020) and Yang (2016) found no significant difference in banzhurens' job satisfaction based on their professional qualifications.

Some researchers have assessed banzhurens' job satisfaction across multiple aspects, such as the school environment, leadership, school resources, and salary. Banzhurens were reported to have the lowest satisfaction with the salaries or allowances they received compared to other aspects (Chen, 2020; Yuan, 2019), and among banzhurens working in rural areas, only 10% were satisfied with their banzhuren-allowance (Zheng, 2019). These findings suggest that the efforts made by banzhurens far exceed the financial compensations (banzhuren allowance)

they receive, and the current allowance for banzhurens is not an effective incentive to perform their jobs well (Lin, 2020; Zheng, 2019).

As discussed in Section 2.1.2, stress and heavy workloads can also negatively impact banzhurens' job satisfaction. Ding and Wang (2018) noted that banzhurens are in an environment where stress outweighs support, and this stress primarily arises from unreasonable expectations from schools, students, and families, which diminishes banzhurens' job satisfaction and further increases their intention to leave their positions. In Zheng's (2019) study, over 80% of the participants stated they were bearing a heavy workload and scope of responsibility, which decreased their job satisfaction. In their analysis of the influence of internal and external factors on banzhurens' intention to leave, Kuai and Zeng (2016) found that internal factors were stronger than external factors. More specifically, banzhuren's decisions to leave the position stemmed more from a lack of achievement, autonomy, and leadership support than from a heavy workload or inadequate financial compensation.

Some scholars also explored the positive factors influencing job satisfaction. For instance, banzhurens with better interpersonal support indicated higher levels of job satisfaction (Pan & Zhang, 2017). Emotional intelligence can also have a positive effect on banzhurens' willingness to stay in the position (Deng & Sun, 2021). Thus, Deng and Sun (2021) suggested that improving banzhurens' abilities to manage and express their emotions may not only help them to increase their job performance but also encourage them to stay in the position.

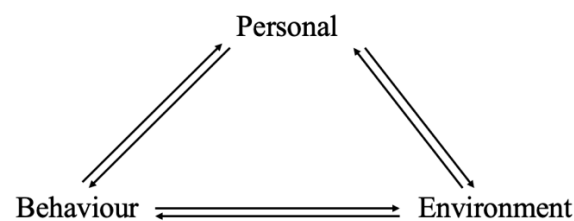
2.3 Self-efficacy

2.3.1 The Theory of Teachers' Self-Efficacy

The theory of self-efficacy was first introduced by Bandura in 1977, and he further situated this term in the construct of the social cognitive theory of human behaviour in 1986 (Pajares, 1997). Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's beliefs about their own ability to carry out the course

of actions that need to attain a given outcome (Bandura, 1997). There has been extensive research exploring the influence of self-efficacy on various professionals, such as those in health, education, business and athletics. In social cognitive theory, people operate within an interdependent causal structure that involves *triadic reciprocal causation*, as presented in Figure 2.1 (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997).

Figure 2.1 Triadic Reciprocal Causation Model (Bandura, 1997)



This model has three sets of determining factors that influence each other: personal (e.g., cognitive beliefs, skills, affects), environmental (all external social elements), and behavioural. People's interpretation of environmental changes can alter their personal factors and subsequent behaviours (Schunk & Usher, 2012). In other words, people are the producers and products of their environment (Bandura, 1997; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2015).

Social cognitive theory emphasises the significance of people's self-beliefs as the key elements of their behaviour control and personal agency (Pajares, 1997). From this perspective, self-efficacy, as a vital facet of the personal system (Bandura, 1997), serves as the determinant of one's behaviour and is also influenced by one's actions and by conditions in the environment (Schunk & Meece, 2006). Self-efficacy belief is not the result of the assessment of the amount of specific work-related skills and knowledge they possess, but rather of the extent to which they believe in their capability to achieve a certain outcome. Additionally, from the perspective of the triadic reciprocal causation model, self-efficacy has a dynamic and cyclical nature, with the reciprocities operating with varying strengths for different people. Individuals with stronger

self-efficacy usually invest greater effort and persistence in their working tasks, which leads to better performance in various aspects and, in turn, to greater efficacy. Those with weaker efficacy may not execute actions or may give up easily, which may lead to poor outcomes that further weaken their self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

Applying Bandura's conception of self-efficacy to the topic of this study, a banzhuren's self-efficacy may be defined as their belief in their own ability to execute a course of activities to facilitate educational tasks and goals (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). This belief determines each banzhuren's choice of behaviours (whether and how to pursue the courses of action), how much effort they will expend, and how long they will persevere when facing difficulties (Bandura, 1997).

Self-efficacy is a context-specific principle (Bandura, 1997). People can only evaluate their self-efficacy in relation to particular circumstances. To be specific, in the school context, teachers' self-efficacy includes but is not limited to, instructional teaching efficacy, classroom management efficacy, efficacy in collaboration, and efficacy in interpersonal engagements. Even from the perspective of curriculum teaching, teachers who have a high level of self-efficacy in science teaching, for instance, may not have this high self-efficacy in different circumstances, for example in designing assessments. A teacher's general self-efficacy can only be measured by aggregating multiple work-related aspects of efficacy. Thus, the results of a study that explores the general self-efficacy of teachers should pay attention to their instruments because it is difficult to find or design an instrument that can measure teachers' self-efficacy with all job-related circumstances covered (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

Existing research has explored teachers' self-efficacy from overall perspectives, specific perspectives, or both. For example, Zee et al. (2016) measured primary school teachers' overall self-efficacy using a short version of the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)

(Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), where 12 items were involved across a variety of important teaching tasks. Additionally, Zee et al. also developed a 25-item, student-related teachers' self-efficacy scale. They found that, compared with the overall self-efficacy scale, the student-related self-efficacy scale was more suitable for capturing both inter- and intra-individual differences in teachers' self-efficacy.

2.3.2 Sources of Teachers' Self-efficacy

There are four main sources that contribute to the judgement that individuals make when they evaluate their self-efficacy: enactive mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states (Bandura, 1997). This section elaborates on these sources from the perspective of teachers.

2.3.2.1 Enactive Mastery Experiences

Enactive mastery experiences, which Bandura (1997) also called performance accomplishments, are the most influential source of self-efficacy since they can provide the most authentic evidence of whether one can master whatever it takes to succeed. Former successful experiences of complex working tasks in any profession can help reinforce one's belief in personal efficacy; in contrast, failures can undermine it, particularly in the stage when their efficacy is not firmly established. Generally, teachers with more job experiences have more mastery experiences and thus indicate higher self-efficacy (Liu, 2003). Different kinds of experiences influence one's self-efficacy. More specifically, a teacher's self-efficacy will increase and remain robust if they achieve their work goals with few setbacks in the early stages of their profession, whereas it may be diminished if they achieve a task through considerable effort or with external assistance, or if the achievement is perceived as unimportant (Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009).

2.3.2.2 Vicarious Experiences

The second source of self-efficacy is the information attained through observing others successfully perform the action needed to achieve a task. Observers may benefit more from seeing their role models overcome difficulties through the input of efforts than from observing them succeed effortlessly (Kazdin, 1973; Meichenbaum, 1971). Moreover, the effect of the role models is found to be stronger when their behaviours yield identifiable outcomes (Bandura, 1977). Specifically, banzhurens may gain confidence in evaluating their own abilities, enhancing their teaching skills, or refining their classroom management goals by observing a role model – such as another banzhuren – who successfully achieves the outcomes they desire and demonstrates that their planning actions are effective. Conversely, a banzhuren might doubt their capabilities and question their current strategies if they witness a role model fail to achieve an outcome. Moreover, vicarious experiences will be more persuasive if the similarity is closer between the role model and the observer (Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). For example, a banzhuren might obtain greater efficacy by observing a successful model who is of similar age, experience, personality, and educational background.

2.3.2.3 Verbal Persuasion

People can be persuaded by others, such as colleagues, supervisors and leaders, to believe that they can use the skills and knowledge they possess to achieve a desired level of performance. Self-efficacy attained in this way is likely to be weaker than that arising from mastery experiences because verbal persuasion does not provide authentic evidence (Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). Banzhurens may believe they have greater efficacy when the people around them, such as leaders, colleagues and students, keep complimenting their work with evidence and existing examples of their work. However, in some circumstances, this kind of verbal persuasion may not be useful if the persuader is not able to provide an environment or condition that can facilitate people to perform their tasks effectively (Bandura, 1977).

2.3.2.4 Physiological and Affective States

People rely partly on information conveyed by physiological and affective states when judging their own capability (Bandura, 1997). Physiological arousal – perceived positively as anticipation or negatively as anxiety – can influence teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs (Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). For banzhurens, their daily work may decrease their personal efficacy if it causes them to feel burnt out or stressed. Moreover, positive emotions caused by success and negative emotions by failure may also influence how banzhurens measure their self-efficacy (Liu, 2003).

2.3.3 The Effects of Self-efficacy

Teachers’ self-efficacy is an important contributor to their work performance as it determines their levels of motivation, which reflect the amount of effort they will invest in tasks and how long they will persist with adversity (Bandura, 2002). It also has both direct and indirect effects on students’ engagement in class (Hajovsky et al., 2020; Lauermann & Berger, 2021). Teachers with higher overall self-efficacy are more engaged in their work and experience more joy, pride and love (Burić & Macuka, 2018). Studies have verified that students’ academic outcomes, such as their overall school grades and academic performance in literacy and mathematics, contribute to their teachers’ high self-efficacy (Zee & Koomen, 2016). Burić and Kim (2020) found that a positive correlation between teachers’ self-efficacy and effective classroom management created a supportive climate in the classroom and in cognitively activating instructions. In Mojavezi and Tamiz’s (2012) study, English teachers’ self-efficacy was positively correlated with students’ intrinsic motivations and attitudes toward learning English, as well as with their opinions about their teacher.

Teachers’ self-efficacy can also predict their job satisfaction. Teachers with a high level of self-efficacy experienced greater job satisfaction and less intention to leave their positions

(Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Compared with first-career teachers, second-career teachers were more satisfied with their jobs; they indicated a higher self-efficacy, which was led by their previous mastery experiences of accumulating skills and training (Troesch & Bauer, 2017). In Italy, Caprara et al. (2003) examined junior high school teachers' self- and collective efficacy and their job satisfaction, their findings indicating that both self-efficacy beliefs and perceived collective efficacy positively influenced these teachers' job satisfaction.

Teachers' self-efficacy in different aspects of their work can also have varying effects on their job satisfaction. For instance, compared with high self-efficacy in student engagement, teachers with high self-efficacy in classroom management and instructional strategies usually generate greater job satisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Huang et al. (2020) showed that self-efficacy in teacher-student relationships and school decision making had a more positive influence on teachers' satisfaction and commitment than self-efficacy in classroom teaching. Studies have also found that teachers' high self-efficacy had a mitigating effect when teachers' job satisfaction was negatively influenced by student misbehaviour (Collie et al., 2012) and stressful school working environments (Toropova et al., 2021).

As mentioned earlier, banzhurens play a vital role in the Chinese education system, and thus low levels of job satisfaction present a critical risk for the education system. However, despite some studies measuring levels of banzhurens' job satisfaction, few researchers have explored the effects of personal factors such as self-efficacy. This limits the opportunity to generate practical solutions to address the dilemmas faced by banzhurens. This study aims to fill this research gap. The first hypothesis in the quantitative component of this study is therefore

H1: Banzhurens' self-efficacy positively affects their job satisfaction.

2.4 Burnout

2.4.1 Definition of Burnout

The early studies on burnout were conducted by Freudenberger (1974) and Maslach (1976). Freudenberger (1974) discussed the concept of “burn-out” as a state that occurred among the staff members in free clinics. He proposed that the behavioural signs of burnout are “a staff member’s quickness to anger and his instantaneous irritation and frustration responses” (p. 160), and verbally expressing a negative attitude. Maslach, a social psychologist, interviewed a wide range of human services workers about the emotional stress of their jobs and found that coping strategies influence people’s professional identity and job behaviour (Maslach et al., 2001). Maslach and Jackson (1981) developed the Maslach Burnout Inventory scale to measure people’s job burnout levels, which has been widely used in studies concerning people’s work status. They described three aspects of burnout syndrome in the workplace: increased feelings of emotional exhaustion; negative and cynical attitudes about one’s client; and the tendency to evaluate oneself negatively. Consequently, burnout is predominately defined by three main components: exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Of these, emotional exhaustion is regarded as the key element in the teaching profession because teachers often engage heavily in emotional labour (Chang, 2009; Maslach, 1986; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). For banzhurens in particular, their work requires them to establish interpersonal relationships with their students, colleagues and students’ parents, which may frequently lead them to feel emotionally exhausted (Zhou et al., 2024).

2.4.2 Causes and Effects of Teachers’ Burnout

Studies on teachers’ burnout suggest it is caused by multiple factors. Chang (2009) reviewed the existing research to answer the questions of *who* experiences burnout, *what* makes teachers feel burnout, and *who* gets burned out in *which* situation. Chang respectively grouped the

sources of teachers' burnout into three categories: individual factors (demographic variables or personality variables), organisational factors (institutional and job characteristics), and transactional factors (interactions of individual factors and organisational factors). The following reviews on the causes of teacher burnout was drawn on Chang's three categories.

In regard to individual factors, for instance, Turkish female teachers indicated a significantly higher level of burnout than male teachers (Sarıçam & Sakiz, 2014), whereas in Czech elementary schools, there was no significant difference between male and female teachers' levels of burnout (Smetackova, 2017). From the perspective of personality, neurotic and introverted teachers are more vulnerable to burnout, especially in the aspect of emotional exhaustion and decreased personal accomplishment (Pishghadam & Sahebjam, 2012).

Studies have also found that organisational factors such as class size and school size (Saloviita & Pakarinen, 2021), parent and student involvement (Pas et al., 2012), workload (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014), time pressure (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020), teacher training programs (Scott, 2019), frequencies of students' misbehaviour (Aloe et al., 2014a), classroom ethnic diversity (Hoglund et al., 2015), can predict teachers' level of burnout.

Finally, teachers' burnout has also been attributed to transactional factors. For example, teachers with lower levels of perceived support from their school leaders for their competence and autonomy are likely to have higher levels of burnout (Ford et al., 2019). Moreover, teachers who perceived a higher initial level of conflict with their students reported higher levels of burnout at the end of the school year (Alamos et al., 2022). Atmaca et al. (2020) analysed the association between burnout and the five emotions of teachers: joy, love, sadness, anger, and fear. They found that *love* had a significant negative effect on burnout, and sadness and fear conversely.

Another important transactional factor, self-efficacy, was found to be negatively associated with burnout. For example, self-efficacy was found to be a strong negative predictor of burnout among Iranian English-language teachers (Ghasemzadeh et al., 2019). Moreover, many studies confirm that the relationship between burnout and self-efficacy is bidirectional among different teacher groups in countries such as Morocco (Hassan & Ibourk, 2021), Norway (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010) and Czechia (Smetackova, 2017). It indicates that teachers experiencing higher levels of burnout generally report lower self-efficacy, and vice versa. However, the unidirectional negative effect of burnout on self-efficacy represents a significant gap in the literature, rarely investigated in either Western studies or those focusing on Chinese teachers, particularly banzhurens. Because the precise directional pathways between these two constructs remained unknown, this study adopted a unidirectional hypothesis to investigate the causal mechanisms and address this critical research gap. Thus, based on the negative associations between teachers' self-efficacy and burnout, as well as the sources of self-efficacy discussed in Section 2.3.2 (i.e., physiological and affective states as one of the sources of self-efficacy), the second hypothesis was proposed as:

H2: Banzhurens' burnout negatively affects their self-efficacy.

The negative effects of teachers' burnout have been verified in previous studies. From the perspective of teachers' work outcomes, Swider and Zimmerman (2010) examined the influences of burnout on teachers' absenteeism, turnover, and job performance. They found that teachers' emotional exhaustion had the strongest negative impact on absenteeism, depersonalisation had the strongest negative impact on turnover, and personal accomplishment had the strongest positive relationship with job performance. Demerouti et al. (2014) measured teachers' burnout using the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory, which included exhaustion and disengagement from work and its relationships with task performance and adaptivity to change.

Their results indicated that exhaustion was significantly negatively related to task performance, and disengagement was significantly negatively related to adaptivity to change.

Students' well-being may also be impacted if their teachers have a high level of burnout. Madigan and Kim's (2021) review of 63 articles concluded that teachers' burnout negatively influenced their students' academic performance, including lower reading ability, lower mathematics test scores, and less growth in literacy skills. Klusmann et al. (2022) found that teachers' burnout negatively influenced their students' self-concept, interest, and achievement in German learning. Shen et al. (2015) found the level of teachers' emotional exhaustion negatively predicted students' perceived autonomy support and further decreased their autonomous motivation, and there was a direct connection between teachers' depersonalisation and students' autonomous motivation.

Regarding teachers' well-being, teachers with high levels of burnout are at risk of physical health, including somatic complaints (such as headaches, back pain, skin rash, etc.), illnesses (such as gastroenteritis), voice disorders, lower levels of cortisol (Madigan et al., 2023). In studies concerning teachers' job satisfaction and/or intention to quit, teachers' burnout had a negative influence on their job satisfaction (Hassan & Ibourk, 2021; Molero Jurado et al., 2019; Okçu & Çetin, 2017; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009) or turnover intent (Madigan & Kim, 2021; Rajendran et al., 2020). For the influence of the specific dimensions of burnout, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2020), for example, found that teachers' job satisfaction is positively predicted by self-perceived accomplishment (positively measured) and negatively predicted by emotional exhaustion, whereas cynicism (depersonalisation) had no significant influence on job satisfaction.

The detrimental effect of teachers' burnout on job satisfaction was also confirmed. Yorulmaz et al.'s (2017) analysis of 29 studies examining the relationships between teachers'

job satisfaction and burnout in Turkey found that teachers' emotional exhaustion and reduced accomplishment were negatively correlated to job satisfaction at a medium level, and teachers' depersonalisation and job satisfaction were negatively correlated at a low level. Similar results were also found in Skaalvik and Skaalvik's (2020) study. The negative influence of burnout on job satisfaction among Chinese teachers has also been examined (e.g., Leung & Lee, 2006). Furthermore, teachers' motivations to quit were affected by emotional exhaustion and self-perceived accomplishment, with job satisfaction as a mediator (Madigan & Kim, 2021). Among banzhurens, job burnout was significantly higher than that of subject specialist teachers (Dong, 2020), and burnout was one of the important factors that decreased teachers' job satisfaction (Yang, 2016). Hence, the third hypothesis of this study is:

H3: Banzhurens' burnout negatively affects their job satisfaction.

While bidirectional hypotheses are useful for establishing correlations between factors, and previous studies have indeed confirmed associations among self-efficacy, and burnout, and job satisfaction, they fail to illuminate the underlying dynamics and mediating effects. Specifically, based on existing research, teacher burnout negatively associated with self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Conversely, self-efficacy positively influences job satisfaction. This raises the question of whether self-efficacy can act as a protective factor against the detrimental effects of burnout on job satisfaction. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis of this study is:

H4: Banzhurens' self-efficacy mediates the effect of their burnout on job satisfaction.

2.5 Chinese Culture and Teacher Morality

For more than two millennia, the ethical framework of Teacher Morality (*Shī Dé*, 师德) has defined the core of Chinese education (Jiang, 2023), influencing both teacher development and

the high societal expectations placed upon them (Wei & Yang, 2023). This enduring cultural tradition, rooted in Confucianism, means the job experience of Chinese teachers are uniquely linked to their status as moral exemplars. These profound cultural and moral expectations create a distinct blend of job demands and personal psychological resources. Consequently, while *Shī Dé* itself is not a variable in the quantitative analysis, its associated expectations are crucial for making sense of the qualitative data, particularly in understanding how *banzhurens* interpret and articulate their experiences with burnout and other contextual factors that influence their job satisfaction, which will be discussed fully in Chapter 6 - Discussion. Overall, this section establishes essential background by elaborating on the construction of Teacher Morality in China, drawing from both traditional Chinese culture (i.e., Confucianism) and contemporary educational regulations, thereby providing a foundation for understanding how *banzhurens* recognise the factors that affect their job satisfaction.

2.5.1 Teacher Morality in Chinese Traditional Culture

In the historical perspective of ethical thought in China, morality (道德) is originally understood through two separate concepts: “Dao (道)” and “De (德)”. Dao refers to the principles that guide behaviour, while De is the result of implementing those principles or the practical manifestation of Dao (Zhang, 1989). When a teacher deeply experiences and understands Dao, they are able to naturally manifest their Dao in the daily educational context and reflect it in their specific actions, which is where De is formed (Wang & Zeng, 2023). The term “Shī Dào” (师道, i.e., teachers’ Dao) was also initially developed in ancient China. Later, following the professionalisation of teachers in the modern Western context, the concept of “*Shī Dé*” (师德), meaning teachers’ De, gradually emerged. The concept of *Shī Dé* represents the characteristics of teacher morality as we understand it today (Chen, 2008). Han Yu’s (802 CE) *Shī Shuō* (《师说》, *Comments on Teachers*) is a representative work of Shī Dào that has

influenced most of the subsequent works concerning teachers' morality and profoundly inspired subsequent generations (Meng, 2021).

In ancient China, teacher morality has also been closely connected to politics. Even after the rise of private schools and the popularisation of education in the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period (春秋战国时期), teachers' moral features were still embedded in the political ideals of “cultivating oneself (修身), regulating the family (齐家), governing the state (治国), and bringing peace to the world (平天下)” (Sun et al., 2024; Wei & Yang, 2023). Teachers existed as the moral subject of ancient society, which meant they were able to command respect and be emulated. They were part of creating moral cohesion at the state level that promoted national construction and formed a political community (Jiang, 2023). In addition, the political character of teachers' identity greatly enhanced their social status, together with feudal moral codes and rituals such as “one day as a teacher, a lifetime as a father (一日为师, 终身为父)”, further elevated teachers as the sacred and inviolable authority of knowledge and morality in the minds of students (Xu, 2006).

Confucius, a prominent figure in the field of Chinese education, devoted himself to cultural and educational endeavours, provided a comprehensive and systematic discussion of teacher morality, and established the earliest system of teacher morality in the history of Chinese education. It encompassed

- (1) Love students and teach without discrimination (热爱学生,有教无类);
- (2) Be eager to learn and tireless in teaching others (学而不厌,诲人不倦);
- (3) Lead by example, teaching by words and demonstrating by actions (以身作则,言传身教);

- (4) Teach according to students' abilities, guiding them with skills and patience (因材施教,循循善诱);
- (5) Never be ashamed to ask questions, and correct mistakes as soon as realised (不耻下问,知过即改) (Jiang, 2023; Lin, 2000).

First, loving students is the core of teacher morality, and teachers' love is based on treating them equally (Shen & Zhao, 2006). Confucius infused the principle of "benevolent love for others (仁者爱人)" into education and provided comprehensive care for students' character, learning, and daily lives (Li, 2004). Additionally, when educating students, teachers should not be concerned with the student's family background (i.e., noble or humble birth, or their family's wealth or poverty) (Gao, 1986).

Second, Confucius suggested teachers embody a love for learning and a joyful attitude towards study (Zheng & Jiang, 2022), and his love for learning reached the state of "being so engrossed that one forgets to eat, finds joy that dispels worries, and does not notice the coming of old age (发愤忘食, 乐以忘忧, 不知老之将至)" (Ruan, 2009a). For teachers, learning is primary, and teaching depends on and continues from learning (Wei & Yang, 2023). Moreover, teachers' attitudes towards education should be tireless, with students sincerely seeking knowledge and teachers generously imparting it (Jiang, 2023).

Third, Confucius placed great importance on teachers leading by modelling (Zheng & Jiang, 2022): "If the teacher's conduct is proper, the students will follow without instruction; if the teacher's conduct is not proper, even if they give orders, the students will not obey (其身正,不令而行; 其身不正, 虽令不从)" (Ruan, 2009b). This quotation emphasises the value of teaching by words and demonstrating by actions, suggesting teachers set a model through their own conduct in order to effectively educate students (Yu & Wang, 2021).

Fourth, Confucius also offered teaching principles and methods. He suggested that teachers should instruct students based on their individual characteristics, abilities, cognitive levels, and interests (Jiang, 2023). Confucius was also skilled at presenting teaching content in a way that followed a logical progression while also considering the student's ability to understand. He guided students step by step, enabling them to progress from simple to complex concepts and learn in a structured manner (Lin, 2000).

Finally, Confucius believed that “Among three people walking, there must be one who can be my teacher (三人行，必有我师焉)” (Ruan, 2022a), meaning that we can always learn something from others, regardless of their status or position (Zheng & Jiang, 2022). Thus, even teachers should not be ashamed to ask questions. Moreover, teachers are also inevitably prone to make mistakes; however, recognising one's mistakes and correcting them is one of the moral standards that teachers should uphold (Lin, 2000).

In conclusion, the central idea and the most important spirit of Chinese traditional culture lies in teaching people how to be a person (Qian, 2011). A teacher also exists first and foremost as a person, and only when they can discover the value and dignity of their own life in real practice can they truly express their innate kindness and good morals from the inside (Yu & Wang, 2021).

2.5.2 Teacher Morality in Contemporary China

Teacher morality in contemporary China is largely rooted in traditional Chinese culture and remains one of the most important criteria for evaluating teacher quality (Zhang & Zhang, 2024). However, its interpretation and application have been the subject of extensive scholarly debate. First, there is a conflict between traditional and contemporary values. Some scholars argue that the traditional conception of teacher morality imposes unrealistically high moral expectations on teachers, which are increasingly incompatible with the realities of modern

teaching and teachers' actual professional circumstances (Tan, 2005). To illustrate, Chinese traditional culture positions teachers as paragons of moral virtue, which is abstract and unachievable for any human to sustain in the face of modern workplace pressures (Li & Tan, 2008), such as operating a large class with a lot of administrative tasks. Moreover, this traditional image of teachers as perfect moral role models is difficult to reconcile with today's pluralistic society, where diverse personalities and value systems coexist (Nie, 2024). The Confucian ideal of *benevolent love* further extends teachers' responsibilities beyond instructional duties, transforming them into "servants" who must provide comprehensive care for students (Li, 2017). This expanded moral expectation drains teachers' personal and emotional resources and may contribute to feelings of burnout. Similarly, the exhortation of "being so engrossed that one forgets to eat, finds joy that dispels worries, and does not notice the coming of old age (发愤忘食, 乐以忘忧, 不知老之将至)" —though admirable— encourages a culture of self-neglect and perpetual work. It suggests that a dedicated teacher must work constantly and find their sole joy in the work, blurring the line between professional duty and personal well-being. Another traditional requirement "If the teacher's conduct is proper, the students will follow without instruction; if the teacher's conduct is not proper, even if they give orders, the students will not obey (其身正, 不令而行; 其身不正, 虽令不从)", imposes immense pressure on a teacher's behaviour. Under constant public scrutiny, even minor mistakes, lapses in judgment, or perceived weaknesses can be interpreted as moral failings, leading teachers to experience emotional distress, loss of control, submissiveness, and inhibited action (Cui & Long, 2024). In contemporary society, as multiple cultural and personal value systems merge, teachers—especially younger generations— have transitioned from the traditional concept of morality centred on modest living and moral integrity to one that also embraces material aspirations, as well from self-sacrifice and devotion to the pursuit of self-fulfilment and the realisation of personal value (Sun et al., 2024). Beyond China, researchers

(e.g., Fenstermacher, 2001) have found that a teacher's moral character has minimal influence on students' moral development. Instead, teaching strategies such as lecturing, fostering class community, and establishing clear behavioural expectations, play a more direct role (Osguthorpe, 2005).

Second, there are contradictions between public expectations and realities. For example, societal expectations of teacher morality extend beyond their professional scope to encompass their conduct in both the private sphere, such as personal conduct and life attitude, and the public sphere, such as being prepared to represent the public interest whenever necessary (He, 2015). However, reducing a teacher's private and social life to mere extensions of their professional moral standards overlooks the realities of their work and living conditions, leading to the invasion or deprivation of the teacher's personal space (Nie & Xu, 2024). Moreover, since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the public has customarily widely praised teachers using metaphors such as "red candles", "the engineers of the human soul" and "gardeners", which have subtly reinforced the sanctification of the teacher's moral image (Ban, 2007). Society has gradually developed a stereotypical view of teachers that expects them to embody complete dedication and to be free from mistakes, ignoring that they are first and foremost ordinary individuals, with their professional roles arising from that foundation (Shen & Zhao, 2006). Consequently, teachers may feel a moral obligation to accept excessive workloads and responsibilities, thereby encroaching on their rights to freedom and self-made decisions, which might consequently increase teachers' job burnout and decrease their life happiness and job satisfaction (Nie, 2024). In addition, the media's over-idealisation and oversimplification of the teacher's image can hinder the healthy development of teachers and diminish public recognition and appreciation of the diverse nature of their role (Ban, 2007).

In conclusion, while the cultivation of teacher morality is undoubtedly important, a teacher who embodies all virtues exists only in idealised scenarios (Wang & Lu, 2011).

Banzhurens are usually held to higher expectations and standards regarding their morality, as they are regarded as the “first person” responsible for students (Peng, 2022). To enhance professional development and increase job satisfaction among teachers, regulations and expectations regarding their morals and responsibilities should fundamentally honour teachers’ sense of achievement and meaning (Sun et al., 2024), as well as acknowledge them as human beings.

2.6 Summary of the Chapter

The role of banzhurens has existed for a long time and plays a vital role in China’s educational system. However, banzhurens face a range of challenges, such as heavy workloads and stress, inadequate professional advancement paths, insufficient compensation, and excessive expectations from various parties, which lead banzhurens to feel dissatisfied with their jobs. Banzhurens with consistently low job satisfaction may choose to leave this position, and even worse, exit the education profession.

Teacher job satisfaction has been found to be influenced by many factors, such as school climate, leadership, social support, and stress. Among these, self-efficacy and burnout are two highly discussed elements in previous studies; however, they are rarely explored in depth among banzhurens. Therefore, it is worth researching whether and how self-efficacy and burnout influence banzhurens’ job satisfaction. Furthermore, while some quantitative studies have examined the antecedents of banzhurens’ job satisfaction, there is a need for more qualitative or mixed-method research to better capture the complexity of their work. This study aims to address these gaps by focusing on banzhurens in Gongyi City in China, employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches to thoroughly explore their job satisfaction and work status.

CHAPTER 3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A mixed-method approach was employed to obtain a comprehensive understanding of Chinese primary school banzhurens' job satisfaction and the factors that positively and negatively influence it. Mixed-method research integrates qualitative and quantitative research techniques to achieve a rigorous and extensive understanding of a subject under investigation (Johnson et al., 2007; Mertens, 2023). It combines the strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches, which is particularly useful when any single approach is insufficient to answer a research question (Taherdoost, 2022).

The quantitative research approach usually examines one or a few causal factors under objective assumptions, with the tendency to closed-ended responses such as questionnaires (Mertens, 2023). The qualitative research approach analyses human choices and behaviours as they naturally occur without any prior expectations or hypotheses (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Empirical materials that cannot be defined as numbers are employed in the qualitative approach, such as case studies, life experiences and stories (Taherdoost, 2022).

Current existing mixed-method designs can be classified into mixed-method typologies (Johnson et al., 2017). There are three main mixed method designs, namely convergent, explanatory and exploratory (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The selection of the appropriate mixed method design depends on the purpose, theoretical drive, and timing (simultaneity and dependence of data collection) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Johnson, 2017). Because this study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of how banzhurens' ratings of self-efficacy and burnout can influence their job satisfaction, an explanatory sequential mixed method research

was implemented. This approach starts with the collection and analysis of quantitative data, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data with the intent to explain or expand the quantitative results. The quantitative approach answers the “what” questions. For example, “What are the relationships between banzhurens’ job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout?” The qualitative approach helps to elaborate the stories behind the questionnaire score and explain how the three variables from the quantitative approach influence each other while giving new insights into the factors that may influence banzhurens’ sense of job satisfaction.

In this study, the quantitative and qualitative phases are conducted separately and sequentially (see Table 3.1 & Figure 3.1). First, quantitative data were collected from an online questionnaire constructed through the Qualtrics platform. This online questionnaire was distributed to collect data on participants’ self-rating of their job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout. The protocol and questions for the semi-structured interviews for the case study component of this study were determined following the descriptive and correlation analyses of the quantitative data. Reliability and validity tests were conducted on the questionnaire items used in this study (further information in Section 3.4.1). Multi-group confirmatory analysis (Section 3.3.4.3 and Section 3.3.4.4) and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) including mediation effect tests (Section 3.3.4.5), were conducted to examine the multi-directional relationships between the quantitative variables in this study. Audio recordings of the semi-structured interviews were transcribed into texts and then translated into English. The text data was coded and then grouped into themes according to the results obtained from the quantitative data analyses (see Section 3.4.3).

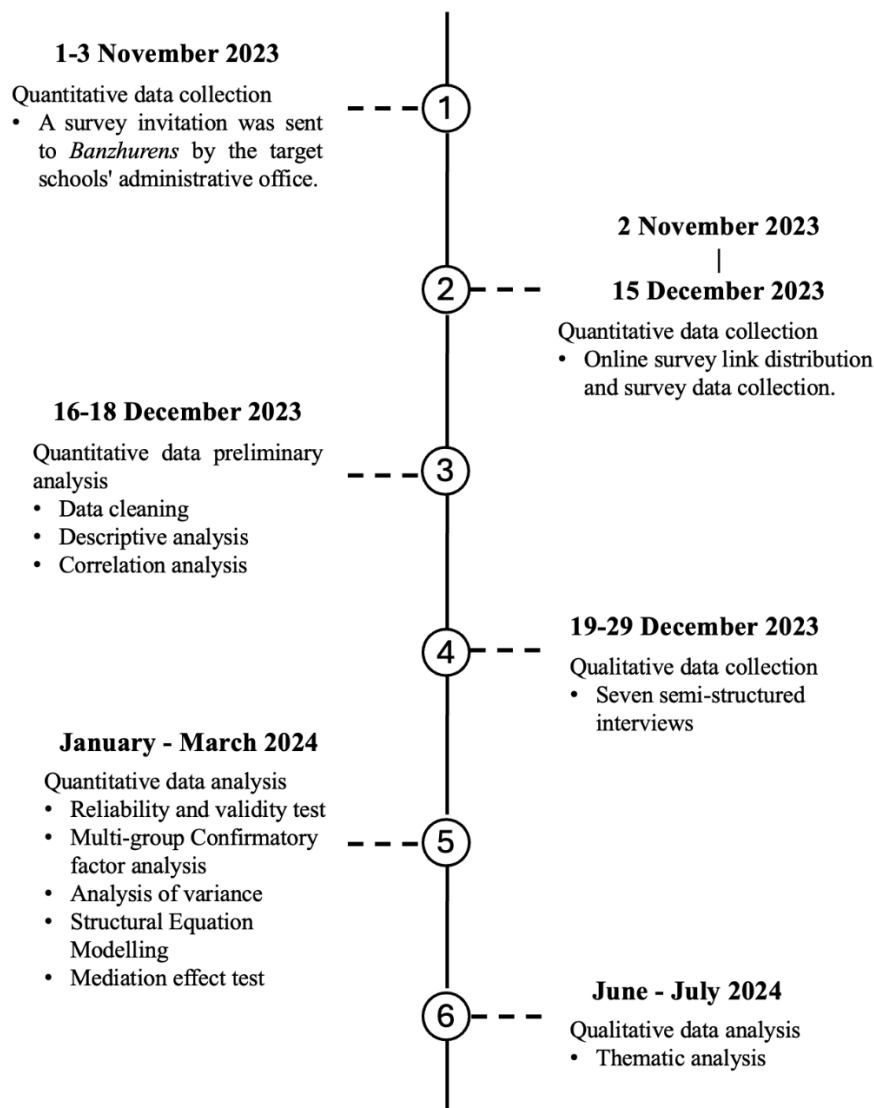
Ethics approval for the study was granted by the University of Technology Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (UTS HREC), with the approval number ETH23-8528. According to the requirements of UTS HREC, participation in this study is voluntary.

Identifying information, such as their names and school names, was not required in the questionnaire.

Table 3.1 Overview of the Methods

Research method	Data collection	Participants	Data analysis
Quantitative research (Survey research)	Questionnaire (Qualtrics)	624 banzhurens from 14 public schools in G City	Descriptive analysis; Reliability tests (Cronbach's alpha, Item-Total Correlation); Validity tests (Convergent & Discriminate Validity) Multi-group Confirmatory factor analysis (MCFA); Analysis of variance (ANOVA); Structural Equation Modelling (SEM); Mediation effect test.
Qualitative research (Case study)	Semi-structured interview (face-to-face)	Seven banzhurens from four public schools in G City	Thematic analysis

Figure 3.1 The Sequence of the Mixed-method Explanatory Approach in this Study



3.2 Recruitment of Participants

The participants in this study are primary school banzhurens who worked in a small city named Gongyi (G city) in Henan province in China. At the time of this study, there were 68 public primary schools and one private primary school in G city, and the number of the total classes from Year 1 to Year 6 is approximately 1200 (Gongyi City Department of Education, 2023), which means there were about 1200 banzhurens in G city. For the generalisability of results,

the inclusion of the entire population of banzhuren in G city is preferable (Noor et al., 2022). However, this is not feasible due to the large number of banzhurens involved as it is difficult to contact and persuade *all* primary school banzhurens to participate in the study. Therefore, convenience sampling was used. Convenience sampling is a type of sampling with less generalisability. It is easier to implement, and the potential participants decide whether to participate in the research by themselves after they receive the invitation.

Recruitment for the online survey started when a brief statement about this research and an invitation to participate in this study were successively sent to the public schools' principals from November to December 2023. There are 14 out of 68 principals replied and approved the banzhurens in their schools to participate in this study. Then, the link to the online questionnaire and the participant consent form were emailed to the banzhurens through their school's administrative offices. Participants were given six weeks to complete the online questionnaire. Before the access to the online questionnaire closed, 624 banzhurens responded and did the online survey. The sample profile can be found in Table 3.5 in Section 3.3.3. The participants were anonymous and were given a unique random research ID in the data-cleaning process. Therefore, the distribution of the participants in each school is unknown. For the interviews, recruitment invitations were sent to the banzhurens by the administration offices of the schools that had approved the distribution of the previous online survey. Seven banzhurens from four schools responded and expressed their willingness to participate in an interview.

Overall, there were 624 banzhurens from 14 public primary schools responded to the online survey for this study, and of these, seven banzhurens participated in the follow-up interview.

3.3 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research can be defined as “a formal, objective, systematic process used to describe variables, test relationships between them, and examine cause and effect associations between variables” (Burns et al., 2015, p. 510). It is generally used to construct, improve or test theories (Roni et al., 2020). A series of methods included in quantitative research can be used to systematically investigate social phenomena by numerical data (Watson, 2015), where surveys and experiments are two primary designs of quantitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Check and Schutt (2012) defined survey research as “the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions” (p. 160). It can best fit the need to describe and understand the trends, attitudes or opinions of participants and generalise it to the entire population (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

As discussed in Chapter 2, many studies verified that there are significant relationships between teachers’ job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout (such as Huang et al., 2020; Madigan & Kim, 2021; Troesch & Bauer, 2017). The intent of this study is to test whether or not, and to what extent these relationships exist in a group of Chinese primary school banzhurens. Thus, survey research is able to serve this study’s aim. The survey was conducted through an online questionnaire, collecting participants’ perceptions of their job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout by responding to questions using 7-point Likert scales in the questionnaire (see Table 3.2 in Section 3.3.2).

3.3.1 Research Framework and Hypothesis

This study employed structural equation modelling to explore the relationships between banzhurens’ self-efficacy, burnout and job satisfaction. The research framework is presented in the following Figure 3.2. Four hypotheses were proposed:

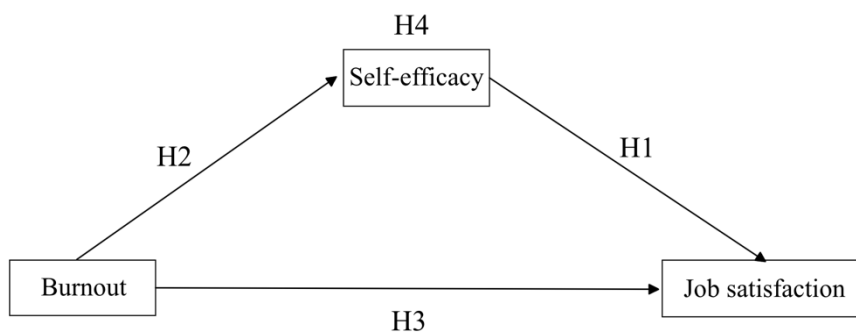
H1: Banzhurens' self-efficacy positively affects their job satisfaction.

H2: Banzhurens' burnout negatively affects their self-efficacy.

H3: Banzhurens' burnout negatively affects their job satisfaction.

H4: Banzhurens' self-efficacy mediates the effect of their burnout on job satisfaction.

Figure 3.2 Quantitative Research Framework



*H1-H4: Hypothesis 1 to Hypothesis 4

3.3.2 Instruments Selection

The instrument used in the quantitative component is a questionnaire. Questionnaires include a series of items reflecting the research aims, and it is one of the commonly used methods to collect data in survey research (Ponto, 2015). After identifying the variables of interest (banzhurens' job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout), three appropriate rating scales were selected consisting of the questionnaire used in this study (Taherdoost, 2019). The scaling method used is the Likert scale (Likert, 1932), which is one of the most popular methods in social science research. The questionnaire consisted of three constructs aiming to respectively measure participants' job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout. Participants responded to the questionnaire items using a 7-point Likert scale (see Table 3.2) with 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= slightly disagree, 4= neither agree nor disagree, 5= slightly agree, 6= agree, and

7= strongly agree (Simms et al., 2019). Three scales in this study were selected from the existing research developed by other researchers (Ho & Au, 2006; Liu, 2003; Maslach, 1981), which are verified as reliable and valid (details will be interpreted in Section 3.3.4.1). Since the target participants were Chinese primary school teachers, the items in the job satisfaction and burnout scales, which were developed in English in the original version, were rephrased and translated into Mandarin. Furthermore, the items related to self-efficacy were translated from Mandarin into English, as illustrated in the Appendix A, to assist the readers of this study. There were three steps in the translation process. First, the English items were translated into Chinese through ChatGPT. Second, I revised and refined the translations to ensure the expressions were appropriate and accurate. Third, the translations were translated back into English by ChatGPT to confirm that the original meanings remained unchanged.

In conclusion, the instrument (questionnaire) used in this study consists of three scales, which can be regarded as the three constructs of the questionnaire: job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout. Sub-constructs also existed under the construct of self-efficacy and burnout, which will be interpreted below.

Table 3.2 Seven-point Likert Response Labels

Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7-points	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree

3.3.2.1 Job Satisfaction

Four items selected from Ho and Au’s (2006) Teaching Satisfaction Scale (TSS) were adopted to measure banzhurens’ job satisfaction. The expression and some subjects were changed to fit the purpose of this study. For example, the original item, “*In most ways, being a teacher is*

close to my ideal”, was rephrased to “*In many aspects, being a banzhuren is close to the expectation of my dream job*”. The items adopted are:

- (1) In many aspects, being a banzhuren is close to the expectation of my dream job.
- (2) I am satisfied with being a banzhuren.
- (3) So far, in the position of a banzhuren, I have gotten what I wanted.
- (4) If I could choose my occupation again, I would still choose to be a banzhuren.

3.3.2.2 Self-efficacy

Banzhurens’ self-efficacy was measured by the items selected from the Primary School Teacher Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Liu, 2003), which consisted of three sub-constructs – instructional strategies, management and administration, and interpersonal support – adding up to 56 items in total. To serve the purpose of this study and according to the theory and previous research (Bandura, 2006; Geng, 2018; Huang et al., 2020), only the items that were highly related to *banzhurens’* daily work were used. Consequently, the scale of self-efficacy used in this study had 12 items, and the original three sub-constructs of the survey were not changed (see Table 3.3). The full version of the scale can also be found in Appendix A.

Table 3.3 Self-efficacy Scale

Sub-construct	Item
Self-efficacy in instructional strategy	I can help students master different learning methods.
	I can cultivate students’ curiosity and thirst for knowledge.
	I can help students understand their responsibilities in both academic and non-academic aspects.
	I can enable students to assess themselves accurately.
Self-efficacy in management and administration	I can make students aware of my expectations for them.
	I can Encourage students to view me as a friend.
	I can handle conflicts among students effectively.

	I can create a safe and secure school environment for students.
Self-efficacy in interpersonal support	I can share teaching experiences with colleagues to improve teaching quality.
	I can communicate my ideas and perspectives with leadership.
	I can obtain understanding and support from parents regarding my work.
	I can convince parents of struggling students that their children can make progress through effort.

3.3.2.3 Burnout

To measure banzhurens' burnout, Maslach's (1981) Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) scale was adopted, which is a widely used scale to measure burnout (such as Shen et al., 2015; Pietarinen et al., 2013). MBI has three dimensions that can measure the burnout of people who work in different industries from the aspects of emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment and depersonalisation. However, in this study, the items under the sub-construct of personal accomplishment had a strong similarity with the items of self-efficacy. Moreover, emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation were confirmed as two central elements of burnout (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Consequently, the personal accomplishment items were excluded from this study to minimise multicollinearity among the items, while eight items measuring emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation were retained. Some items were rephrased to better serve the purpose of this study. For example, the item "*Working with people directly puts too much stress on me*" was rephrased to "*Working with people (colleagues and students) directly puts too much stress on me*", and to enhance understanding for Chinese participants, the item "*I feel like I'm at the end of my rope*" was translated and rephrased as "*I feel like I 'm reaching my limit*" (see Table 3.4). The full version of the scale can also be found in Appendix A.

Table 3.4 Burnout Scale

Sub-construct	Item
Emotional Exhaustion	I feel emotionally drained from my work.
	I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.
	I feel burned out from my work.
	I feel frustrated by my job.
Depersonalization	Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.
	I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.
	I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.
	I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.

3.3.3 Sample Profile

After deleting the incomplete responses or those not finished within the 200 seconds allowed, 516 valid responses were kept for the analysis. This amounted to around 40% of the total number of *banzhurens* in G City.

The gender of the participants is disproportionate. Within the 516 responses, the gender ratio is 96.6% (500) female and 3.1% (16) male. According to the Chinese Educational Statistics 2022 (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2023), there are 78.7% (477958) of full-time female teachers working in primary schools in Henan province. This indicates that the gender disproportion in the data collected is not unique to this study. The ages of the participants were broken down into three groups: 76 (14.7%) *banzhurens* are under 30 years old, 421 (81.6%) *banzhurens* aged 31-50 years old, and 19 (3.68%) *banzhurens* are over 50 years old. *Banzhurens'* experiences in this role are also categorised into three groups: 139 (26.9%) teachers have been *banzhurens* for less than five years, 221 (42.8%) teachers have

been banzhurens for 6 to 20 years, and 156 (30.2%) teachers have been banzhurens for more than 20 years.

Table 3.5 Descriptive Summary of Demographic Information of Samples

Demographic	N	%
Gender		
Male	16	3.1
Female	500	96.9
Age		
<= 30	76	14.73
31 - 50	421	81.59
> 50	19	3.68
Years of being banzhuren		
<= 5 years	139	26.94
6-20 years	221	42.83
> 20 years	156	30.23

3.3.4 Data Analysis

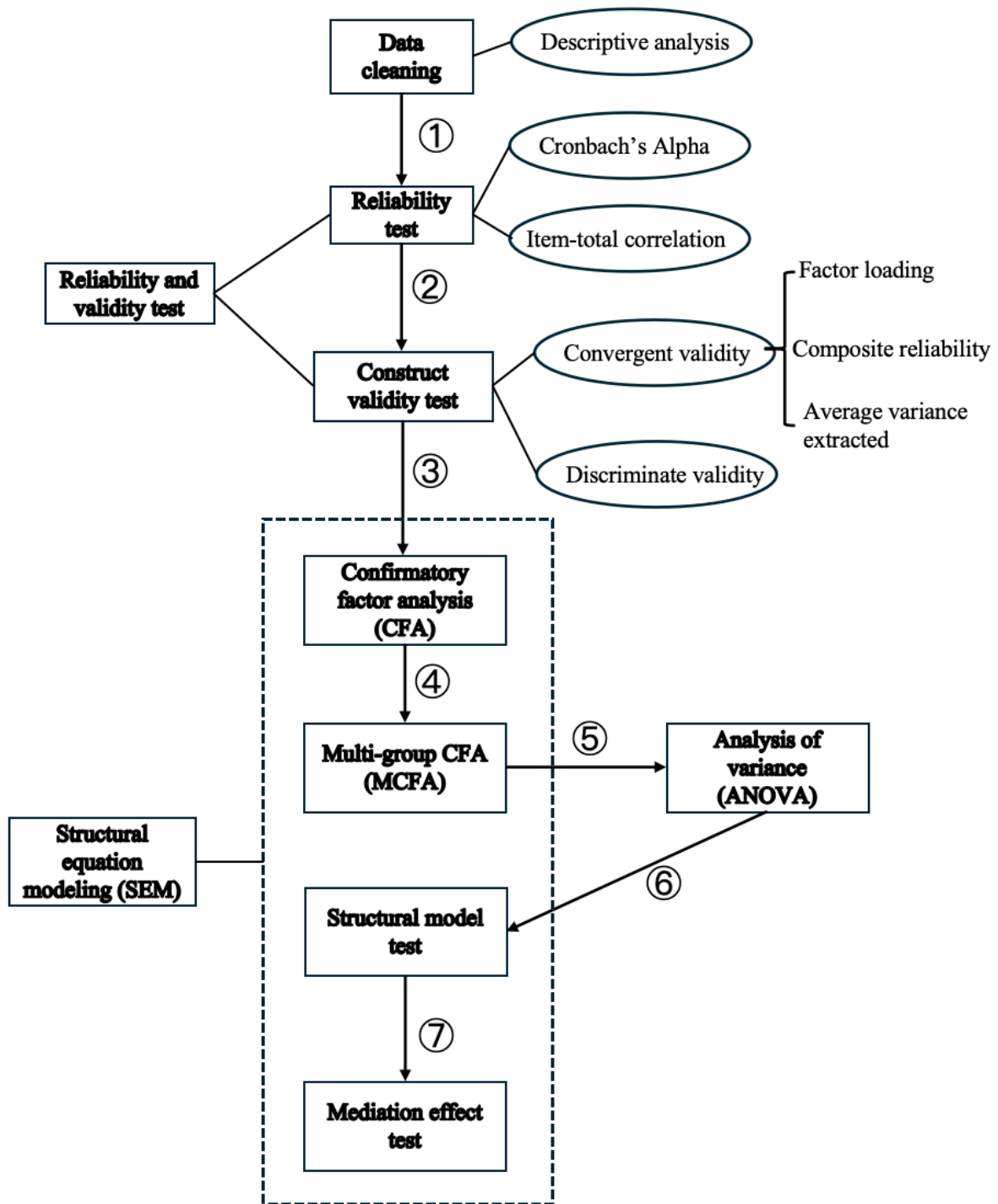
As shown in Figure 3 below, data cleaning was the first step in data analysis after the data collection was completed, conducted using StataSE 16. The total number of responses was 624, and 108 were deleted because the duration of completing the questionnaire was too short or the questionnaire was not completed. More specifically, the duration of completing the questionnaire under 200 seconds was deleted as it was verified in the pilot that if participants could rate all the items in this short time, their responses could not be used as they may not reflect the participants' real perspectives. The IP addresses of each participant were confirmed as unique, which helped to make sure there were no duplicate responses. Descriptive analysis was the second step (see Section 4.1), used to “calculate, describe and summarise collected data in a logical, meaningful, and efficient way” (Vetter, 2017, p.1797).

A set of rigorous reliability and validity tests were conducted as the third step (results presented in Section 4.2). The indicators of reliability tests --- coefficients of α , pairwise item correlations and item-total correlations were computed by SPSS 29, and the indicators of validity test - factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted were computed by Mplus8 and Microsoft Excel 2024.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (results presented in Section 4.3) was conducted by Mplus 8 as the fourth step. The questionnaire also collected data on participants' gender, age and years of being banzhuren. Therefore, multi-group analyses can be conducted. Due to the disproportionate data for gender (Section 3.3.3), multi-group analysis was not performed for gender groups. Participants' ages and years of experience are highly correlated with each other. Within them, years of experience can reflect on teachers' workability and performance more directly and is more commonly applied in the previous study, which explores teachers' job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout (such as Jentsch et al., 2023; Lauermaun & Berger, 2021; Toropova et al., 2021). Thus, the groups with different years of banzhuren experience were selected for the multi-group confirmatory factor analysis (MCFA) and analysis of variance (ANOVA) by Mplus8 and StataSE 16 (results presented in Section 4.4).

Finally, the structural relationships and mediation effect test (results presented in Section 4.5) under the framework of SEM were conducted by Mplus8 to explore the relationships among the banzhurens' job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout. The following sections represent the explanation and theoretical basis with details of the reliability and validity test (Section 3.3.4.1), CFA (Section 3.3.4.2), MCFA (Section 3.3.4.3), ANOVA (Section 3.3.4.4), SEM and mediation effect test (Section 3.3.4.5).

Figure 3.3 Flow Chart of Quantitative Data Analysis



3.3.4.1 Reliability and Validity Test of the Instrument

Validity and reliability are two crucial indicators reporting the rigour of research (Heale & Twycross, 2015), indicating whether the instruments used are accurate and consistent. They are also the initial steps before conducting a CFA and SEM. Reliability refers to the extent an instrument provides stable, consistent and repeatable results (Johnson & Christensen, 2016; Taherdoost, 2016). Validity is to test the meaningfulness of the items. It is the extent to which the data obtained from a set of items accurately reflects what they were designed to measure under the theoretical latent construct (Hair, 2013).

3.3.4.1a Reliability test: Cronbach's Alpha (α) and item-total correlation

Internal consistency should be measured first before the instrument can be employed for the sequential analysis and also for the purpose of ensuring its validity (Tavakol and Dinnick, 2011). Coefficient Alpha was developed by Lee J. Cronbach (1951) to measure the internal consistency reliability of a scale and is now the most widely used measure of reliability testing.

The pairwise correlations were computed by the method of Pearson correlation. It represents the association between two variables (items). Thus, the more items contained, the stronger the pairwise items correlated, which will lead to a higher internal consistency reliability. The value range of the α is from 0 to 1. The value of **0.7** is an acceptable lower bound for α (Nunnally, 1978). A low alpha is due to a poor correlation between items. Items with poor correlation should be revised or discarded.

Except for Cronbach α , item-total correlation is another measurement for the reliability test. Item-total correlations refer to "how much the score of each item in the measuring instrument is related to the total score of all items in the measuring instrument" (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020, p.2712). For the aim of determining the internal consistency reliability, Hair et al. (2009) pointed out that except for α , the pairwise correlations (absolute value) between

items used to calculate the α coefficient should exceed **0.3**, and the items-total correlation should also be greater than **0.5**. The higher the pairwise correlations and items-total correlation, the higher the internal consistency of the scale. Thus, a scale can be considered reliable when its constructs have an α over 0.7, pairwise correlations of its item of over 0.3, and item-total correlation of over 0.5.

3.3.4.1b Construct validity test

Two components of construct validity, convergent validity and discriminant validity, were tested in this study.

Convergent validity

Convergent validity can be defined as “the extent to which indicators of a specific construct converge or share a high proportion of variance in common” (Hair et al., 2019, p.659). Factor loadings, construct reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were common indicators of convergent validity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

Factor loadings are the degree of correspondence between the variable and factor (Hair et al., 2019). The higher the factor loading is, the higher the item can represent the construct, and the higher construct validity is indicated. The standardised factor loading should be (a) statistically significant, and (b) the value should be at least 0.5 and ideally 0.7 or higher (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012; Hair et al., 2019). Low factor loading indicates that the item may not be measuring the construct and should be excluded from the scale or model.

Composite Reliability (or Construct reliability) (CR) was formulated by Werts et al. (1978), which refers to “the measure of reliability and internal consistency of the measured variables representing a latent construct” (Ahmad et al. 2016, p.3). The absolute value of CR over 0.7 indicates that the constructs of the scale are reliable.

AVE is the “average percentage of variation explained by the items in a construct” (Ahmad et al. 2016, p.3). Both convergent validity and discriminant validity measurements are based on AVE. It is computed by the factor loading and the number of observed variables (items). The low bound of AVE should be at least 0.5 (Hair et al., 2019).

In conclusion, a scale has good convergent validity when the factor loading of each item is over 0.5, has a CR of over 0.7, and AVE of over 0.5.

Discriminant validity

“Discriminant validity refers to the situation where expressions in the scale refer to one specific factor and are less related to the other factors” (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020, p.2704). In other words, a scale has good discriminant validity when a particular construct in the model is uniquely different from the other constructs (Hair et al., 2019). Discriminant validity can be tested by comparing the square root of AVE for individual constructs with the correlations among the latent constructs. A scale has good discriminant validity if the square root of the AVEs of its individual constructs is greater than the correlations between its constructs.

3.3.4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The CFA was conducted after the questionnaire was verified as reliable and valid, which is also a widely used method to form a measurement model under the framework of the structural equation model (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021, p184; Xiao et al., 2019). CFA confirms “how well a prespecified measurement theory composed of measured variables and factors fits reality as captured by data” (Hair et al., 2019, p.660), i.e. the fitness of the measurement model which consists of the measured variables (items) and the factors (job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout). The CFA was conducted four times by Mplus, respectively, for the three scales as well as the whole questionnaire. The technique used for testing structural relationships was

maximum likelihood estimation, which is suitable for continuous variables and normally distributed data. The CFA results can be found in Section 4.3.

Goodness-of-fit (GOF) is a set of indices computed in the CFA process that indicate how well the theoretical constructs can represent reality through computing the data obtained (Hair et al., 2019). In this study, CFA was conducted with Mplus 8.3. The GOF indices computed by this software and reported in this thesis are Chi-Square (χ^2), degree of freedom (*df*), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis's Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR).

Considering that the χ^2 test is sensitive to sample size, the ratio of χ^2 to its degree of freedom (χ^2/df) was measured (Iacobucci, 2009). Some scholars suggest that χ^2/df below 3.0 indicates a reasonable fit of the model (Kline, 2023). Others also think the five thresholds indicate that the fit between the hypothetical model and sample data is acceptable (Carmines & McIver, 1981). According to Wang, Wen & Li et al. (2022), model fit can be acceptable if (a) CFI and TLI fit $\geq .90$; (b) RMSEA and SRMR $\leq .08$; model fit can be excellent if (a) CFI and TLI fit $\geq .95$; (b) RMSEA and SRMR $\leq .05$.

In conclusion, this study applied χ^2/df , CFI, TLI, RMSEA and SRMR as the criteria for assessing the fitness of the measurement model. A measurement model is acceptable if $\chi^2/df < 5.0$, CFI and TLI fit $\geq .90$, and RMSEA and SRMR $\leq .08$.

3.3.4.3 Multi-group Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MCF)

Multiple group analysis is an SEM framework for testing the potential differences between models estimated for different groups. MCF separates the samples into different groups and then makes comparisons to determine their equivalence (Hair et al., 2019). The groups in this study are established by the different years of participants being banzhuren. Participants' years

of being banzhuren are divided into three groups: (a) less than five years, (b) 6-20 years, and (c) more than 20 years.

In this study, MCFA is to test whether the three scales: job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout, are measuring the same constructs among banzhurens with different years of experience. Hence, three models were tested for each group of years of experience, totalling nine MCFA models. A tight replication strategy of MCFA was applied (Wang, 2014). A tight replication strategy means the models are completely equivalent among different sample groups, including the models' constructs, factor loadings, intercepts, variance and covariance, and measurement residual. Thus, five models: Configural Invariance (M1), metric invariance (M2), intercepts invariance (M3), variance and covariance (M4) and measurement residuals (M5) were conducted respectively to measure whether the data obtained is equivalent on the factor loadings, intercepts, variance and covariance, and measurement residual between the different groups of banzhuren experiences. To be specific, M1 tests whether the basic constructs of the latent variable and explicit variable are equivalent. M2 tests the equivalence of factor loading. M3 tests for the equality of intercept terms in the equations explaining the measured variables. M4 assess the equality of the variances of the constructs across the groups, as well as the equality of covariances between constructs. M5 assesses the error term invariance for each measured variable across the groups.

There are no significant differences in the estimated model between groups if the p -value $> .05$ for $\Delta \chi^2$. However, the χ^2 is sensitive to sample size. The p -value of $\Delta \chi^2$ can be significant even if the sample size increased a little (Wang, 2014). Hence, ΔCFI (the difference of CFI between two MCFA models) of less than 0.01 (Meade et al., 2008; Wang, 2014; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000) is used as the defining criteria in this thesis considering the large sample size (>500) in this study. Therefore, there are no significant differences between the

estimated model between groups if $\Delta TLI < .01$ and $\Delta CFI < .01$, indicating that the models which measure the three constructs under study are equivalent for each group of people.

3.3.4.4 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

ANOVA is a method to “compare the variance among and within many groups at one time” (Stoker et al., 2020, p.197). One-way ANOVA was conducted in this study to test for the statistical significance of the difference of means in banzhurens’ job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout between three groups of banzhurens as defined by their years of experience as banzhuren.

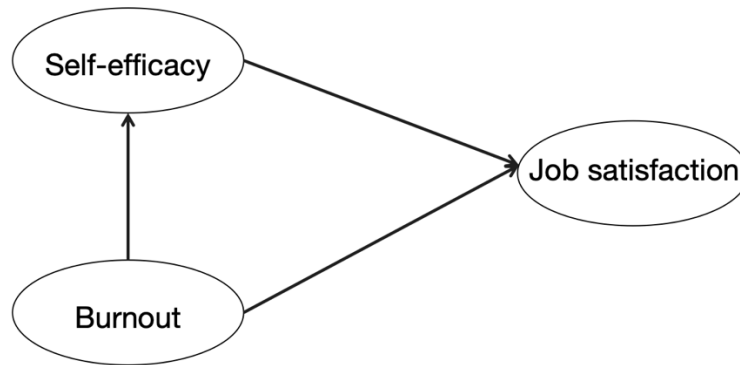
F statistic is used to calculate the p -value under the different significant levels. If p -value < 0.1 , indicating that under the 0.1 significant level, the scores of the factors are significantly different among the different groups. If p -value < 0.05 , indicating that under the 0.05 significant level, the scores of the factors are significantly different among the different groups.

3.3.4.5 Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and Mediation Effect Test

SEM is a set of statistical models aiming to explain the relationships between multiple dependent and independent variables (Hair et al., 2019). There are two components in SEM - the measurement model and the structural model. The measurement model was constructed and confirmed by CFA (see Section 3.3.4.2). The structural model was used to test the multi-directional relationships and causal relationships between the variables concerned in the research. Before conducting structural analysis, we examined the distribution of the data for the four variables (including the control variable) through SPSS 29 and confirmed that they follow a normal distribution. Hypotheses 1 to 3 of this study were tested by the structural model of CFA through Mplus 8.3, and the technique applied is the maximum likelihood (ML), which is suitable for continuous variables and normally distributed data. In this study, the dependent

variables are banzhuren's job satisfaction and self-efficacy, while the independent variables are banzhuren's self-efficacy and burnout (see Figure 3.5).

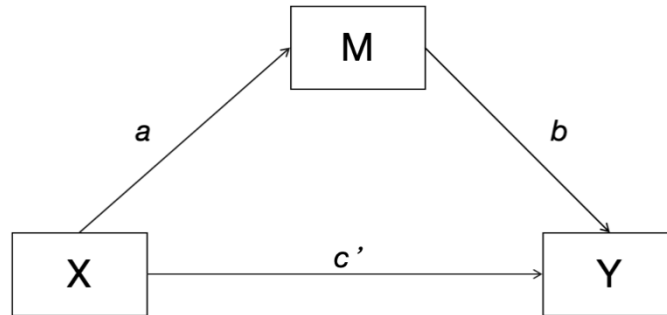
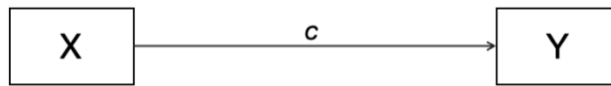
Figure 3.5 The SEM Model in This Study



Aiming to verify hypothesis 4: *Teachers' self-efficacy (TSE) mediates the effect of their burnout (BNT) on job satisfaction (JS)*, a three-path mediation model was conducted after SEM. In the mediation effect test, a mediator variable (i.e. TSE in this study) is the variable that connects the relationship between two variables (i.e. BNT and JS in this study). To be specific, a change in the independent variable BNT causes a change in the mediator variable TSE, and a change in the mediator variable TSE causes a change in the dependent variable JS.

As indicated in Figure 3.6, the independent variable X influences the dependent variable Y with a path coefficient c . The path coefficient a represents the effect of the independent variable X on the mediator variable M, b represents the effect of the mediator variable M on the dependent variable Y, and c' represents the direct effect of the independent variable X on the dependent variable Y after controlling the mediator variable M. Therefore, $a*b$ represent the mediation effect while c is the total effect which can be calculated from $a*b$ plus c' .

Figure 3.6 Path Analysis of Mediation Effect



The method used for mediation effects testing in this study is Bootstrapping, which is verified as having higher statistical power compared with the other methods (Hayes, 2009). Therefore, mediation effect tests were conducted using Bootstrapping with 5000 replicates through Mplus 8.3.

3.4 Qualitative Research

Following the initial analysis of the quantitative data, qualitative research was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the participating banzhurens' job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout, and of the interactions among these factors, and to explore the influence of other factors on their job satisfaction. Qualitative research is "an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell & Creswell, 2023, p. 25). Different from quantitative research, such as a questionnaire that is designed from the researcher's perspective, qualitative research aims to understand the problem primarily from the participants' perspectives (Hancock et al., 2021). The researcher focuses subjectively on the participants' own cognition and on interpretation of

their attitudes, motivations, behaviours, events, and situations in a specific social context (Aspers & Corte, 2019).

In this study, the quantitative component was employed to measure the banzhurens' job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout levels and to statistically determine the relationships between these aspects of their work. The qualitative component was designed to offer explanations for why the banzhurens rated the specific scores on the items in the questionnaire, how they perceived self-efficacy and burnout as influencing their job satisfaction, and to uncover other factors that were influencing their job satisfaction.

The qualitative research design followed a case study approach. Hancock et al. (2021) describe the case study as research that focuses on addressing a phenomenon of a representative of a group of people, where the phenomenon could be a particular event, a situation, a program or an activity. It aims to figure out "how" or "why" this phenomenon occurs (Yin, 2018). Moreover, according to both Yin (2018) and Hancock et al. (2021), there are three types of case study research designs: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. In the current case study, seven semi-structured, one-to-one interviews were conducted to collect the data (information) about each participant's account of their job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout. The aim was to explain how the self-efficacy and burnout of G city's banzhurens (the *case*) influenced their job satisfaction (the *situation*) and to explore whether there were other factors that also influenced it.

3.4.1 Data Collection

Seven banzhurens were recruited from four primary schools to participate in semi-structured interviews. Interviewing is a commonly used data-collecting method in case study research. It provides an opportunity for researchers to discover, understand, reflect and explain a social phenomenon through an adaptive process (Tracy, 2020). Semi-structured interviews involve

predetermined open-ended questions (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006) based on identified themes (Qu & Dumay, 2011). This approach encourages interviewers to listen, reflect, and adapt to changing circumstances and allows the interviewee to take more control of the discussion (Tracy, 2020).

To have a deeper understanding of the participating banzhurens and explore the factors that affected their job satisfaction, the questions and themes of the interviews were designed according to the constructs of the questionnaire used in the quantitative research. The main themes that the semi-structured interviews explored were:

- A. The daily routine of a banzhuren.
- B. Job tasks banzhurens are particularly confident in and job tasks they feel difficult to accomplish.
- C. Job tasks that contribute most to banzhurens' job satisfaction or dissatisfaction.
- D. Banzhurens' understanding of the differences between banzhurens and subject specialist teachers.
- E. The reason they would or would not continue working as a banzhuren for a long time.

The questions under theme A primarily focused on exploring the banzhurens' daily work routines, with follow-up questions that included the duration of their daily work, whether they were working overtime, and their feelings about their workload. The questions under theme B were designed mainly to obtain their perception of self-efficacy (the concept of self-efficacy was discussed in Section 2.3). In summary, in the context of this study, a banzhuren's self-efficacy can be defined as their belief in their own ability to execute the necessary actions to achieve their working tasks and goals (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). However, since the term

“self-efficacy” is not commonly used in the participants’ daily lives, it was anticipated that it might take time for each participant to understand the precise meaning of this term during their interviews. Therefore, the questions about the kinds of job tasks they might have higher or lower self-efficacy began with *“What kind of job tasks are you confident in?”* and *“What job tasks do you feel are difficult to accomplish?”*

Theme C aimed to explore the factors that influenced their job satisfaction; hence the related questions began with *“What aspect of your role as a banzhuren gives you the greatest satisfaction”* and *“Are there aspects of your role as a banzhuren that don’t contribute to your job satisfaction or make you feel dissatisfaction?”* Although it was uncertain whether the participants would refer to issues related to self-efficacy or burnout, to avoid the influence of the researcher’s bias and thus learn the participants’ real feelings, the interview questions under theme C did not guide the participants to consider these two factors in relation to the question about job satisfaction. The questions under Theme D asked the participants to describe their occupations, comparing their responsibilities and tasks as banzhurens to those of subject specialist teachers. The questions under Theme E aimed to elicit the crucial indicators of their job satisfaction as banzhurens: *“If you can make your own decision, do you think you will continue working as a banzhuren for a long time and Why/Why not?”* Their responses were expected to provide insights into the attractiveness, or lack thereof, of the banzhurens’ role.

The participants decided on the place and time for the interviews. All invited me to their schools for the interviews. The various meeting locations within their school included the participant’s office, classrooms, the reading room, or the meeting room. Five of the interviews took place on school days but after school hours, and two were conducted on weekends.

3.4.2 The Participants

The participants' names (pseudonyms) and years of experience are shown in Table 3.6. Their years of service in teaching ranged from 3 years to 29 years, and in the role of *banzhuren*, from 3 years to 28 years. Four were Chinese Language teachers, and three were Mathematics teachers. One of the participants is male, and the others are female. The following alphabetical list summarises each participant's information at the time of the study:

- a) *An* had recently taken a leave from her role as *banzhuren* for one year but had served in this position for the past 28 years. Throughout these 28 years as a *banzhuren*, she consistently taught the Chinese language. At the time of our interview, she was teaching Morality and the Rule of Law.
- b) *Bing* served as a middle school mathematics teacher from 1999 to 2015. Since 2016, she has worked in primary school, teaching Year One or Year Two students. She has taught for 24 years and had the role of *banzhuren* for 23 years.
- c) *Cui* has taught for 17 years and in the role of *banzhuren* for 14 years. She used to be a Computer Science teacher and started teaching the Chinese Language after taking the role of *banzhuren*. She was teaching Year One students in 2023 when the interview was conducted.
- d) *Dong* transitioned into the education field from a different career and has worked as a mathematics teacher for 5 years and in the role of *banzhuren* for 4 years.
- e) *Fang* has been in the teaching profession for 4 years and in the role of *banzhuren* for 3 years. She was a Chinese Language specialist teacher but had taught Mathematics for the first 2 years. She was teaching Year One Chinese Language when the interview was conducted.

- f) *Guo* also transitioned from another career field. She has worked as a teacher for 3 years and in the role of banzhuren for 3 years. During this time, she has been teaching the Year Six Chinese language.
- g) *Hui* was in charge of teaching Year four Mathematics. He has been a Mathematics teacher for 3 years and only took up the role of banzhuren the year prior.

Table 3.6 Basic information of interview participants

Name	Subject they teach	Grade	Age	Years of being a teacher	Years of being a banzhuren
An	Morality and the Rule of Law	Grade Five	53	29	28
Bing	Mathematics	Grade Two	44	24	23
Cui	Chinese Language	Grade One	39	18	14
Dong	Mathematics	Grade Four	32	5	4
Fang	Chinese Language	Grade One	27	4	3
Guo	Chinese Language	Grade Six	32	3	3
Hui	Mathematics	Grade Four	27	3	1

3.4.3 Data Analysis

All participants were Chinese Mandarin-speaking primary school banzhurens, and the interviews were conducted in Mandarin. The interviews were audio-recorded, the durations ranged from 17 minutes to 42 minutes. Following Creswell and Poth (2018), four essential steps were involved in the interview analysis. The initial phase, as previously noted, involved transcribing the interview texts. During this step, I used the transcription software iFLYTEC to convert all audio recordings into text. After the initial transcription, I manually refined the text

by cross-checking it with the original audio recordings. This process included removing the participants' repeated filler words that were unrelated to the research purpose (such as "um") to enhance readability, correcting errors in the software-generated transcript, and supplementing any missing or misrecognised sentences.

The next step in data analysis involved thoroughly reading the interview transcripts more than three times, highlighting text and noting recurring ideas in the margins, for example, ensuring classroom/student discipline, fixing students' bad habits/misbehaviour, communicating with students' parents, heavy workloads, school activities, workload pressure, and students' approvals. I also highlighted key phrases that frequently appeared in multiple interviews, such as "no time to sit down", "too exhausted", "work overtime", "receiving or making phone calls from parents every day", "not enough support", "banzhuren allowance cannot compensate for our labour input", and "students make me happy". Following this, I thematised the data roughly as "job satisfaction", "self-efficacy", "burnout", and "others", based on this study's purpose.

The fourth step involved further subdividing the themes according to the items in the questionnaire. The codes under the theme *job satisfaction* included factors that contribute to banzhurens' satisfaction or dissatisfaction (e.g., "student improvements", "heavy workloads", "phone calls from parents never stop", "too many school activities", "insufficient allowance"), gaining from this position (e.g., "career development"), and reasons for continuing or not continuing to take up this role (e.g., "too stressful", "too tired"). The codes under the theme of *self-efficacy* were primarily developed based on the constructs and items of the self-efficacy scale in the questionnaire; they included self-efficacy in instructional strategies (e.g., helping students master different learning methods), in management and administration (e.g., helping students understand their responsibilities, making students aware of their banzhuren's expectations for them, handling conflicts among students effectively, creating a safe and secure

school environment for students), and in interpersonal support (e.g., communicating ideas with leaders, obtaining understanding from students' parents, convincing parents of struggling students that their children can make progress through effort).

The contents under the theme *burnout* were coded as “feelings of burned out” and “emotionally drained from the work”. The contents under the theme of *others* were coded into four aspects: “banzhuren’s daily routine”, “differences between banzhuren and subject specialist teachers”, “how to be a banzhuren”, and suggestions for improving the attractiveness of the position of banzhuren. The anticipated themes were also allowed to emerge as inductive coding. For example, the banzhurens’ self-efficacy in handling conflicts among students were often in combination with their self-efficacy in communicating with those students’ parents because they need to report on students’ daily lives to the concerned parents. Moreover, the banzhurens’ multiple working tasks reflected not only their heavy workload but also their work stress. Finally, the highlighted and noted segments of data were translated into English and reported in a clear and structured manner (see Chapter 5). The translating process was similar to that presented in Section 3.3.2.

CHAPTER 4 Quantitative Findings

4.1 Reliability and Validity Test

4.1.1 Cronbach's Alpha (α)

The coefficients of α of the three constructs in the questionnaire, job satisfaction (JS), self-efficacy (TSE) and burnout (BNT), were tested respectively, and the results can be found in Tables 4.2 to 4.4. The Cronbach's α of the three constructs are .877 (JS), .929(TSE) and .915 (BNT). All of the α exceed the acceptable lower bound of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978). The left side matrix in Table 4.2 to Table 4.4 show the pairwise correlations of each scale. The correlation ranges of the three scales are [.546, .713] (JS), [.300, .682] (TSE) and [.384, .776] (BNT). All of the correlations exceed the correlation standard of 0.3 (Hair et al., 2009), indicating the items are pairwise correlated to each other. The middle column in Table 4.2 to Table 4.4 is the value of item-total correlations. The values of the item-total correlations are [.676, .798] (JS), [.518, .780] (TSE), and [.643, .830] (BNT). All of the item-total correlation values exceed the standard of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2009), indicating each item is correlated to its construct. Thus, results from α , pairwise correlations and item-total correlations showed that the items in each of the three scales are internally consistent and that the three constructs in this questionnaire are reliable.

Table 4.2 Internal Consistency of Banzhuren's Job Satisfaction

	Items*				Reliability	
	JS1	JS2	JS3	JS4	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's α
JS1	1				.798	
JS2	.698	1			.715	.877
JS3	.635	.546	1		.676	
JS4	.713	.636	.618	1	.757	

*JS refers to banzhuren's job satisfaction.

Table 4.3 Internal consistency of Banzhuren’s Self-efficacy

	Items*												Reliability	
	TSE1	TSE2	TSE3	TSE4	TSE5	TSE6	TSE7	TSE8	TSE9	TSE10	TSE11	TSE12	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach’s Alpha
TSE1	1												.685	.929
TSE2	.647	1											.754	
TSE3	.657	.667	1										.754	
TSE4	.624	.682	.634	1									.706	
TSE5	.547	.646	.632	.578	1								.776	
TSE6	.563	.633	.574	.563	.679	1							.756	
TSE7	.521	.600	.622	.555	.654	.643	1						.757	
TSE8	.464	.564	.574	.553	.636	.535	.585	1					.719	
TSE9	.339	.383	.369	.402	.464	.449	.434	.410	1				.518	
TSE10	.380	.400	.427	.377	.435	.455	.436	.472	.300	1			.553	
TSE11	.455	.496	.504	.409	.544	.586	.579	.541	.426	.475	1		.671	
TSE12	.567	.581	.625	.555	.629	.612	.669	.649	.446	.521	.583	1	.780	

*TSE refers to banzhuren’s self-efficacy.

Table 4.4 Internal Consistency of Banzhuren’s Burnout

Items*									Reliability	
	BNT1	BNT2	BNT3	BNT4	BNT5	BNT6	BNT7	BNT8	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach’s Alpha
BNT1	1								.830	
BNT2	.723	1							.789	
BNT3	.658	.648	1						.672	
BNT4	.668	.616	.492	1					.712	
BNT5	.607	.610	.510	.514	1				.672	.915
BNT6	.776	.714	.651	.642	.597	1			.806	
BNT7	.569	.537	.384	.513	.453	.536	1		.643	
BNT8	.565	.518	.436	.533	.493	.536	.630	1	.660	

*BNT refers to banzhuren’s burnout.

4.1.2 Measurement of the Model Construct Validity Test

As discussed in Chapter 3, validity is used to test the extent to which the set of items accurately reflects the latent construct they are designed to measure (Hair et al., 2019). Convergent validity and discrimination validity were conducted in this study to measure the construct validity of the instrument used.

4.1.2.1 Convergent Validity

Measurements of factor loadings, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) are common indicators of convergent validity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988) and were computed in this study.

4.1.2.1a Factor Loadings

The factor loadings in this study were computed by Mplus 8.3. As presented in Table 4.5, the factor loadings of each item were all statistically significant ($p < .001$), with t -values, used to

calculate the *p*-value, ranging from 11.802 to 27.542 ($t > 1.96$ indicates significance). The range of factor loadings for each construct are [.705, .874] (JS), [.533, .805] (TSE) and [.656, .884] (BNT), and all of them are above the cut-off value of 0.50. Thus, these suggest that all the items in the questionnaire significantly contribute to the constructs they are involved in, and all of the constructs have good convergent validity

4.1.2.1b Composite Reliability (CR)

CR value in this study was calculated according to its formula by Microsoft Excel 2024. As depicted in Table 4.5, the CR value of each scale is .877 (JS), .933 (TSE) and .916 (BNT). All the CR values $> .7$ (Werts et al. 1978), which indicates that the items under the constructs of job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout are all internally consistent with their corresponding constructs. In other words, the items measure what they are designed to measure.

4.1.2.1c Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The AVE value in this study was calculated according to its formula in Microsoft Excel 2024. The AVE values in this study are .643 (JS), .542 (TSE) and .581 (BNT), all exceeding the value of 0.50, which indicates that all three constructs under study have good convergent validities (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In conclusion, the results from standardised factor loading, CR, and AVE show that the items on each scale in this study are validly convergent to its construct.

Table 4.5 Construct Validity Test

Dimension*	Items	Unstd. ^a	S.E. ^b	Z (<i>t</i> -value) ^c	P ^d	Std. ^e	Cronbach's α ^f	CR ^g	AVE ^h
JS	JS1	1.000				0.874	.877	.877	.643
	JS2	0.946	0.042	22.319	***	0.819			
	JS3	0.762	0.041	18.402	***	0.705			
	JS4	0.964	0.043	22.262	***	0.800			
TSE	TSE1	1.000				0.721	.929	.933	.542

	TSE2	1.115	0.062	17.900	***	0.792			
	TSE3	1.097	0.061	17.844	***	0.788			
	TSE4	1.056	0.063	16.701	***	0.740			
	TSE5	1.098	0.061	17.982	***	0.805			
	TSE6	1.143	0.065	17.620	***	0.787			
	TSE7	1.135	0.065	17.592	***	0.789			
	TSE8	1.209	0.073	16.511	***	0.743			
	TSE9	0.723	0.061	11.802	***	0.533			
	TSE10	1.149	0.089	12.961	***	0.585			
	TSE11	1.067	0.069	15.369	***	0.692			
	TSE12	1.172	0.065	17.942	***	0.802			
	BNT1	1.000				0.884			
	BNT2	0.917	0.037	24.909	***	0.826			
	BNT3	0.697	0.035	20.205	***	0.729			
BNT	BNT4	0.753	0.036	21.041	***	0.748	.915	.916	.581
	BNT5	0.784	0.042	18.697	***	0.695			
	BNT6	1.010	0.037	27.542	***	0.867			
	BNT7	0.755	0.044	17.154	***	0.656			
	BNT8	0.745	0.043	17.131	***	0.656			

*JS, teachers' job satisfaction; TSE, teachers' self-efficacy; BNT, teachers' burnout

^a Unstandardized coefficient

^b Standard error

^c *t*-value is used to calculate the *p*-value

^d *p*-value < .1 *; *p*-value < .05 **; *p*-value < .001 ***

^e Standardized coefficient, i.e. factor loading

^f Cronbach's α is used to test the reliability of the scale

^g Composite reliability

^h Average variance extracted

4.1.2.2 Discriminatory Validity

As discussed in Section 3.3.4.1b, discriminant validity refers to the items on a scale measuring a specific factor or construct that are also less related to the other factors or constructs (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020, p.2704). Discriminant validity can be tested by comparing the square root of AVE for individual constructs with the correlations among the latent constructs. The correlations matrix of pairwise constructs was computed by SPSS 29. The square root of AVE

was calculated according to the AVE in the former section and listed on the diagonal of Table 4.6. The mean and standard deviation represented in Table 4.6 were discussed in the former section of 4.2. Comparing all pairwise construct correlations with the square root of AVE, the results indicate that discriminant validity was established as diagonal elements exceeded those of the off-diagonal elements (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Thus, the results show that the constructs within the questionnaire (JS, TSE and BNT) are uniquely different from each other. Hence, the questionnaire has good discriminant validity.

Table 4.6 The Discriminatory Validity Test of the Whole Scale

Dimension [§]	Mean	S.D.*	JS	TSE	BNT
JS	3.504	1.592	.802		
TSE	5.240	0.891	.583	.736	
BNT	4.485	1.402	-.628	-.478	.762

[§]JS, job satisfaction, TSE, self-efficacy and BNT, burnout.

* Standard deviation

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

This section analyses the participants' rating scores according to the three scales in the questionnaire. Table 4.1 presents the results of the mean and standard deviation of each construct, sub-construct and item.

The overall mean of participants' JS is 3.50, with a standard deviation of 1.59. This suggests that, in general, banzhurens are slightly dissatisfied with their job. Banzhurens with shorter years of experience scored lower on job satisfaction. The item *If I could choose my occupation again, I would still choose to be a banzhuren* had the lowest score at 3.28.

The mean of banzhurens' overall TSE is 5.24, with a standard deviation of 0.89, which suggests that banzhurens are relatively confident about their work-related tasks. Compared with job satisfaction and burnout, banzhurens' scores on TSE have a lower standard deviation,

which means the responses of each item are more consistent and less spread out from the mean. Banzhurens with longer years of experience scored higher on their self-efficacy. The item with the lowest score is *I can communicate my ideas and perspectives with leadership* (mean score at 4.41). The item with the highest score was also related to the aspect of interpersonal support, that was, sharing the teaching experience with colleagues (Item 9: *I can share teaching experiences with colleagues to improve teaching quality*).

Scores for burnout (BNT) are reversed from job satisfaction and self-efficacy. Participants rated higher scores on the items under BNT, suggesting a higher level of BNT. The overall mean of banzhurens' BNT is 4.49 ± 1.40 . Participants with fewer years of experience rated higher on the items of burnout. The item "*I feel burned out from my work*" had the highest score at 5.50. The means of the items under depersonalization are lower than 4.

Table 4.1 Descriptive Summary of Each Item in Different Banzhurens' Group

Variable	Mean	S.D. *	Mean and S.D. with different experiences			Overall mean & S.D.	
			<= 5 years	6 - 20 years	> 20 years		
Job Satisfaction	1. In many aspects, being a banzhuren is close to the expectation of my dream job.	3.51	1.86				
	2. I am satisfied with being a banzhuren.	3.85	1.87				
	3. So far, in the position of a banzhuren, I have gotten what I wanted.	3.38	1.75	3.24±1.58	3.54±1.61	3.69±1.55	3.50±1.59
	4. If I could choose my occupation again, I would still choose to be a banzhuren.	3.28	1.96				
Self-efficacy-instructional strategy	1. I can help students master different learning methods.	5.30	1.11				
	2. I can cultivate students' curiosity and thirst for knowledge.	5.23	1.12				
	3. I can help students understand their responsibilities in both academic and non-academic aspects.	5.38	1.11				
	4. I can enable students to assess themselves accurately.	5.19	1.14	5.03±0.92	5.26±0.88	5.40±0.85	5.24±0.89
Self-efficacy - management and administration	5. I can make students aware of my expectations for them.	5.43	1.09				
	6. I can encourage students to view me as a friend.	5.28	1.16				
	7. I can handle conflicts among students effectively.	5.35	1.15				

	8. I can create a safe and secure school environment for students.	5.20	1.30				
	9. I can share teaching experiences with colleagues to improve teaching quality.	5.68	1.08				
Self-efficacy - interpersonal support	10. I can communicate my ideas and perspectives with leadership.	4.41	1.56				
	11. I can obtain understanding and support from parents regarding my work.	5.26	1.23				
	12. I can convince parents of struggling students that their children can make progress through effort.	5.17	1.16				
	1. I feel emotionally drained from my work.	4.62	1.82				
	2. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	4.95	1.78				
Burnout-Emotional Exhaustion	3. I feel burned out from my work.	5.50	1.54				
	4. I feel frustrated by my job.	4.55	1.62				
	5. Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.	4.04	1.81	4.62 ±1.37	4.55±1.38	4.27±1.45	4.49±1.40
	6. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.	4.36	1.87				
Burnout-Depersonalization	7. I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.	3.90	1.85				
	8. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.	3.96	1.83				

*Standard deviation.

4.3 Model Fit of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

In this study, CFA was conducted four times to test the model fit for the three scales and the whole questionnaire. According to the criteria of the model fit discussed in Section 3.3.4.2, χ^2/df , RMSEA, SRMR, TLI, and CFI are the indices that need to be considered in CFA. The results (in Table 4.7) show that the χ^2/df ranges from 1.000 to 3.580 ($\chi^2/df < 5$). RMSEA ranges from .046 to .071 (RMSEA < .080), and SRMR ranges from .009 to .066 (SRMR < .080). TLI ranges from .913 to .998 (TLI > .090), and CFI ranges from .922 to .994 (CFI > .090). Thus, the questionnaire, as well as each construct are well fitted, suggesting that the predefined instruments (questionnaire), consisting of the measured variables (items) and factors (constructs) used in this study measured what they were meant to measure. The structural model analysis under the framework of SEM can then be conducted to examine the relationships between the three constructs (see Section 4.5).

Table 4.7 Fit Indices of Three Scales and the Whole Questionnaire

Fit indices*	χ^2 ^a	<i>df</i> ^b	χ^2/df ^c	RMSEA ^d	SRMR ^e	TLI ^f	CFI ^g
JS	4.193	2	2.097	.046	.009	.998	.994
TSE	120.097	51	2.355	.051	.022	.982	.976
BNT	46.384	46.38	1.000	.053	.022	.984	.989
Whole questionnaire	891.499	249	3.580	.071	.066	.913	.922
Standards (Good fit)	-	-	< 5.000	< .080	< .080	> .900	> .900

* JS, job satisfaction, TSE, self-efficacy and BNT, burnout.

^a Chi-Square statistic

^b Degree of freedom

^c The ratio of χ^2 to the degrees of freedom (*df*)

^d Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

^e Standardised Root Mean Square Residual

^f Tucker-Lewis's Index

^g Comparative Fit Index

4.4 Multi-group Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Analysis of Variance

4.4.1 Multi-group Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MCFA)

As discussed in Section 3.3.3, participants' years of being banzhuren were divided into three groups: (a) less than five years, (b) 6-20 years, and (c) more than 20 years. Referring to the descriptive analysis in Section 4.1, there are variances in banzhurens' JS, TSE, and BNT among the three groups. Thus, MCFA was conducted separately according to the three constructs of the questionnaire to ascertain if the variances among the three groups truly existed and not due to spurious variances caused by the non-equivalence of the instruments.

The results of the MCFA were presented in Table 4.8, Table 4.9 and Table 4.10. An MCFA model is considered well-fitted if its χ^2/df values are all under three and its CFI and TFI are over 0.9. ΔTLI and ΔCFI were used as the criteria to interpret the equivalence of measurement models among different groups. The self-efficacy scale and burnout constructs have ΔTLI and ΔCFI of less than .01 for all five models tested (Tables 4.9 and 4.10). Therefore, the constructs for self-efficacy and burnout have strict equivalence between groups. In Table 4.8, ΔTLI and ΔCFI of Model 4 and Model 5 are .025 and .042, both over 0.01. Strict invariance of the job satisfaction scale was not observed, indicating that the job satisfaction scale is not strictly equivalent among the groups. However, the ΔTLI and ΔCFI of the first four models are all less than .01, indicating a strong invariance of the job satisfaction scale. Therefore, the scale of job satisfaction is strongly equivalent among different groups.

In conclusion, the three scales are all verified as equivalent for different groups. The scale of job satisfaction is confirmed as strongly equivalent among the three groups, and the scales of self-efficacy and burnout are confirmed as strictly equivalent among the three groups. The results in this section showed that the constructs of the instruments used are equivalent among different groups of participants in this study. Therefore, the variance analysis results

reported in Section 4.4.2 are the true variance between groups rather than the spurious difference in the result from the non-equivalence of the instruments.

Table 4.8 Multi-group CFA of Job Satisfaction

Model	χ^2 ^a	df ^b	χ^2/df ^c	CFI ^d	TLI ^e	Comparison	$\Delta\chi^2$ ^f	Δdf ^g	P ^h	ΔTLI ⁱ	ΔCFI ^j
Configural Invariance (M1)	6.921	6	1.154	.999	.998						
Metric invariance (M2)	11.199	12	0.933	1.000	1.000	M2 vs.M1	4.278	6	.639	-.003	.001
Intercepts invariance (M3)	25.605	20	1.280	.995	.995	M3 vs.M2	14.406	8	.072	.006	.005
Variance and covariance (M4)	26.545	22	1.207	.996	.997	M4 vs.M3	0.940	2	.625	-.002	-.001
Measurement residuals (M5)	80.848	30	2.695	.954	.972	M5 vs.M4	54.303	8	.000	.025	.042

^a Chi-square statistic; ^b Degree of freedom; ^c The ratio of χ^2 to the degrees of freedom (df); ^d Comparative Fit Index; ^e Tucker-Lewis's Index; ^f Difference of Chi-square statistic between models; ^g Difference of degree of freedom between models; ^h *p*-value of $\Delta\chi^2$; ⁱ Difference of Tucker-Lewis's Index between models; ^j Difference of Comparative Fit Index between models

Table 4.9 Multi-group CFA of Self-efficacy

Model	χ^2 ^a	df ^b	χ^2/df ^c	CFI ^d	TLI ^e	Comparison	$\Delta\chi^2$ ^f	Δdf ^g	P ^h	ΔTLI ⁱ	ΔCFI ^j
Configural Invariance (M1)	304.169	153	1.988	.960	.949						
Metric invariance (M2)	326.706	171	1.911	.959	.953	M2 vs.M1	22.537	18	.209	-.004	-.001
Intercepts invariance (M3)	384.235	195	1.970	.950	.950	M3 vs.M2	57.529	24	.000	.003	.009
Variance and covariance (M4)	411.513	207	1.988	.946	.949	M4 vs.M3	27.278	12	.007	.001	.004
Measurement residuals (M5)	445.950	231	1.931	.944	.952	M5 vs.M4	34.437	24	.077	-.003	.002

^a Chi-square statistic; ^b Degree of freedom; ^c The ratio of χ^2 to the degrees of freedom (df); ^d Comparative Fit Index; ^e Tucker-Lewis's Index; ^f Difference of Chi-square statistic between models; ^g Difference of degree of freedom between models; ^h *p*-value of $\Delta\chi^2$; ⁱ Difference of Tucker-Lewis's Index between models; ^j Difference of Comparative Fit Index between models

Table 4.10 Multi-group CFA of Burnout

Model	χ^2 ^a	<i>df</i> ^b	χ^2/df ^c	CFI ^d	TLI ^e	Comparison	$\Delta\chi^2$ ^f	Δdf ^g	P ^h	Δ TLI ⁱ	Δ CFI ^j
Configural Invariance (M1)	95.633	57	1.678	.985	.978						
Metric invariance (M2)	117.22	69	1.699	.981	.977	M2 vs.M1	21.587	12	.042	.001	-.004
Intercepts invariance (M3)	158.794	85	1.868	.972	.972	M3 vs.M2	41.574	16	.000	.005	.009
Variance and covariance (M4)	177.748	91	1.953	.967	.969	M4 vs.M3	18.954	6	.004	.003	.005
Measurement residuals (M5)	215.223	107	2.011	.958	.967	M5 vs.M4	37.475	16	.002	.002	.009

^a Chi-square statistic; ^b Degree of freedom; ^c The ratio of χ^2 to the degrees of freedom (df); ^d Comparative Fit Index; ^e Tucker-Lewis's Index; ^f Difference of Chi-square statistic between models; ^g Difference of degree of freedom between models; ^h *p*-value of $\Delta\chi^2$; ⁱ Difference of Tucker-Lewis's Index between models; ^j Difference of Comparative Fit Index between models

4.4.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

To test if there are any statistical significances in the means for JS, TSE and BNT between the three groups of banzhurens categorised based on their years of experience as banzhuren, one-way ANOVA was conducted using Stata SE 16.

To determine if the mean scores for job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout were statistically different between the three groups of banzhurens, the *p*-values in Tables 4.11, Tables 4.12 and Tables 4.13 were checked. Banzhurens' scores for job satisfaction ($p < .1$), self-efficacy ($p < .05$) and burnout ($p < .1$) were significantly different between the three groups. These results indicate that banzhurens with different years of experience have significantly different levels of job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout. Thus, the variable for years of being banzhuren is controlled in the SEM analysis, which follows in Section 4.5.

Table 4.11 ANOVA of Job Satisfaction

Sources of variance	SS ^a	df ^b	MS ^c	F ^d	<i>p</i> -value ^e
Between Group variance	14.777	2	7.388		
Within Group variance	1290.841	513	2.516	2.940	.054*
Total	1305.617	515			

^a Sum of squares, measures variability within and between groups.

^b Degree of freedom between/within groups

^c Mean square, determine whether the differences between/within group means are statistically significant.

^d F-ration

^e *p*-value < .1 *; *p*-value < .05 **; *p*-value < .001 ***

Table 4.12 ANOVA of Self-efficacy

Sources of variance	SS ^a	df ^b	MS ^c	F ^d	<i>p</i> -value ^e
Between Group variance	9.817	2	4.908		
Within Group variance	399.376	513	0.779	6.300	.002**
Total	409.193	515			

^a Sum of squares, measure variability within and between groups.

^b Degree of freedom between/within groups

^c Mean square, determine whether the differences between/within group means are statistically significant.

^d F-ration

^e p -value < .1 *; p -value < .05 **; p -value < .001 ***

Table 4.13 ANOVA of Burnout

Sources of variance	SS ^a	df ^b	MS ^c	F ^d	p -value ^e
Between Group variance	10.236	2	5.118		
Within Group variance	1001.542	513	1.952	2.620	.070*
Total	1011.778	515			

^a Sum of squares, measure variability within and between groups.

^b Degree of freedom between/within groups

^c Mean square, determine whether the differences between/within group means are statistically significant.

^d F-ration

^e p -value < .1 *; p -value < .05 **; p -value < .001 ***

4.5 Hypothesis Test

4.5.1 Structural Model Test

The structural model analysis under the framework of structural equation modelling (SEM) was conducted using Mplus 8.3 based on the maximum likelihood (ML) technique to assess the direct relationships between banzhurens' burnout, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction. As determined in the former section, the variable of years of being banzhurens was controlled to eliminate its influence on the SEM model and to ensure the SEM results were more accurate.

The results in Table 4.14 and Figure 4.1 show that teachers' self-efficacy has a significantly positive effect on teachers' job satisfaction. The unstandardised coefficient of the path from TSE to JS is -0.736, $p < .001$, showing that if TSE increases by 1 unit, JS will increase by 0.736 unit. The standardised path coefficient is .361. The first hypothesis, *banzhurens' self-efficacy positively affects their job satisfaction*, is verified.

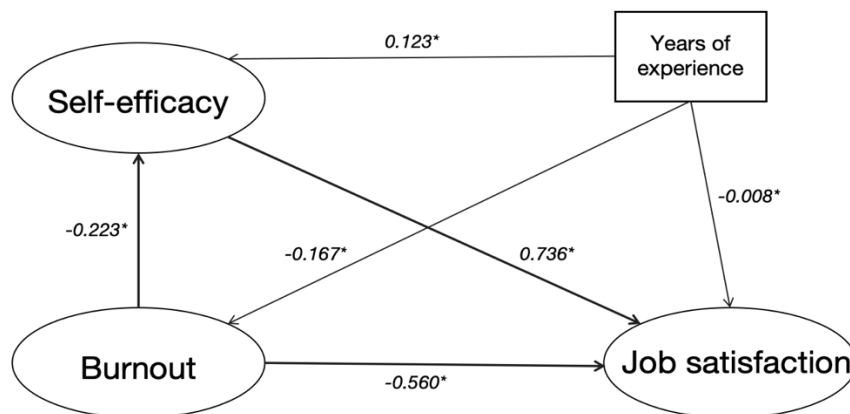
Teacher burnout has a significantly negative effect on teachers' self-efficacy. The unstandardised coefficient of the path from BNT to TSE is -0.223, $p < .001$, showing that if

BNT increases by 1 unit, TSE will decrease by 0.223 unit. The standardised path coefficient is -.451. The second hypothesis, *banzhurens' burnout negatively affects their self-efficacy*, is verified.

Teacher burnout has a significantly negative effect on teachers' job satisfaction. The unstandardised coefficient of the path from BNT to JS is -0.560, $p < .001$, meaning that if BNT increases by 1 unit, JS will decrease by 0.560 unit. The standardised path coefficient is -.554. The third hypothesis *banzhurens' burnout negatively affects their job satisfaction*, is verified.

Furthermore, the standardised path coefficients can also be used to compare the extent of the influence. Through the SEM model, it can be seen that the negative influences of burnout on job satisfaction are greater than the positive influence of self-efficacy on job satisfaction. Also, the negative influences of burnout on self-efficacy are greater than the positive influence of self-efficacy on job satisfaction. Thus, it can be concluded that banzhurens' burnout has a stronger influence on their self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

Figure 4.1 Structural Model of SEM



* Unstandardized coefficient of the path

Table 4.14 Summary of Hypotheses Test Results

Hypothesis	Paths ^a	Unstd. ^a	S.E. ^b	Z ^c	P ^d	Std. ^e
H1	TSE → JS	0.736	0.086	8.578	***	.361
H2	BNT → TSE	-0.223	0.024	-9.472	***	-.451
H3	BNT → JS	-0.560	0.042	-13.19	***	-.554

* JS, job satisfaction, TSE, self-efficacy and BNT, burnout.

^a Unstandardized coefficient of the path

^b Standard error

^c *t*-value, used to calculate the *p*-value

^d *p*-value < 0.1 *; *p*-value < 0.05 **; *p*-value < 0.001 ***

^e Standardized coefficient

4.5.2 Mediation Effect Test

The structural model in the former section indicates that JS, TSE and BNT are significantly related to each other, which brings to question the role of TSE as a mediator variable in the SEM test. Therefore, the mediation effect test was conducted, and participants' years of being banzhuren were included in the model, suggesting its effect was known and controlled to eliminate its influence on the mediation effect model.

The results are summarised in Table 4.15 and Figure 4.2. Under the 95% confidence interval, all three path results of the bootstrapping tests do not include zero, which means TSE has a mediated effect on the relationship between BNT and JS. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis, *banzhurens' self-efficacy mediates the effect of their burnout on job satisfaction*, is verified. The results also indicated that banzhurens' BNT has a total negative effect on JS at .297. Within this, the direct negative effect (after the mediating variable TSE was controlled) of BNT on JS is .110, and the indirect effect of BNT on JS, which was mediated via self-efficacy, is -.187. The ratio of the indirect effect to the total effect (i.e., $a*b/c$) is often interpreted as the proportion of the total effect that is mediated (Hayes, 2009). Thus, for the mediation hypothesis, adding banzhurens' self-efficacy to the model reduced 62.96% of these effects. This shows that TSE can mediate 62.96% of the negative influence from BNT to JS. Therefore, increasing

banzhuren’s self-efficacy could eliminate over half of the negative influences from banzhurens BNT on their JS.

Table 4.15 The Results of the Mediation Effect Analysis

		Indirect effect				Proportion of relative effect
BNT→TSE→JS[§]	B(a*b)	SE^a	Z^b	Bootstrapping 95% CI^c		
	-0.187	0.029	-6.429	-0.243 -0.129	62.96%	
		Direct effect				
BNT→JS	B(c')	SE	Z	Bootstrapping 95% CI		
	-0.110	0.017	-6.642	-0.143 -0.077	37.04%	
		Total effect				
BNT→JS	B(c)	SE	Z	Bootstrapping 95% CI		
	-0.297	0.032	-9.25	-0.358 -0.229	100.00%	

[§] JS, teachers’ job satisfaction; TSE, teachers’ self-efficacy; BNT, teachers’ burnout

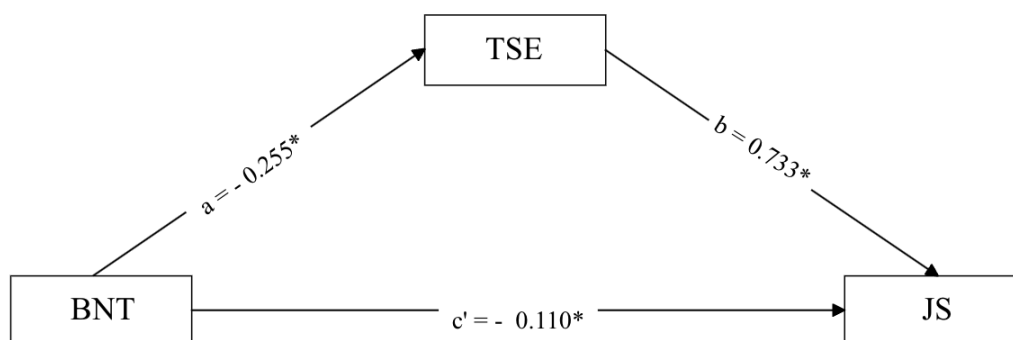
B Unstandardized coefficient of the path

^a Standard error

^b *t*-value, used to calculate the *p*-value

^c Bootstrap confidence intervals

Figure 4.2 Structure of Mediation Effects ^a



^a The variable for years of experience was controlled but not shown in this figure

* Unstandardized coefficient of the path

CHAPTER 5 Analysis of the Interviews

This chapter will elaborate on the results of the thematic analysis of the interviews from four aspects: an overall introduction of banzhuren's work (Section 5.1), banzhurens' perception of their self-efficacy (Section 5.2), factors that banzhurens perceived to influence their job satisfaction (Section 5.3), and suggestions they proposed to improve their job satisfaction (Section 5.4).

5.1 What Does a Banzhuren Do?

5.1.1 Working as the Students' Moms: The Daily Routines of Banzhurens

Among the four schools from which the interview participants were recruited, there were variations in the specific times of some the banzhurens' routine tasks. Nevertheless, all banzhurens shared some common core tasks: they usually had to be present in the classroom with their students except during the lessons taught by the other subject specialist teachers. The extent of their responsibilities is reflected in An's comment:

A banzhuren serves as students' "Moms" in school, responsible for all aspects of students' wellbeing during their time at school, whether related to academics or personal matters. The most important aspects are ensuring students' learning and safety.

学生在学校一天，所有的大小事都是班主任在负责。班主任像妈妈一样在关心他们学习和学习以外的其他的事情。最主要的就是学习和安全。

【An, 29 years, Grade Five】

The participants explained that primary school banzhurens are full-time teachers who work 5 days a week, and their work time at school is about 10 hours a day, normally from 7:20 am to 5:30 pm. In G City, a typical class consists of about 55 students, and there are no separate classes or designated teachers for inclusive education. As a result, banzhurens are responsible

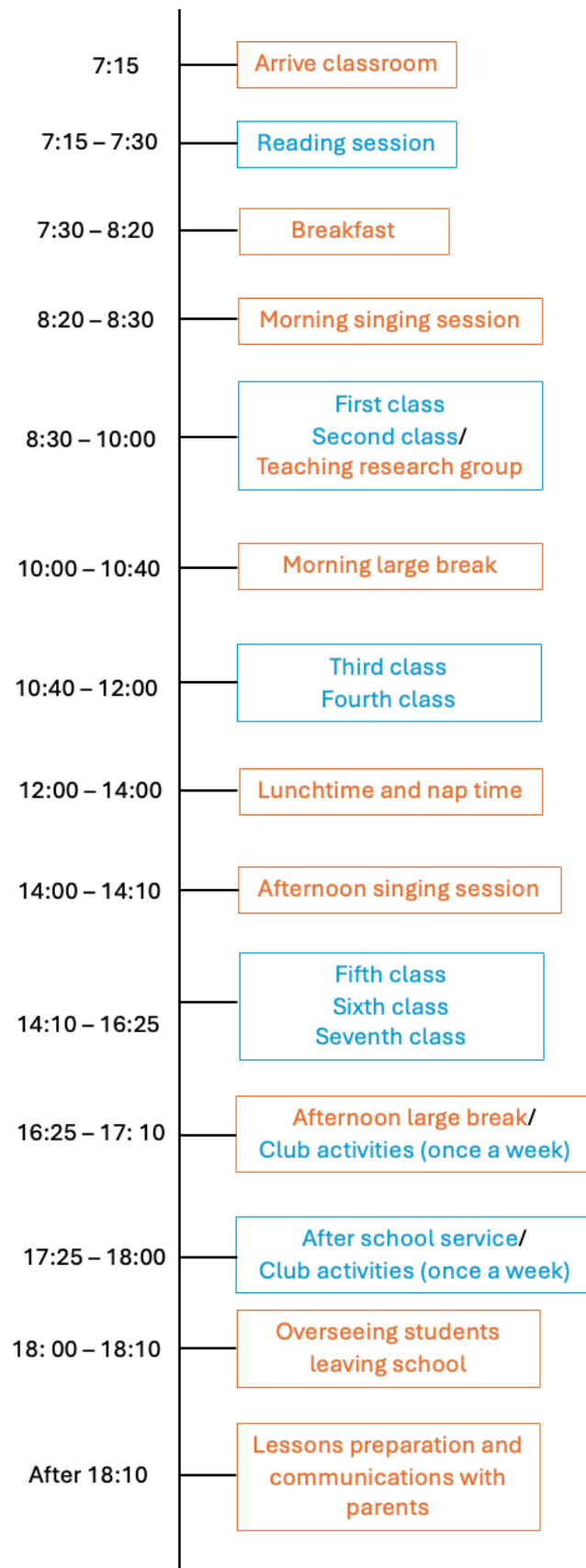
for both mainstream and students with special educational needs within the same class, which adds to their workload.

The school day typically begins between 7:00 am and 7:20 am. The morning session usually starts with a reading session, which is a scheduled time for the students to read the textbook aloud, followed by breakfast. The banzhuren needs to be present before the reading session commences to maintain class discipline and help students transition into a learning mode. If the day's reading is related to the subject taught by the banzhuren, they need to stay and oversee the whole reading session. The school provides breakfast, and the banzhuren should accompany their students to the cafeteria and eat together, ensuring students' good eating habits are gradually developed. After breakfast, there is a 10-minute morning singing time, also supervised by the banzhuren, before the first lesson begins.

Primary schools in G city usually arrange seven periods of teaching classes each day. The first lesson of a school day usually starts between 8:00 am and 8:30 am, depending on each school's schedule. The second lesson is usually dedicated to the daily subject-specific teaching research group, which all teachers should attend if not scheduled for class. This is followed by the morning break, during which students engage in exercise. The banzhuren will show up in the playground to accompany their students and ensure they are safe and disciplined. After the morning break, the third and fourth lessons take place before lunchtime. After lunch, students have a designated nap time. Lunchtime and nap time are also overseen by the banzhuren. The afternoon session begins with another singing session, followed by three more lessons. After these lessons, there is another break for exercise. The banzhuren oversees the after-school service until the school day officially ends between 5:00 pm and 5:30 pm. During this time, the banzhuren ensures their students leave the school premises safely. However, each banzhuren's work does not end until around 7:00 pm, when the tasks of lesson preparation and communication with students' parents are finished.

An example of a banzhuren's daily routine is shown in Figure 5.1. Tasks outlined in orange font indicate duties that require the banzhuren's presence. Tasks in blue font denote responsibilities that may necessitate the banzhuren's involvement, particularly if the contents are related to the subjects that the banzhuren teaches.

Figure 5.1 An Example of a Banzhuren’s Daily Routine



5.1.2 Differences Between Banzhurens and Subject Specialist Teachers

Compared with banzhurens, subject specialist teachers bear a double workload in teaching. There are requirements for the number of lessons per week that the subject specialist teachers need to conduct. To meet this requirement, they must teach more than one class or subject, which means they have more lesson preparation work to do, more lessons to teach, additional homework to grade, and more communication tasks with students' parents regarding any issues related to their children's studies in this subject. But the banzhuren is only in charge of one class and teaches one subject. All the work tasks are centred within this class, whether or not they are related to academic subjects. Fang said:

There is a requirement for the subject specialist teachers that they have to teach up to 15 lessons per week. When I was the math specialist teacher and not a banzhuren, I also had to teach Science or Ethics and the Rule of Law to the older grades to fulfil this number. The teaching scope was broader, and I had to teach several classes. However, the banzhuren's job tasks are within one class of students.

任课老师每周有固定的课时要求，大概在 15 节课左右。只担任数学任课老师的时候，我还兼顾着高年级的科学或者道德与法治课，那个时候范围更大，要教好几个班，但当班主任就只有一个班，不管是啥事都围绕着这一个班。

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

In addition to the teaching tasks, more administration work or tasks related to the school's activities or events might also be assigned to subject specialist teachers. For instance, participant An had been relieved of the role of banzhuren the previous year but was assigned to lead the Calligraphy Research Group for her Year Five students. She said:

There is much calligraphy-related work, and I have to be the one to organise it. I am required to manage all the matters related to calligraphy, and I cannot say no to school because this is what I have to pay for quitting banzhuren.

书法上的事很多，还都得我来安排。学校让我来做（这些事），我不能说不，不当班主任就得多做别的工作

【An, 29 years, Grade Five】

However, a heavier teaching workload does not equate to more responsibilities. While subject specialist teachers have more teaching tasks compared to banzhurens, they have fewer administrative duties and responsibilities and less mental stress. Banzhurens are responsible for all aspects of their students' school life, including their studies, daily activities, moral guidance, and parent communication, which means compared with subject specialist teachers, banzhurens have more interactions and communications with students and their parents. Bing said:

We have to cultivate the students with good academic performance and also help improve the performance of those who are struggling. We also have more to deal with parents, to communicate about the children's situations whenever necessary. We make more effort on work.

我们要把班里成绩好的学生培养出来，成绩差一点的给提高上来。然后给家长打交道多一些，要沟通孩子的情况，付出的也多一些。

【Bing, 24 years, Grade Two】

Banzhurens also have the responsibility of handling emergencies, even those occurring in subject specialist teachers' lessons, because students usually behave better when their banzhuren is present. In contrast, subject specialist teachers only need to ensure the successful

delivery of their lessons and are not concerned with issues unrelated to their teaching. Dong and Guo commented:

Subject specialist teachers might leave directly after the lesson finished and may not be so strict on classroom discipline. However, banzhuren has more responsibilities. If there is a problem that comes up in any subject specialist teacher's lesson, such as PE, music, art, ethics, or science, banzhuren has to deal with it.

可能其他任课教师对于课堂纪律他们要求的不够严格，反正上完课人家就走了。可是班主任担的责任非常多，体育、音乐、美术、道法、科学，不管哪堂课上出问题了，班主任都要去处理这个事情。

【Dong, 5 years, Grade Four】

As a banzhuren, I have a broader responsibility not just for the subject I teach, but also for the overall well-being and discipline of the students in the lessons of other subjects. I need to support other subject specialist teachers if they need.

作为一个班主任的话，我不仅是要管好我教的这门学科，学生的方方面面包括其他的学科的课堂纪律我也需要关注，要协助其他任课教师。

【Guo, 3 years, Grade Six】

5.1.3 How To Be a Banzhuren?

Banzhurens are typically the teachers of the Chinese Language, although some teach Mathematics or English. The role of a banzhuren is mostly mandated by the school, leaving teachers, especially those who teach the Chinese Language, with little space to choose whether or not to take on the role. A banzhuren usually teaches a class for two years, such as from Grade 1 to Grade 2 or from Grade 3 to Grade 4. The school assigns them to different grades based on their abilities and personal characteristics. First-year teachers are usually not asked to be

banzhuren. However, for those who teach core subjects, particularly the Chinese Language, assuming this role is inevitable. When asked if they would continue to be a banzhuren in the long term, most of the participants indicated that this was not their choice, and they would have no alternative. Fang and Guo commented:

I feel that as long as I teach the subject of the Chinese Language, I can't avoid being a banzhuren.

我觉得只要我教语文，班主任这个职责就卸不掉。

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

I must have to be a [banzhuren]. Because banzhurens are normally the teachers who teach the core subjects. Most of the banzhurens teach the Chinese Language in our school, similar to the other schools.

这个不是说我觉得，而是肯定会，因为一般是主科老师担任班主任，在我们学校的话是语文老师担任偏多，基本上都是语文老师，其他学校也是类似的情况。

【Guo, 3 years, Grade Six】

5.2 Banzhurens' Self-efficacy

The term “self-efficacy” is not commonly used by primary school teachers in China. To facilitate their understanding of this term in the interviews, questions related to self-efficacy began with *Are there any kind of your job tasks that you feel confident to accomplish?* and *Are there any kind of job tasks that you feel difficult to accomplish?* The participants had varying perceptions about their self-efficacy in relation to their work tasks. Although three participants responded to these two questions on a general level, Hui and Fang, two of the new banzhurens with less than 5 years teaching experience, expressed a lack of confidence in performing banzhuren-related tasks:

Actually, I don't think there is a specific working task that I am surely good at.

其实我觉得我所擅长的方面不很明显。

【Hui, 3 years, Grade Four】

I am still exploring and experiencing every task of being a banzhuren, and I haven't identified any part that I feel I am confident in. Every step is quite challenging, to be honest. I don't think my strengths in this role are very clear.

班主任的每一个工作任务我现在都还在摸索当中，还没有说哪一部分我觉得我很擅长，每一步其实都挺吃力的。我觉得我没什么明显优势

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

In contrast to Hui and Fang, participant Guo, also a new banzhuren, said she did not feel that a banzhuren's job tasks are very difficult to accomplish:

It's not exactly difficult to conduct the job tasks. There is no requirement for much innovation to be a banzhuren. The work tasks, such as daily class management and school activities are predetermined. For the school activities that are related to singing, dancing, and classroom culture exhibition, the students usually brainstorm together on them, so I don't find it particularly challenging.

困难倒也谈不上，感觉工作任务执行起来都还好。因为班主任这个工作也并不需要我去做什么创新。工作任务都是既定的，比如平时的班级管理、组织活动。活动的话有班歌、班舞、班级文化，学生会集思广益的，所以也没有感觉特别困难

【Guo, 3 years, Grade Six】

5.2.1 Self-Efficacy in Interpersonal Support

5.2.1.1 *Interacting with students' parents*

Banzhurens' self-efficacy related to interpersonal support, particularly regarding engagement with students' parents, was mentioned most frequently in the interviews. For primary school banzhurens, communicating and cooperating with students' parents is a vital part of their job. The parents will also proactively contact a banzhuren to inquire about their child's recent status. All seven participants shared their experiences of communicating or interacting with the students' parents. Three participants elaborated on the questionnaire item (the 11th item of self-efficacy in the questionnaire), *I can obtain understanding and support from parents regarding my work*. Among these three participants, Dong and Fang, who had less than 5 years of teaching experience, indicated that they have relatively low self-efficacy in obtaining parents' support regarding some school activities. Dong said the student's parents should not be responsible for some of the tasks, which made her feel reluctant to ask for help from the parents:

Some of the tasks that I think should not be assigned to parents, but I have to deliver this information to seek their cooperation.

比如说有些任务确实实不应该让家长去做，但是我又不得不去转达这个信息给家长，要让家长去做这个事情。

【Dong, 5 years, Grade Four】

Fang indicated that there might be misunderstandings between her (or the school) and the parents when she was asking for cooperation from parents on some school activities:

In my current school, most of the students' parents are dual-employed and very busy. They do not really understand why many school activities need their cooperation, and they have no time to fulfil the demand from banzhuren or the school. Their negative emotions make it difficult to communicate with them.

像我们这个小学，家长一般都是双职工，也非常忙。家长他也不太理解为什么会有这么多活动，老师又让他们干这个干那个，他们也有很大的情绪，沟通起来有点累。

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

Cui, who has 14 years of teaching experience in the position of *banzhuren*, emphasised the importance of communication skills with the parents and demonstrated high self-efficacy in obtaining the parents' understanding and support:

I feel that I'm good at communicating with parents. Sometimes, they may not understand teachers' educational methods in the first place, which needs communication skills. After I explain things clearly and with patience, they'll understand that I truly have the child's best interests in mind. Most parents are very cooperative with the class activities.

我在与家长的沟通这一方面，做得还算可以吧。有时候有的家长他可能不理解，这就需要我们班主任有这种沟通的艺术，去和家长耐心的沟通，慢慢给他讲清楚之后他就会知道这个老师是真的为了孩子好。大部分家长还是都非常配合班级的工作。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

Additionally, Cui shared her experience of cooperating with the parents of challenging students. Her comments can explain her high level of self-efficacy in *convincing parents of struggling students that their children can make progress through effort* (the 12th item of self-efficacy in the questionnaire). She said:

In my efforts to assist students with behavioural issues, I also engaged extensively with their parents. In the phone call with the parents, I usually began by praising their kid and acknowledging the parents' efforts, which made them more willing to ask how they could further collaborate with me to support their child's improvement. I do this kind of communication with parents a lot.

所以我在教育的过程中，包括小任（有行为问题）这个孩子，我也是经常跟他家长沟通。沟通的时候，先表扬他，先跟他说孩子这星期哪方面有进步，家长听到这也觉得是对他的肯定，然后他也很乐意很积极去听，他也就会问接下来还需要他怎么配合。我经常这样跟家长进行沟通。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

Moreover, according to An and Bing, the high divorce rate in China could also adversely impact banzhurens' self-efficacy in communicating with students' parents. Many students from single-parent families experience insufficient familial attention, leading to them behaving badly at school or home. Banzhurens can find it difficult to communicate with this kind of family. An commented that divorced parents might leave home for work and not live with their children, which limited them from educating their children. And Bing stated that such parents tend to be unwilling to take the responsibility of educating their children, and they shift the duty onto each other.

With the high divorce rate, there are many unattended children. Usually, these children are raised by their fathers after the divorce; if the father goes out of the city for work, the child is sometimes alone at home at night. It's a pity for these children because no one is home to oversee them. Furthermore, children from divorced families who are raised by their grandparents may spend entire nights playing video games without supervision. There's a child in our class like that; he decides not to come to school one day, locks himself in his room, and plays video games all day. Nobody knows what he's doing on the internet or what temptations he might be exposed to. This kind of situation is completely out of control, and the banzhuren has no way to handle it.

还有一个现在是离婚率超高，离婚率一高，没人管的小孩太多了，这小孩往往还都是啥？跟着他爸，他爸要是出门打工，这小孩就有时候晚上是一个人在家里。非常可怜的孩子，就没人管了。跟着爷爷奶奶的（孩子），他把自己关到房间里

打游戏。我们班有个小孩就是这样，可能今天不想上学了，关着门打一天游戏，没人知道他在网上干了啥，也不知道他受了啥诱惑。这种状态就是完全失控的，老师就没办法。

【An, 29 years, Grade Five】

The number of divorced families is increasing, so there will be more and more children from single-parent families. When parents are busy in blaming and passing the buck to each other, these children will have problems because they don't get the support and attention that they need from their parents. I think dealing with these kinds of children makes me resistant to the job of being a banzhuren, and I'm not willing to do this job.

因为现在离异家庭越来越多了，所以单亲家庭的孩子会越来越多，就是父母两方相互推诿的时候，这类孩子就会出问题，孩子得不到家长的支持和关注。我觉得有这一类问题的孩子，让我对班主任的这份工作产生很多的抗拒，不愿意去干这个工作。

【Bing, 24 years, Grade Two】

The new banzhuren, Hui, who had only one year of experience, acknowledged that his limited communication skills with students' parents regularly prevented him from reaching out to the parents:

I think banzhurens need to spend a lot of time communicating with parents. But I usually try to avoid it. Because as a new banzhuren, I feel that I lack some skills in communicating with students' parents. Sometimes, I am not certain how I can express myself clearly to seek better cooperation from the students' parent with my work. Moreover, home-school communication may also take up some personal time, so personally, I don't want to do this much.

我觉得班主任应该是需要花费很多的时间去和家长互相沟通了解。但是我现在一般不主动跟他们沟通。因为我觉得自己作为一个新手班主任还是缺乏一些和学生家长沟通的技巧。有时候有些话我可能不太清楚怎样表达给家长，能够让他们更好的配合我们的工作。我不太会做这个家校沟通方面的工作。而且家校沟可能又会占据到一部分个人时间，所以我个人的意愿上也不太想去做家校沟通。

【Hui, 3 years, Grade Four】

5.2.1.2 Interacting with school leaders

As for communication or interaction with school leaders, the participants barely mentioned it. Most indicated that they were not engaged too much with the leaders; they just wanted to focus on their job tasks. For example, Dong said:

I just simply want my job done well. Since I took up this job, I will carry it out according to my own principles. I am not really concerned with what my superiors think of me. However, if they offer me suggestions, I will reflect on whether there is something I could improve and whether it is necessary to make corrections.

我就是想把我自己活干好，我感觉我现在做这个工作了，就按照自己的本心去做。关于领导怎么看的我不太在意。当然如果领导跟我提建议了，我还是会去想是哪点做的不好，有没有必要去调整去纠正。

【Dong, 5 years, Grade Four】

An and Fang showed low self-efficacy in communicating with the school leaders, mainly due to the responses from the leaders being different from their expectations. Their comments explained the low rating for the 10th self-efficacy item in the questionnaire: *I can communicate my ideas and perspectives with leadership to some extent*. An said the leaders in her school refused to hear suggestions and negative feedback, although some of the suggestions would come from the student's parents:

It appears that the school does not encourage negative feedback about its operations and prefers to receive only praise. Banzhurens will be blamed if the school leaders hear negative feedback from the parents on school operations. For instance, if a student's parents raise concerns about the school's food, the school leaders tend to hold the banzhuren accountable and ask them to pacify the parents, rather than addressing the issue raised by the parents.

学校有任何的事不让你说，所有人都要发出正能量，夸学校的好。如果有意见，他（领导）就认为是你班主任没有管理到位。比如家长向学校反映一个，说咱学校的餐食不太好，给学校反映了。学校会问是你哪个班哪个孩子反应的问题，他不是去根本上找问题，解决这个问题。

【An, 29 years, Grade Five】

Fang also found it difficult to obtain support and understanding from her leaders, which impacted the communications between her and them. She said:

I am seeking greater understanding and support from the school leaders. However, what I got are additional demands instead. Consequently, I sometimes feel dissatisfied with the leaders, and we have experienced minor conflicts, particularly when the task assignments are unreasonable. While some senior teachers may be accustomed to this, younger teachers like me find it unacceptable.

我更希望得到领导的一些理解跟支持，但是有时候领导给的更多的是要求。所以其实我觉得我有时候对领导的怨气还是挺重的，有一些活动他的安排我觉得不合理的时候，就会跟领导有一些摩擦。可能老教师就更容易接受一点，我们反正接受不了。

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

5.2.1.3 *Interacting with colleagues*

Interaction among colleagues is common because all the schools have daily and weekly teaching research activities. The participating banzhurens treated the teaching and research activities as ordinary school activities. Bing shared the three kinds of teaching and research activities in her school:

We have daily and weekly teaching research activities. Daily teaching research activities are held within our office every day after breakfast. There are two kinds of weekly teaching research activities. One is held on each Tuesday's morning reading time and all teachers in my grade need to participate. Another one is subject-oriented, such as the math teaching research activity is held on each Thursday afternoon.

日教研是天天都有的，一般是在吃过早饭，。然后是周教研。一个是年级组的教研，安排在周二的早读时间。还有学校的学科教研，例如数学学科教研是每周四下午。

【Bing, 24 years, Grade Two】

Cui also shared about the daily teaching research activity in her school:

We have a teaching research activity after school every day aimed at designing the homework for that day. We cannot assign writing homework for Year One students. So, we need to share the daily teaching progress together first and design the non-writing homework. Then send the notice of homework to home-school chatting groups together.

我们放学以后我们就会在一起教研一下，例如今天布置什么作业。我们一年级还不能布置写的作业。所以我们就要在在一起教研下今天各个班进度是什么样子的，一起布置一下作业，然后发送至家长群。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

Furthermore, it is not rare for banzhurens to seek support from their colleagues when they face difficulties, as said by Hui:

Sometimes when I need to organise our students for preparing school activities such as singing, dancing, or reciting, I really don't know how to coordinate them. I will ask other class teachers for advice.

有时候遇到在学校活动时我实在不知道怎么配合，例如唱歌跳舞朗诵那一类的，我就会问问其他班主任，向他们请教。

【Hui, 3 years, Grade Four】

5.2.2 Self-Efficacy in Management and Administration

Managing the classroom and accomplishing administrative work are important parts of a *banzhuren's* work. These include but are not limited to ensuring teaching activities run smoothly, ensuring students' safety, correcting students' bad habits or behaviours in both academic and non-academic aspects, and filling out various forms and documents that the school requires. While some of the *banzhurens* perceived a high self-efficacy in classroom management and administration, others felt the opposite. In response to the 7th item of self-efficacy assessment in the questionnaire, *I can handle conflicts among students effectively*, An and Fang both said they experienced difficulties caused by the students' parents when handling conflicts among students.

If children have conflicts at school, their parents may have a different perspective than the teachers. They can't tolerate their child being mistreated, and even a minor issue might be regarded as a school bully.

比如说有些孩子在学校跟别人闹矛盾了，他（家长）站的角度他就不一样，他不能忍受自己的孩子受委屈，有一点小事，他就可能上升到说是校园暴力。

【An, 29 years, Grade Five】

I feel lacking ability to communicate with Year One parents. The knowledge learned in Year One is relatively simple. Under this circumstance, parents may not pay much attention to their child's studies; they may be more concerned about whether their children have eaten well and whether they have been bullied. In some extreme cases, the minor fights between children can become a conflict between parents, making it more difficult to deal with.

我觉得跟家长沟通更困难一点。因为一年级学习的知识也比较简单，这个时候家长他也不太重视学习，他们可能更重视的是孩子今天是否吃饱了，有没有被欺负。有时候孩子之间一些很小的摩擦碰撞，就会上升到家长之间的一些矛盾上，这就很难跟他沟通。

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

In addition, Fang also indicated a low self-efficacy in making students aware of her expectations for them, which corresponds to the 5th item of the self-efficacy assessment in the questionnaire. She said:

After being a banzhuren for two to three years, this year, sometimes when I was looking at my students, I felt helpless and frustrated. I think I've tried my best, and I don't know what else I can do to help students change certain bad habits. Some of their bad habits just can't be changed no matter what I did, especially when I can't get support from students' parents.

现在干了两三年班主任，有时候我看着学生，会产生一种无力感，感觉沮丧。我觉得我已经想遍了各种方法，不知道再用什么方法去帮助学生改掉某个坏习惯，他们有的坏习惯就怎么样都改不掉，尤其是有时候还得不到家长的支持的时候

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

In contrast, Cui, an experienced banzhuren, demonstrated high self-efficacy in this aspect. She also shared an example of how she made a student who has behavioural issues aware of her expectations and helped him improve in his behaviour.

I believe I am good at assisting students with behavioural issues. Last year, I had a student in my class who exhibited significant behavioural problems. At the beginning of the school year, he would almost never remain seated at the start of each class and often wander around the campus. But I recognised he desired to be a good student and to receive teachers' praise, so I made it a point to commend him for any positive behaviours I observed. Concurrently, I deliver my additional expectations to him. After two to three months, his behaviour improved significantly, and even his other subject specialist teachers praised him in our office.

我还挺擅长纠正孩子的行为问题的。去年教的有一个学生，他在行为习惯特别不好。刚进入小学，没有什么纪律意识。上课铃声响的时候没有一次他是坐在教室座位上的，都是在校园里边到处闲逛的。其实他也自己也想学习好，也想得到老师的表扬。所以我只要发现他的优点就赶紧表扬他。当然在表扬他优点的同时，还会指出他还需要做哪些方面的努力。两三个月后，他就进步很大，其他老师也会在办公室跟我夸他，说他怎么变得那么好。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

Guo, who has been a *banzhuren* for 3 years, exhibited high self-efficacy in interacting with students. She said she expresses her concerns to her students generously, which corresponds to the 8th item of the self-efficacy assessment in the questionnaire: *create a safe and secure school environment for students*. Guo said:

I am getting along well with my students. For example, if someone has a cold or feels unwell, I'll ask how they're doing and remind them to drink water or take pills. This actually makes the students very happy, and they'll go home and share with their parents.

我和学生相处的比较好。时我喜欢和孩子谈谈心，或者说是他感冒、身体不舒服了我会问一下好点了没有，提醒他们喝水吃药。这样子其实学生他们也会很开心，他回家都会跟家长分享。

【Guo, 3 years, Grade Six】

5.2.3 Self-Efficacy in Instructional Strategy

Instructional-teaching-related self-efficacy was mentioned least by the participating banzhurens. Only two of them indicated their high self-efficacy in teaching: *Bing*, with over 20 years of experience as a banzhuren, and *Dong*, who with 4 years of experience. Both teach Mathematics.

I am good at researching different teaching methods, including writing lesson preparation plans or work perception.

其实我比较擅长的是研究一些特例课型，或者说是坐下来写一些教案、自己的感悟、工作经验总结这一类的。

【Bing, 24 years, Grade Two】

I feel confident in math teaching. Because I am banzhuren and teaching mathematics, compared with the other subjects, the discipline in my mathematics class is better and students usually get higher scores.

我感觉是做我的数学学科教学比较自信。因为我是班主任，那就是班主任所教的这一科肯定比其他科的成绩会稍好一点，或者是课堂纪律稍微好一点。

【Dong, 5 years, Grade Four】

In response to the first item of self-efficacy assessment in the questionnaire, An, an experienced banzhuren with 28 years of experience, expressed her helplessness in supporting students to learn better under the current education system, which prioritises academic achievement above all else. She said:

The subject of Morality and the Rule of Law that I teach is deeply intertwined with our everyday lives. However, in pursuit of better exam performance, students often resort to

rote memorising information from textbooks and classroom instruction. This approach significantly restricts their ability to think independently.

道德与法治本身是一个与生活联系很紧密的学科。但是因为这个学科要考试，一到考试的时候，孩子非常紧张，每天都是读啊背啊，束缚孩子的思维。

【An, 29 years, Grade Five】

In addition, two participants demonstrated low self-efficacy in the aspect of instructional strategy. Cui and Hui both said they struggled with tasks that were out of their teaching subjects and found it very challenging to coordinate school activities unrelated to their subjects:

Coordinating with the cultural and sports activities is quite challenging for me. If other teachers don't help in time, I wouldn't know how to guide my students to cooperate with the activities such as performing a roleplay from the textbook, rehearsing a musical performance, or other similar kinds of activities.

在学校组织的文体类活动上，我的困难很大，如果没有其他老师及时帮助我的话，我就不知道该怎么带我们班的学生去配合这个活动。比如说课本剧的表演，或者是我们要彩排一个音乐类的表演，或者是其他类似的对我来说比较困难。

【Hui, 3 years, Grade Four】

Executing tasks that are beyond the scope of the subject of the Chinese language is quite challenging. For example, our roleplay performance activity requires each class to perform a play according to the stories in the textbook, which is a bit beyond my expertise. I am a Chinese language teacher and am not professional in performance. Additionally, we need to arrange the scene, decorate, and prepare costumes for the students, all of which are unfamiliar tasks for me. I don't know how to do these things.

我个人感觉是执行那些超出我们语文学科范围的工作任务（比较困难）。比如我们的课本剧演活动，需要我们每个班级表演一个课本上的小故事，这个就有点超

出了我们语文老师的专业，我们也不会指导表演，再加上还要还要布置场景、做装饰、给学生准备表演服，这些都要全部都要弄。我们也不会弄这些。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

5.3 Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction

The thematic questions in the interviews related to banzhurens' job satisfaction were:

- *What aspect of your role as a banzhuren gives you the greatest satisfaction?*
- *Are there aspects of your role as a banzhuren that don't contribute to your job satisfaction?*
- *Do you think you will continue working as a banzhuren for a long term? Why/ why not?*

These questions aimed at exploring whether the participating banzhurens were satisfied with their job and the factors contributing to either job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The responses from the participants corresponded to three questionnaire items assessing each banzhuren's job satisfaction: (1) *I am satisfied with being a banzhuren*; (2) *So far, in the position of a banzhuren, I have gotten what I wanted*; and (3) *If I could choose my occupation again, I would still choose to be a banzhuren*.

5.3.1 Factors Contributing to Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction

The banzhurens' responses to the first question, *What aspect of your role as a banzhuren gives you the greatest satisfaction?* can be viewed as one aspect of the interpretations of the questionnaire item, *I am satisfied with being a banzhuren*. All seven participants stated that students are the main source of their job satisfaction, though their reasons varied. Hui, Cui, Fang, and Bing said they felt satisfied and had a sense of achievement when their students make progress in their academic performance, their learning habits and their living habits.

I feel that the sense of satisfaction in this job mainly comes from education itself. When I see the progress and growth in the children in my class, whether in their studies or their

lives, I actually feel quite happy. For example, after cooperating works with my students in some school activities, if we achieve some collective accomplishments, or I see progress in the personal growth of students, I have a sense of happiness.

我觉得这份工作满意度主要还是来源于教育本身。就是当你看到班里孩子，不管是学习还是生活上有一些进步一些成长的时候，其实还是很幸福的。包括在一些活动中，经过我们辛苦的准备，取得了一些集体成就之类的，或者在学生个人的成长方面有一些进步，都能让我获得幸福。

【Hui, 3 years, Grade Four】

Banzhuren will spend much more time with students, which brings me much happiness. I feel a great sense of satisfaction when seeing every little progress that children make under my help and patient guidance, especially the children who are falling behind in their studies or habits.

对于我来说，做班主任和孩子们相处时间比较多，这就带给我的快乐。我觉得看到孩子们的每一点进步。尤其是比如学习上或者是生活上习惯上稍微有点落后的这些孩子。他在你的帮助下、耐心的指导下，有了一点点进步，那时候就特别有满足感。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

Some of my students had no sense of boundaries at all at the beginning of the school year. I observed them gradually grow and develop, which provided me with a profound sense of achievement.

刚开学的时候感觉孩子非常没有边界感，我是看着他们慢慢的、一点一点的成长，感觉是在进步，这点我觉得很有成就感。

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

I feel more rewarded to see the improvements of the students who struggle with their studies. For example, when I was working in the middle school, there was a student who could only score a few points in his math exams at first. His parents were divorced, and he was a left-behind child; as his math teacher, I continuously helped and cared for him. After one or two months, he scored around 65 points out of 120 in math exams. Later on, he was able to score 80 to 90 points, which was very good for him. In the end, he was admitted to a very good high school.

感觉是对一些特殊孩子的转化方面，我会更有成就感。例如我原来带过一个中学的孩子，刚入学的时候他的数学考试就只能考几分，然后了解到他父母离异，还是留守儿童。在不断地对他进行帮助和关照下，能考到六七十分。咱们中学数学考试满分 120 分，再后来他就能考到八九十分，对他来说是很不错的，最后上了一个很不错的高中。

【Bing, 24 years, Grade Two】

Dong and Guo said their job satisfaction is mainly sourced from their student's class discipline.

For me, a sense of satisfaction comes from the teaching process. For example, when the classroom discipline is particularly good, and the children gain a lot in class, I will feel happy.

对我来说就是教学过程中，例如课堂纪律特别好，孩子收获特别多，就比较满足

【Dong, 5 years, Grade Four】

I feel it comes from the class discipline. If the children in the class are well behaved and other subject specialist teachers praise them, this can bring me a sense of achievement.

我感觉是班级的纪律这方面，如果班里的孩子挺乖的，挺好的，挺有眼色的，别的任课老师都夸，这种会比较满足。

【Guo, 3 years, Grade Six】

The seventh participant, An, said she feels satisfied with this job when she receives positive appreciation from her students:

The sense of satisfaction comes from students' appreciation. When the relationships between us are harmonious, and they genuinely like me, this will contribute to my job satisfaction. Furthermore, it gives a sense of accomplishment when the former students still remember me after they graduated.

满足感的就是你的学生认可你，孩子之间的关系处理的很融洽，孩子很喜欢你。特别是有往届学生毕业了以后，这孩子还能再想起来，感觉这相对比较有成就感。

【An, 29 years, Grade Five】

An also mentioned that her job satisfaction would be increased if her class was granted an award of *Outstanding Class* at the end of the year, because this would mean the school acknowledged her efforts.

5.3.2 Factors Impacting Banzhurens Satisfaction: Heavy workload

The heavy workload was frequently mentioned by participants as a significant factor that decreases job satisfaction. There are several aspects to this. The first is **Working overtime**, which is common for banzhurens. Although primary schools typically finish teaching between 5:30 and 6:00 pm (although this varies with different schools), banzhurens often extend their work hours to complete additional tasks, which invades their rest time. For example, Hui said:

Under normal circumstances, I usually work overtime for about an hour. If there are other tasks, like preparing for a public lecture, it could go on until 8 or 9 o'clock. I feel that

this one hour of overtime after daily work encroaches on my rest time. But I've somewhat gotten used to it now.

通常情况都会加班，一般加班时间在一个小时左右，如果有一些其他任务，比如说让讲公开课或者其他任务的话，就可能会加到八九点。所以每天下班后的这一小时加班我觉得是挤占了我的休息时间。但是怎么说呢，现在也有点习以为常了。

【Hui, 3 years, Grade Four】

The balance between the banzhurens' personal life and work is also adversely impacted because of working overtime. As Cui said, there is not a clear division between work time and lifetime:

Work is invading my rest time, and sometimes there are job tasks to be done on weekends as well. We're on duty at the school all day. After overseeing the students leaving for home, we still need to communicate with their parents, so we basically leave around 7 pm. Now we don't know when is work time or family time. Especially from Monday to Friday, there is no family time; it's all about work.

工作占用了休息时间，包括周六周日的时候有时候有一些工作也需要去做。我们等于说全天制都在学校。把学生送走后，我们还要跟家长再沟通，基本上都是 7 点才走现在都不知道什么时候什么是工作，什么是家庭，尤其是星期一到星期五的时候，就没有家庭，都是工作。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

During the day, banzhurens are occupied with various tasks at school and parents are busy with their own jobs. Therefore, phone communication with parents outside school hours is common and constitutes another form of overtime. Dong and Bing commented on how this encroaches on banzhurens' rest time and leads to a "24-hour" work cycle.

The banzhuren is basically on call 24 hours a day. Because some parents may suddenly have something to communicate with me at night. For example, if a student has a problem

in class, the parent will only find out after picking up the child in the evening, and then they will come to me for feedback.

班主任，基本上可以说是 24 小时在线的。因为可能有些家长晚上突然就有个事情跟我沟通。比如学生如果在其他课堂上出现了问题，只有晚上家长接到孩子了以后才会发现，那么他这时候就会来给班主任反馈。

【Dong, 5 years, Grade Four】

Parents of lower-grade students are very concerned about their children. They will occasionally call you to ask about some petty matters, which will occupy the rest time that belongs to me. Some of the children's grandparents will also occasionally call me to ask about the child's situation. I feel that my life quality has been affected.

因为低学段的家长他们非常关注自己的孩子，他会不时的给我打电话，询问一些很小的事儿，然后就会占据本来属于我自己的休息时间，包括现在有很多孩子的爷爷奶奶照顾的，他们也会不时的打电话来问孩子的情况，这也会影响自己的生活。

【Bing, 24 years, Grade Two】

Another reflection of banzhurens' heavy workload and a reason for working overtime is that their lesson preparation time is heavily squeezed. As the daily routine displayed in Section 5.1.1 illustrates, banzhurens' time is mostly occupied by daily activities, except for the lessons taught by the subject specialist teachers. Thus, as mentioned by Fang and Dong, most banzhurens need to prepare lessons after school time:

I feel that there is not enough time for lesson preparation. I communicated with the leaders that there is absolutely no time for lesson preparation during the day, and preparation can only be done after school. I don't have any time during the day at all.

Look at our daily schedule: except for the lessons taught by other subject specialist teachers, banzhuren is staying with the students all the time.

我觉得是备课时间不够，前段时间也跟领导沟通说完全没有备课时间，备课只能放到放学之后，白天一天完全没时间。你看我们一天的工作流程，学生除了上非语文课的时候，其他时间班主任全部全程都跟学生在一块。

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

I feel like there's no time to prepare lessons. I'm busy with the duties of banzhuren during the day, and I can only focus on math teacher work when I get home at night. Lesson preparation has to be done in the evenings.

我感觉没有时间备课，白天忙班主任工作，晚上回家才能忙数学老师的工作。备课要放在晚上了。

【Dong, 5 years, Grade Four】

Even when they do not have lessons, there are other unscheduled tasks that come up. As Cui said:

There are many unexpected works that need to be done every day. We just want to sit down together and really discuss how to teach a certain lesson and then apply it in our classrooms. Teaching time is what we lack the most.

每天都会有不同的事情出现在面前。我觉得我们就想真真正正坐在一起，去教研一下某节课怎么上，回归到我们课堂上，教学时间是最缺乏的。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

Additionally, tasks unrelated to teaching encroach on banzhurens' work time, leaving no time for lesson preparation. An said:

Teachers are also required to do various forms of training courses, as well as various forms to complete. I feel like I am dealing with multiple things every day. Let alone banzhurens, there's rarely any time for me to sit down quietly and mark homework or prepare lessons.

我都感觉每天我的主要工作都在在应付各种各样的表格和学习任务，让人感觉你每天都是在应付各种各样的东西。别说班主任了，我都很少有时间坐这儿，能静心把作业批改一下，把课备一下，没有时间。

【An, 29 years, Grade Five】

Excessive school activities also contribute another layer of workload to banzhurens. Currently, each semester features numerous school activities initiated by the school, themed around various subjects, and grouped by each class. These activities require significant preparation time. The banzhuren and the students need to prepare for them, which mostly occupies all their non-class time. Hui said:

Most of the activities are led and coordinated by banzhurens, which means we have more job tasks than subject specialist teachers. It may take about two weeks for each activity. About one week for preparation and then holding the activity in the second week. During the event, most of the banzhurens' rest time will be squeezed out. If there is a large-scale activity, we will be very busy for a whole day.

如果学校组织的活动比较多的话，大部分的活动都会由班主任来组织，也就是比任课教师多了很多这种活动。大概一场活动需要两周左右的时间，准备一周左右，然后在第二周举行这个活动。如果这样的话，班主任大部分的休息时间都会被挤占。如果说要组织大型活动的话，基本上一天就会非常忙。

【Hui, 3 years, Grade Four】

During peak periods, a school might even have two to three significant events in one week. An described her experience:

Various activities take up the most time of banzhurens. The school organises numerous activities, and we nearly have two to three events every week. For example, last week, the first activity was evaluating and assessing our students' calligraphy work, which is a challenging task. We've been preparing for this event since the beginning of this semester, and it requires everyone's involvement. The second major event was a Chinese language subject activity, a classic recitation. This large-scale event is organised by all Chinese language teachers and lasts for three days. Sometimes, I feel that teachers and students have to spend much more attention on school activities instead of academic learning. Class time is also squeezed by activity preparation. I have to teach as quickly as I can to ensure all the key points are covered before the final exam.

现在学校组织的活动名目繁多，我们学校每星期都举行两三场活动。比如上周，第一个活动是我们书法基地校验收，这是个大任务也是硬任务，我们从这学期开学到现在一直在准备这个活动。这个活动（结束后），还有一个大型活动是学科活动，经典诵读。这个大型活动是以学科为单位，语文老师负责，延续了三天，我们现在都感觉活动都成主业了，其他的都是副业了，抽空上课。上课的时候像流水一样快速的讲完（知识点），不然到期中考试、期末考试就讲不完。

【An, 29 years, Grade Five】

Banzhurens often feel uncertain about the purposes of these activities and whether they can accomplish them. For example, Fang and Cui said:

Sometimes I feel that some tasks make little difference whether they are done or not such as choir competitions. I feel that students and teachers are tired, and I don't see the

benefits. It may be because I haven't participated in such large-scale activities before, so I lack experience, and my communication skills with students are not good enough.

有一些活动，比如说合唱比赛，我就觉得学生累老师也累，我不知道意义在哪可能是我也之前也没有参与过这么大型的活动，经验也不够，然后跟学生之间沟通开展的也不好。

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

I think there are quite a lot of school activities now. We can't say it is unnecessary; in fact, each activity is necessary. However, there are just too many things to do now, which makes us feel like we can't really finish them well, and it's hard to explore the real value of each activity.

感觉现在主要是学校的活动比较多，不能说没有必要做，其实每一个活动包括我们班主任需要传达给学生的每一项事情，它都是有必要的。但是现在要做的事情太多了，让我们觉着没办法真真正正的深入的、把这件事情的价值给体现出来。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

The **long work time** and continuous overtime would leave some of the participating *banzhurens* exhausted after teaching all day, leading them to have no interest in any other entertainment or social life. This can also explain the questionnaire item *I feel burned out from my work*. Fang shared her feelings:

I don't have a personal life at all. On the weekends, I just want to lie in bed and rest. I do not want to participate in any leisure activities. I feel very tired. On weekdays, when I get home at night, I don't want to go out, either. There's basically no entertainment for me after work. I don't want to talk to anyone, and communication with my family is also minimal. When I talk to my family about work issues, I can get quite emotional and even have breakdowns. That's the situation I have.

我完全没有个人生活，我周六周天放假只想躺床上休息，就完全没有不想有娱乐活动，感觉很累。晚上回家也不想出门，只想躺着休息。晚上对基本没有娱乐的，也不想跟人家说话啥的，跟自己家人沟通也很少。有时候跟家里边沟通我工作的问题的时候情绪也比较崩溃，反正就是这种情况。

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

5.3.3 Factors Impacting Banzhuren's Satisfaction: The Limited Benefits of Taking the Role of Banzhuren.

Through analysing participants' responses, it can be concluded that the advantages of taking the role of banzhuren are limited either in the aspect of **professional development** or in the aspect of **financial support**, giving more implications to the questionnaire item *So far, in the position of a banzhuren, I have gotten what I wanted.*

Aiming to improve primary and middle school teachers' passion, professional knowledge and research ability in teaching, the Chinese educational system has established a rigorous professional promotion mechanism (Chen & Peng, 2016). Professional titles are generally divided into three levels: senior, intermediate, and junior. The senior level is divided into senior and associated senior. The junior level is divided into the assistant level and the staff level. According to the notice published by the Department of Human Resources and Social Security and the Department of Education of Henan Province (2022), the professional titles of teachers are pursued step by step, and there are different requirements for teachers who are aiming for promotion to a higher level. Under the overall professional promotion mechanism, each school has its own point system to assess whether teachers are qualified for promotion to a higher professional title.

Although being a banzhuren does give a teacher more points, it has limited advantages. For example, teachers need to have at least three years of working experience in student

management, which is a necessary requirement for those who aim to pursue middle-level professional titles. Being a banzhuren is just one kind of work related to student management.

An said:

Being a banzhuren can add some points for teachers promoting higher professional qualifications, but it is limited. Every teacher can get this kind of point after working for a certain number of years. This is achievable for everyone. Moreover, receiving the “Excellent Banzhuren” award at the city level will contribute points towards the promotion of a professional title.

当班主任也能在评职称的时候加分，加分到一定程度就不加了。这个加分是每个人都能达到的，比如说你干够多少年的时候加多少分，这个干够多少年是每个人都能达到的。还有，如果能评上市级优秀班主任，对职称晋级也有帮助

【An, 29 years, Grade Five】

As well, being a banzhuren does not give a teacher many additional points. Teachers can gain points in other ways, such as having a higher education background, hosting a teaching research project, or being granted certificates for excellent teaching ability or educational activities. The number of different levels of teachers’ professional qualifications is limited within a specific school or city, which means teachers need to compete with their colleagues. Banzhurens’ work tasks also consume a great deal of time and energy, leaving them with insufficient time to prepare for other teaching and research activities and projects that significantly contribute to their career development. Hence, banzhurens are at a disadvantage to some extent when competing with their colleagues who are not banzhurens. Hui and Fang said:

Banzhuren will be affected by class-related matters, which could take more time. However, these class-related matters are not beneficial for my personal professional development.

如果当班主任的话，可能就会因为班级的其他一些事物影响到我，可能就会占用更多时间，但是对我个人的专业发展上起到作用可能并不会太大。

【Hui, 3 years, Grade Four】

I don't think banzhuren has the advantage in career promotion in our school. When it comes to promoting professional titles, research projects and papers are more important. Being a banzhuren doesn't offer much advantage, basically none. In fact, I've noticed that math teachers actually were faster in their professional title promotion than Chinese language teachers. I think it is because they have a bit more time for teaching research. As Chinese Language teachers, we just fulfil the formality of school tasks because we don't have time to research. Even if we have time, we want to rest a bit.

在我们学校的话就我觉得没有优势，我们学校评职称他看的就是你的课题成果、论文这种，班主任的话就没有优基本上没有优势。其实我就发现一个现象数学老师他的专业发展其实比语文老师更快，因为我觉得他们时间上更充足一点，包括教研上他们的时间用的也更充裕一点。语文学科（教研）方面有时候我们就是走个形式，因为我们又没有时间，有时间我们想休息一下。

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

As for financial support, a banzhuren receives an additional allowance of Yuan 500 (approximately AUD100) per month); however, this allowance fails to compensate for their contributions and sacrifices at school and thus does not make the role of banzhuren attractive to teachers. According to Hui and Cui:

Allowance for banzhurens is ¥ 500 per month, but compared to other subject specialist teachers, banzhurens' workload is much higher, and we have to constantly worry about things in the class.

班主任津贴目前是 500 块每个月，但是和其他任课教师相比的话，工作任务多了很多，要一直操心班里面的事情。

【Hui, 3 years, Grade Four】

Listen to my voice; it's been hoarse for so long, and the money I spent on medical treatment is more than ¥ 500. But it hasn't improved, so ¥ 500 really has no appeal anymore.

你听我这嗓子已经哑了这么长时间，光治病花的钱都不止 500，但是身体还是没有好，所以 500 块钱确实已经没有吸引力了。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

5.3.4 Teachers' Willingness to Continue Serving as Banzhurens

Many participants expressed a sense of helplessness when asked about their willingness to continue as banzhurens, viewing it as inevitable. As discussed in Section 5.1.3, taking the role of a banzhuren is decided by school leaders, which limits a teacher's autonomy. When asked if they could make their own decisions, most of the participants expressed their unwillingness to be a banzhuren. Their reasons are related to the earlier discussions, including the exhaustion and stress associated with the role of a banzhuren, compounded by excessive workload. The participants' comments analysed in this section explain the questionnaire item: *If I could choose my occupation again, I would still choose to be a banzhuren*. Hui, Dong, Fang, and An said they would be reluctant to do so:

From my point of view, I actually don't want to be a banzhuren. It takes up a lot of personal time. If I'm not a banzhuren, I might have more rest time or time to do other things. For example, if I have no class at some time, although I don't have a break, I might be preparing lessons or preparing a public lecture which is beneficial for my professional development.

其实就是个人主观意义上来说，我其实不太想当班主任。因为挤占了很多的个人时间。不当班主任的话，可能会有更多的休息时间，或者是自己的时间去做其他事情。比如某节不是我的课，虽然我也没有休息，但是我可能在备课或者是我在准备一节精品课，这对个人专业发展是有好处的。

【Hui, 3 years, Grade Four】

I'm not very willing to do it. Because being a banzhuren is working under a high-pressure. If someone doesn't have a strong sense of responsibility, they might not care. But if I really want to do this job well, it's quite exhausting.

不太愿意。因为班主任高压的工作，我感觉是高压的工作。如果是那种责任心不太强的人，可能也觉得无所谓。但是我要真的想把这这份工作干好的话真是挺耗费精力。

【Dong, 5 years, Grade Four】

If I had a choice, I don't think I would be a banzhuren again. It is too exhausting. I think there probably aren't any conditions that would make me voluntarily become a banzhuren.

我能选的话不会当（班主任）的，太累了。对我来说我觉得应该没有啥条件能让我主动当班主任。

【Fang, 4 years, Grade One】

I think no one would answer "Yes" if you were to ask other teachers. One of the most difficult tasks for schools is assigning banzhurens every year, as no teachers want to undertake it. Banzhurens face various school evaluations of their classes. These evaluations occur weekly, and the results directly reflect banzhurens' work performance. Moreover, students' parents and public opinion also impose significant stress on teachers.

你去问别的老师这个问题我觉得没有人会给你肯定的答复。现在学校每年分任务，最难分的就是班主任，没人愿意当班主任。班主任要面临学校对这个班级各种各样的考评，考评结果每周都要排名，排名结果就是你的工作成绩。另外家长和社会舆论也给班主任造成很大压力。

【An, 29 years, Grade Five】

Bing and Cui indicated they might voluntarily choose to continue as banzhuren, but not because of their passion for or satisfaction with the role. Bing's motivation stems from her familiarity with it.

I think I might still continue. Because I've been a banzhuren for so many years, if suddenly I'm told not to be a banzhuren anymore, I don't think I can completely let go of this responsibility. The sense of responsibility is still in my heart, so I might continue to be a banzhuren.

我觉得可能还会的吧。因为已经当了这么多年的班主任了，如果突然说不做班主任了，我也不觉得自己可以这个事完全放下来。心里这份责任感还在，所以可能还会继续当班主任。

【Bing, 24 years, Grade Two】

Cui's reason for still choosing to remain a banzhuren was her unwillingness to take on extensive teaching tasks:

This question is also quite tricky. Because if I am not a banzhuren, there are still many things that need to be done. I think it depends on the individual teacher's situation. If I were to choose again now, I think I might still choose to be a banzhuren. If I don't, I have to teach two or even more subjects, which means more teaching tasks.

这个问题也挺纠结的。因为如果不当班主任的话，也还是有很多的事情需要去做。我觉得是根据老师情况的不同，如果要是现在让我再选的话，我觉得我可能还会选班主任。不当班主任的话，就得去教两个甚至更多学科，有更多的教学任务。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

5.4 Suggestions for Improving the Job Attraction of a Banzhuren

The participating banzhurens suggestions for improving the job attraction of banzhuren were closely related to job dissatisfaction: they lacked effective strategies to reduce the current workload. Nonetheless, some suggested that having a teacher assistant responsible for all class administration and management could improve conditions, allowing them to focus solely on educating. For example, Cui said:

Actually, I think the role of a banzhuren should be designated as a separate position that deals with the class administration work solely. Teaching a subject is already quite difficult, requiring specialised knowledge and continuous learning by teachers.

Similarly, the work of a banzhuren also requires more specialised knowledge, as well as more time and effort to be invested. It's like one person taking on two roles, one in teaching and one in management, and both roles need to be done well.

其实我觉得应该单独划分出来一个岗位做班级的行政工作。本来学科教学工作就比较深奥，需要专业知识的，需要教师不断学习。那班主任工作其实也需要更多的专业化知识，也需要更多的时间和精力去投入的。现在（班主任）是一个人担了两份工作，一个教学，一个管理，两个都要做好。

【Cui, 18 years, Grade One】

Two of the younger banzhurens indicated that a higher allowance could be more appealing. However, one of them, Guo, also noted that a slight increase in class teachers' allowances would still fall short of addressing banzhurens' needs.

5.5 Conclusion to the Chapter

This chapter provided a comprehensive analysis of the interview data concerning the roles, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction of banzhurens. Firstly, it illustrated the multifaceted nature of a banzhuren's daily routine, often described as similar to being the students' "moms", highlighting the constant multiple tasks and wide responsibilities involved. The chapter also discussed the distinctions between banzhuren and subject specialist teachers, as well as how the teachers were assigned to the position of banzhuren. The second section shared the participants' perceptions of their self-efficacy in interpersonal support, management capabilities, and instructional strategies. Among these, communicating with students' families was mentioned the most in the interviews. In the third section, the chapter analysed factors influencing banzhurens' job satisfaction. Students' improvements were found to enhance satisfaction, while other factors, such as frequently working overtime, long worktime, emotional exhaustion, excessive school activities and insufficient rewards, negatively affected their motivation. Moreover, many banzhurens expressed reluctance to continue in the role without substantial improvements in working conditions and support. Finally, based on the findings, several practical suggestions were offered to improve the attractiveness of the banzhuren position.

Chapter 6 Discussion and Findings

6.1 Introduction to the Chapter

This study has sought to obtain a deeper understanding of primary school banzhurens' job satisfaction through a sequential mixed-methods research design. First, a quantitative method was implemented to investigate the potential relationships between primary school banzhurens' self-efficacy, burnout and job satisfaction. Subsequently, a qualitative method was employed to gain a deeper understanding of banzhurens' working status, along with how burnout, self-efficacy, and other factors influence their job satisfaction. This chapter discusses and summarises the main findings from both the quantitative and qualitative methods, thus addressing the three research questions:

1. What are the relationships among banzhurens' job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout?
2. Are there factors beyond self-efficacy and burnout that also influence banzhurens' job satisfaction?
3. What are the possible ways to improve banzhurens' job satisfaction?

Section 6.1 first addresses the initial research question, which concerns the contribution and impact of self-efficacy and burnout on banzhurens' job satisfaction. Section 6.2 explores other factors influencing banzhurens' job satisfaction, as identified in the interviews, to gain a better understanding of their job. Finally, based on the results from the survey and interviews, Section 6.3 provides some possible ways to improve banzhurens' job satisfaction. Finally, Section 6.4 summarised this chapter.

6.1 What Are the Relationships Among Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction, Self-Efficacy and Burnout

This section addresses the first research question: *What are the relationships among banzhurens' job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout?* The discussions in each sub-section are organised according to the sequence of hypothesis testing. Section 6.1.1 discusses Hypotheses 1 and 4: *Banzhurens' self-efficacy positively affects their job satisfaction, and banzhurens' self-efficacy mediates the effect of their burnout on job satisfaction.* Section 6.2.2 discusses Hypotheses 2 and 3: *Banzhurens' burnout negatively affects their self-efficacy and job satisfaction.*

6.1.1 The Effects of Self-efficacy on Job Satisfaction

In the current study, the participating banzhurens scored an average of 5.24 out of 7 in their self-efficacy, suggesting that they possessed a mild sense of confidence in dealing with their work tasks. It is worth noting that among the 12 items of self-efficacy assessment, the only item with a score below 5 is *"I can communicate my ideas and perspectives with leadership"* (mean rating of 4.41 ± 1.59). This indicates that the banzhurens would prefer supportive school environments where they would feel comfortable expressing their ideas to school leaders. This quantitative finding is also echoed in the interview data (see Section 5.2.1): An stated that her school leaders preferred to hear praise rather than constructive feedback, and Fang indicated that her school leaders tended to impose more requirements on her when she sought support. This may be because, in some schools in China, school leaders usually adopt a bureaucratic leadership approach enhanced by professional strategies (Zhang et al., 2022), leading the authorities to value only praise and effort, while discouraging suggestions and demands.

Similar findings are scarce in previous studies. A possible reason may be that the studies on banzhurens' self-efficacy in the context of China have not gained much attention. Another

reason might be that although many Western studies have focused on teachers' self-efficacy, they investigated teachers' self-efficacy in instruction and classroom management situations and not in interactions with leadership.

The first hypothesis posited in the quantitative component of this research is that banzhurens' self-efficacy positively influences their job satisfaction. This relationship was confirmed through structural equation modelling. That is, banzhurens' job satisfaction will increase if their self-efficacy increases. This positive relationship has also been reported in Canada (Klassen & Chiu, 2010), Romania (Ortan et al., 2021), Germany (Jentsch et al., 2023), and Australia (Granziera & Perera, 2019). A possible reason for the positive influence of self-efficacy on job satisfaction may be that teachers with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to accept and try new teaching methods and classroom management strategies and to pursue better work conditions that support their efforts, all of which may lead to effective teaching, as measured by student academic achievement (Caprara et al., 2006; Klassen & Tze, 2014), as well as by less job stress and burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010).

The fourth hypothesis about banzhurens' self-efficacy mediating the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction was tested as valid. This result indicates that banzhurens' self-efficacy can eliminate the negative influence of their burnout on job satisfaction. In other words, self-efficacy can be regarded as a protective factor against burnout (Shoji et al., 2016). This can be interpreted from the perspective of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997). According to this theory, self-efficacy shapes how individuals interpret and respond to their environment. Teachers with higher self-efficacy tend to view challenging situations as manageable and maintain their motivation, which helps to mitigate the negative impact of burnout on job satisfaction. Thus, a teacher with a high level of self-efficacy may not feel very dissatisfied with their job even if they feel burned out.

Despite the quantitative findings of this study demonstrating the positive influence of banzhurens' self-efficacy on job satisfaction, the participants did not explicitly mention the positive effect of self-efficacy on their job satisfaction during their interviews. Given that banzhurens have complex workplaces involving school leaders, colleagues, students, parents, and educational departments, many factors within this environment, such as interpersonal relationships, salary and school resources, as well as the student-related factors mentioned in Section 5.3.1, may be more directly perceived by teachers when assessing their job satisfaction. The influence of self-efficacy might therefore not be strongly recognised.

6.1.2 The Effects of Burnout

The results of the quantitative research showed that the participating banzhurens indicated a slight dissatisfaction with their roles (score of 3.50 out of 7), although banzhurens with extensive years of experience demonstrated a higher level of job satisfaction. Burnout was verified as significantly negatively influencing Banzhuren's job satisfaction. Thus, the third hypothesis was confirmed: banzhurens' job satisfaction will decrease if their burnout increases. The negative relationships between banzhurens' burnout and job satisfaction were also found in previous Chinese studies (e.g., Yang, 2016). Regarding the impacts of different dimensions of burnout, studies from Asian and Western countries (Skkalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Yorulmaz et al., 2017) reported a stronger impact of emotional exhaustion than that of depersonalisation. Although this current study did not analyse the relationships among the dimensions of each factor in structural equation modelling, the stronger impact of emotional exhaustion was supported by the interviews with the participating banzhurens. When talking about their feelings about being a banzhuren and the reason why they were unwilling to continually take up the role of banzhuren, the words they mentioned were related to emotional exhaustion: "tired (累)", "high-pressure (压力大)", and "exhausting (精疲力尽)".

The second hypothesis proposed that burnout negatively impacts banzhurens' self-efficacy; this relationship was confirmed through structural equation modelling. The negative association between burnout and self-efficacy has also been reported by Shoji et al. (2016) and Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010). The theoretical framework of self-efficacy employed by Bandura (1977) and Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) in their studies comprised four fundamental sources of self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states. Bandura (1977) pointed out that the level of emotional and physiological arousal could influence a person's self-perception of their efficacy on the job. By extension, when banzhurens frequently experienced negative mental feelings such as emotional exhaustion, tiredness or depersonalisation, their confidence in handling work tasks would also be expected to decline. In contrast, the experience of positive emotions at work such as joy, happiness, and a sense of achievement would be expected to contribute to the development of banzhurens' self-efficacy.

The questionnaire results indicate that the participating banzhurens had a moderate level of burnout (4.49 out of 7). This numerical result suggests that banzhurens did not have a high level of burnout. Similarly, during their interviews, the participants did not appear to be in a state of exhaustion or overwhelm. However, they did mention that if given the choice, they would not continue as banzhurens, finding the job too exhausting. This result could be explained by the influence of Chinese culture on participants' own perceived cut-off points for burnout (Schaufeli & Van Dierendonck, 1995). Under the influence of Confucian culture, most Chinese teachers choose to avoid radical expression in their words or actions; controlling their emotions at a moderate level is the core philosophy of Confucian culture, *Zhongyong* thinking (the Doctrine of the Mean, 中庸之道) (Soto et al., 2005). Furthermore, one of the fundamental values of teacher morality as established by the Confucian school is "be eager to learn and tireless in teaching others (学而不厌, 诲人不倦)" (Jiang, 2023). This may lead them to feel

ashamed to express their feelings of exhaustion regarding their profession. Thus, even if they feel the job of being a banzhuren is extremely tiring, most of them would still not label it a high level of burnout or exhaustion.

Although the average level of burnout is moderate, two items under the emotional exhaustion dimension had a score over 5 out of 7 (i.e., an indication of agreement): *I feel burned out from my work*, and *I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job*. The sense of burnout among the banzhurens was also evident in the interviews, particularly Fang's (see Section 5.3.2), who expressed limited interest in personal social life due to exhaustion from work. One reason the banzhurens felt burnout might be the heavy workload they were bored with, which was also discussed in Section 5.3.2. The banzhurens needed to spend a lot of energy to complete the various aspects of their job tasks. Referring to the participants' comments in Sections 5.1.1, 5.1.2, and Section 5.3.2 of Chapter 5, they stated that in addition to their teaching duties, they were responsible not only for students' overall well-being but also for providing support to subject specialist teachers in their own classes if necessary. Heavy workload causing burnout is also reported in previous studies (e.g. Jomuaud et al., 2021).

Another reason for feeling burnt out might be due to unexpected job tasks. As Cui (see Section 5.3.2) mentioned, most of the banzhurens' job tasks were ad hoc, unplanned and fragmented. They included handling students' emergencies, managing class administrative work with short notice, and responding to unexpected phone calls from parents. All of these greatly interrupted the banzhurens' routine work. Faced with these job features, the banzhurens were likely to experience an increased sense of burnout and thus decreased job satisfaction.

In addition, while traditional culture may discourage teachers from openly expressing burnout, the same cultural and modern standard of teacher morality expectations paradoxically

intensify their psychological strain and emotional exhaustion (refer to Section 2.5.2). In modern educational contexts, banzhurens may feel obligated to suppress personal needs and continuously devote themselves to students' moral and academic growth, even at the expense of their own well-being. Such persistent self-sacrifice and emotional suppression can result in chronic stress and emotional exhaustion—core components of burnout—despite their outward composure and endurance.

In conclusion, the quantitative data from this study revealed the negative impacts of burnout on the participating banzhurens' self-efficacy and job satisfaction while also showing positive effects of self-efficacy on job satisfaction, with self-efficacy acting as a mediating factor against the negative impacts of burnout on job satisfaction. The qualitative data highlighted the negative effects of perceived burnout, with no recognisable positive influences of self-efficacy. Although the participants did not explicitly perceive the role of self-efficacy in job satisfaction, the interview data provides valuable insights for school leaders and education department officials in their efforts to enhance job satisfaction among banzhurens.

6.2 What Are the Other Factors Influencing Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction?

This section aims to elaborate on the factors influencing banzhuren's job satisfaction identified in the interviews in response to RQ2: Are there factors beyond self-efficacy and burnout that also influence banzhurens job satisfaction?

6.2.1. Students' Academic and Non-Academic Progress and Behaviours in Schools

When interviewed about the factors contributing to their job satisfaction, as analysed in Section 5.3.1, the participating banzhurens' responses predominantly centred on their students' achievements, personal growth and academic improvements, along with classroom discipline and the appreciation the students expressed towards them. It is not surprising that the teachers viewed students as the primary source of their job satisfaction; after all, students' development

is the main focus of their work. As participant An mentioned (see Section 5.1.1), banzhurens often fulfilled the role of students' "school moms", indicating that, unlike subject specialist teachers who primarily concentrate on teaching a specific subject, banzhurens emphasise students' comprehensive development rather than solely focusing on just their academic achievements.

The reason banzhurens place such importance on students' personal development may be understood from two perspectives: policy and culture. First, the educational policy, Regulations on the Work of Primary and Secondary School Banzhurens (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2009), emphasises that the job responsibilities of banzhurens should focus on students' moral and ethical development. This suggests that school leaders and banzhurens should view students' healthy spiritual development as one of the direct indications of their effectiveness. Second, as a representation of Chinese Confucian culture, the school emphasises how teachers must cultivate their own morality if they are to provide support and guidance to students on *how to be a person* (Qian, 2011). According to the fundamental requirements of teachers outlined in "*Shī Shuō*" (《师说》 (*Comments on Teachers*) by Han Yu (802 CE), the primary responsibility of teachers is to provide spiritual guidance, followed by imparting knowledge and addressing students' questions (Chen & Xie, 2014). Spiritual guidance includes helping students shape their values, worldviews, and outlooks on life, enabling them to understand the principles of being a good person and their responsibilities to society. As well, Confucius's statement that "habits formed in youth become second nature (少成若天性, 习惯成自然)" (Ban, 2012), emphasises the importance of developing good habits and behaviour during one's early years because they often shape one's character and become deeply embedded in how one lives and acts in later life. In contrast, if a child's inappropriate habits and moral issues are not intervened with promptly, they might affect the rest of that

individual's life. For banzhurens, therefore, developing a child's character and moral values in the primary school years is crucial and regarded as one of their "significant work tasks".

In summary, the influence of Chinese educational policies and traditional culture, and the progress and growth of students regarding learning, habits (both academic and non-academic), behaviours, morals, and ethics serve as significant affirmations of the participating banzhurens' efforts and can account for their job satisfaction.

6.2.2 Workload

In contrast, a significant contributor to the banzhurens' job *dissatisfaction* identified through the interviews was the imposition of overwhelming workloads, as reflected in long working times and too many tasks. First, as illustrated in Figure 5.1, a banzhuren typically arrives at school in the early morning and leaves in the late evening, a total of 11 hours, 5 days a week. As also discussed in previous studies (e.g., Pan & Zhang, 2017), these total weekly working hours greatly exceed the average of 44 hours mandated by the Labour Law of the People's Republic of China (National People's Congress, 1995). Moreover, as the participants mentioned in their interviews (Section 5.3.2), they worked overtime for almost an hour every day and remained on call for 24 hours, even on weekends. This encroachment on their personal rest time has greatly affected their emotional and physical health, ultimately impacting their job attitudes and overall job satisfaction.

Second, the burden of excessive non-teaching-related tasks exacerbated the banzhurens' job dissatisfaction. Banzhurens have a broad work scope and responsibilities that extend beyond teaching to encompass all aspects of classroom affairs. Geng (2018) found that banzhurens spent over half of their work time on job tasks unrelated to teaching. Such tasks were also mentioned participants in this study in relation to online or offline learning (An in Section 5.3.2), frequent extracurricula school activities (Hui and An Section 5.3.2),

communication with students' parents (Section 5.2.1), and various inspections by school or education departments (An in Section 5.3.4). Other studies have also alluded to the seemingly endless administrative forms and paperwork (Lin, 2020).

The various job tasks unrelated to teaching also consumed time and energy that the participating banzhurens could have invested in lesson preparation and students' moral education, rather than needing to work overtime, as stated by Hui (Section 5.3.2). This led to them questioning the true essence of their profession. In combination, the heavy workload, hectic school life, and lack of time for recovery greatly contributed to their emotional exhaustion, ultimately leading to a decline in job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020) and even posing a risk to physical health (Madigan et al., 2023). More importantly, the participants frequently mentioned the other various school activities occupying much of their time. According to Hui and Cui's statements (see Section 5.2.3), many of these activities were often unrelated to the subjects they taught, and the lack of relevant knowledge and skills to coordinate these activities caused them to struggle. Such complaints about excessive school activities were not found in the previous studies, suggesting that this issue may be a distinctive characteristic of the educational system within the specific city where this research was conducted.

6.2.3 Stress

The interviewees also indicated that stress was another factor that impeded banzhurens' job satisfaction. The negative relationship between stress and job satisfaction has also been reported in previous studies (e.g., Jentsch et al., 2023; Parveen & Bano, 2019). This section elaborates on the possible causes of job dissatisfaction from four aspects: the banzhurens' inner pride, school leaders, social opinion, and students' parents.

The teachers who are selected to take up the role of banzhurens are usually those who have relatively high capability and a good sense of responsibility. These teachers often have

high expectations of themselves. Dong (see Section 5.3.4) said she felt a banzhuren's job was highly pressured and exhausting because he had a strong sense of responsibility and wanted to do this job well. However, it is difficult to achieve perfection when managing multiple complex work tasks, especially for young banzhurens who often have high expectations for their work performance and outcomes (Zhang, 2023). Therefore, given the gap between reality and excellence, they may exert pressure on themselves and, in turn, undermine their motivation and job satisfaction.

Another possible reason that banzhurens possess a strong sense of responsibility is the enduring influence of traditional Confucian culture. Except for the requirements of teacher morality discussed in Section 2.5, a widely circulated saying in Confucianism that shapes the quality of perseverance among the Chinese people is “Where there is a will, there is a way”, which emphasises that one can ultimately achieve success as long as one possesses ambition and puts in the effort. Banzhurens are even more likely to be guided by this saying because the whole society, including themselves, views teachers as the models for students. Hence, they will push themselves to do their job well, even though it causes them additional stress.

The high expectations that school leaders place on banzhurens can also greatly increase their stress. Parents entrust their children to the school, and the school entrusts the students to the banzhuren. From the perspective of school leaders, banzhurens, being the primary responsible persons for their classes, are the connection between students and the school. According to An (see Section 5.1), ensuring student safety has priority among the many responsibilities of a banzhuren. Previous Chinese studies have show that 76.7% of banzhurens were bearing the pressure of maintaining students' safety (Zhao & Liu, 2018), and if an accidental incident were to happen they would immediately be given a “veto” on their performance, leading to the complete denial of all their work achievements and disqualification from receiving awards and recognition in the school year (Song, 2022).

As the daily routine in Figure 5.1 illustrates, banzhurens need to be with students to ensure their safety, even when they don't have teaching duties. This means that as long as they are in school, the banzhurens bear the pressure of supervising the students. However, since there are about 50 students in a class, playful roughhousing, minor conflicts, and even physical altercations among students are unavoidable. It can be challenging and stressful for banzhurens to ensure that every student remains well-behaved and completely free from accidents. In addition, school leaders use other standards to assess the banzhurens' work as classroom managers. These include their students' overall discipline both inside and outside the classroom, classroom cleanliness, their students' obedience, and class culture. The results of the evaluation are a reflection of a banzhuren's work effectiveness and include credits or demerits for the rewards of *Excellent Banzhuren* (see Section 5.3.3). This places a significant amount of additional pressure on each banzhuren.

The rapid development of the internet and information technology in China has allowed the public to scrutinise education quality, student behaviour, and teacher conduct. Hence, social media has emerged as a significant source of pressure on primary school banzhurens. Influenced by traditional Chinese culture, the public has high expectations of teachers' morality and ethics (see discussion in Section 2.5), believing that teachers should possess a strong spirit of sacrifice and dedication and be available to take on extra work and make additional contributions without asking for rewards (Shen & Zhao, 2006). Descriptive metaphors include "selflessly dedicated gardeners", "red candles that quietly burn themselves to illuminate others", and "engineers of the human soul" (Ban, 2007). Perceived failure to meet the expectations of the public is often exaggerated by online media or individuals, forcing banzhurens to face intense scrutiny and criticism, further exacerbating the stress they already deal with. Recent research (see Wang, 2022) found approximately 33,300 internet search results related to teachers, but fewer than 1,000 of these are reports about the positive image of

teachers, the rest consisting of mainly negative coverage. On social media, people express their dissatisfaction with the misconduct of a very small number of teachers, attributing the blame to the entire teaching community (Cui & Long, 2024). As participant An indicated, under the pressure of social opinion, banzhurens must be careful when managing students who have behavioural issues.

Last but not least, a source of work pressure on banzhurens comes from the students' parents. As the analysis in Chapter 4 shows, all participants shared their experiences of communicating with students' parents in the interviews. The pressure from parents took many forms, including frequent inquiries, unrealistic academic expectations, and dissatisfaction with school decisions or teaching methods. Banzhurens often serve as the primary point of contact between the school and parents. Not only do they bear the responsibility of managing parents' high expectations, concerns, and demands on schools and students, but they are also responsible for educating parents and guiding them to collaborate with the school.

With the popularisation of compulsory education in China and the development of the internet, most of today's parents are well educated and have their own perspectives on education methods for their children, which may differ from those of the schools, the teachers, and even other parents (Sun, 2024). Since it is hard for a banzhuren to meet everyone's needs, parents may misunderstand, complain, or feel dissatisfied when their requests are not met, making the banzhuren feel stressed and emotionally exhausted (Peng, 2022). Due to inadequate and ineffective communication skills and work experiences, young banzhurens, such as participants Dong, Fang, and Hui in this study, often experienced significant pressure when communicating with parents about a child's learning and behavioural issues while also seeking collaboration from the parents.

In conclusion, the high expectations of the school leaders, society, students' parents and the banzhurens themselves placed a large amount of pressure on the participants.

6.2.4 Insufficient Reward

Salary and promotion have also been shown to significantly affect teachers' job satisfaction (Khaliq, 2021). As already discussed, the participating banzhurens bore heavy workloads, responsibilities and stress, but they did not receive allowances proportionate to their work and effort. Previous studies have also reported banzhurens' dissatisfaction with the allowances they received (Chen, 2020; Yuan, 2019). Although the Chinese government has repeatedly emphasised increasing banzhurens' monetary welfare, it has been quite challenging to implement effectively in practice (Wang, 2021). The amount of allowance awarded to banzhuren is decided by the local education department and varies between the provinces and cities. According to Zhao and Liu (2018), the ideal allowance for banzhurens should account for one-third of their gross monthly salary. However, they found banzhurens in some rural and countryside regions received an allowance rate of less than ¥ 100 (around AUD20) each month, whereas banzhurens in Shenzhen City (one of China's first-tier cities) received 1500 Yuan (around AUD300) per month.

In this current study, the banzhurens in G City received an allowance of around AUD100 every month, accounting for about one-eighth of their salary, which is far from the ideal standard allowance for banzhuren. Given that the Chinese teaching community is already dissatisfied with their salary levels (Pan & Zhang, 2017), the allowance they receive is significantly disproportionate to the effort they dedicate (as claimed by Cui and Hui – see Section 5.3.3), which increases job dissatisfaction.

In practice, subject specialist teachers have clear promotion paths that motivate them to pursue professional promotion and administrative leadership such as deputy director, director,

school vice-principal, and school principal. In contrast, banzhurens possess neither rank, level, nor defined professional standards concerning job titles (Zheng, 2019) and thus no significant advantage in terms of career advancement. As already discussed, banzhurens devote half of their working time to management and administrative tasks. In comparison, subject specialist teachers have more time and energy to enhance their teaching and related activities, such as participating in teaching research projects. However, as mentioned in Section 5.3.3, the career promotion path for banzhurens is primarily the same as that for subject specialist teachers, which, according to participant Fang, ultimately disadvantages banzhurens. Participant An said that even though effective banzhurens could be awarded the title of *Excellent Banzhuren* to acknowledge their efforts and effectiveness, no additional allowance would be received, other than a few scores added to their professional title assessment; hence, this “reward” lacked appeal and failed to stimulate banzhurens’ work motivation and satisfaction.

6.3 Possible Ways to Improve Banzhurens Job Satisfaction

This section addressed the third research question: *What are the possible ways to improve banzhurens’ job satisfaction?* Based on the results of the quantitative research and banzhurens’ sharing in the interviews, four strategies were proposed to enhance banzhurens’ job satisfaction and support their professional development in both the short and long term. The strategies are:

1. Provide better work environments and support for banzhurens
2. Establish a professional evaluation system for banzhuren
3. Establish the position of teaching assistant
4. Increase banzhurens self-efficacy.

6.3.1 Provide Better Work Environments and Support for Banzhurens

First, the school leaders should reduce unnecessary administrative tasks unrelated to teaching, such as filling out forms, learning irrelevant documents, writing unreasonable work reports,

and attending meaningless meetings. This would allow banzhurens to focus on their subject teaching and students' moral guidance.

Second, the school should pay attention to banzhurens' professional development. For new banzhurens, professional development could focus on improving communication skills with students and parents, strengthening classroom management abilities, and developing strategies for emotional self-regulation. For experienced banzhurens, professional development could focus on updating professional skills and learning new educational philosophies and teaching approaches. The school could hold training workshops or seminars for banzhurens, focusing on different work-related themes to provide them with opportunities for mutual sharing and communication (this is discussed further in Section 6.3.4). More importantly, the content of these workshops and seminars should be practical and of high quality. To further improve banzhurens' job satisfaction, the school leaders could actively and broadly seek teachers' suggestions and opinions, allowing them to play a role in school decision-making to enhance their sense of belonging and motivation.

Third, banzhurens' current allowance needs to be increased to realistically reflect their labour input, making the job of banzhuren more attractive and increasing banzhurens' motivation. This will be further discussed in the next section.

6.3.2 Establish a Professional Evaluation System for Banzhuren

As mentioned in Section 6.1.4, although banzhurens bear heavy responsibilities, the lack of defined professional standards regarding their professional qualification promotion (Zheng, 2019) provides no significant advantage for career advancement. For long-term development, school leaders and education department officials should consider establishing a comprehensive evaluation system for banzhurens' work performance, as is the case for subject specialist teachers, whose work performance is assessed through direct evaluations of their

students' grades and lesson performance, which are relatively objective. Banzhurens' work performance is assessed through lesson discipline, classroom cleanliness, students' behaviours, etc., which may be deemed scientific and objective, but such evaluations do not completely reflect banzhurens' work tasks and responsibilities, or the energy and effort they invest (Peng, 2022). For example, their work attitudes, relationships with students and parents, communicative skills with parents, moral education, and pastoral care for students are not included in the regular performance assessments. A more holistic performance evaluation system for banzhurens' work is needed.

To ensure such performance evaluations are objective, multiple assessors should be involved, including colleagues, school leaders, parents, and the banzhurens themselves (Wang, 2022). Colleagues who work closely with the banzhurens, such as subject specialist teachers who teach the same class or subject, are well acquainted with their teaching practices, relationships with students, and work attitudes. School leaders, who are responsible for developing and enforcing educational policies, can offer objective assessments of banzhurens' work ethics, teaching methods, effectiveness, and classroom management. Given their authoritative role, leaders' evaluations carry significant weight and would add an important dimension to the performance evaluation. Parents, as significant "collaborators" in banzhuren's work on the home-school connection, play an essential role in evaluating banzhuren's ability to foster a positive relationship between home and school. Their feedback could be gathered through home visits and school meetings.

Importantly, establishing a more holistic and objective performance evaluation system should not add additional work pressure and burnout to banzhurens; rather, it should enable authorities to create a variety of professional qualifications that are uniquely tailored for them, such as junior banzhuren, intermediate banzhuren, and senior banzhuren. By removing competition with subject specialist teachers, this exclusive promotion system could provide

fairer opportunities for banzhurens' career development. Banzhurens' allowances and salaries could also be increased according to their professional qualification, making the "job" of a banzhuren more attractive and creating better career paths.

6.3.3 Establish the Position of Teaching Assistant

In their interviews, some participating banzhurens indicated that neither the allowance nor the possibility of promotion was attractive for taking up the role of banzhuren; they simply wanted to focus on teaching and nurturing children. They tended to avoid administrative, communicative tasks. Cui, for example, proposed a new position, such as a teaching assistant, to manage most of the administrative tasks, completely taking them away from banzhurens (see Section 5.5). The administrative tasks handled by teacher assistants could include recording student attendance, filling in school work papers and forms, organising students' collaborative activities, collecting homework, supervising classroom cleaning, and recording assessment data. This would free up time for banzhurens to focus on teaching, communicating with parents, and providing moral guidance to students.

6.3.4 Increase Banzhurens Self-Efficacy

As discussed in Section 5.2.2, the positive effects of self-efficacy on the banzhurens' job satisfaction that were revealed in the quantitative data also align with the findings of previous studies (e.g., Granziera & Perera, 2019; Jentsch et al., 2023). Increasing banzhurens' self-efficacy can therefore be considered a possible way to improve their job satisfaction and professional development. Providing a framework for education policymakers or school leaders to enhance banzhurens' self-efficacy in practice could be based on the four main sources of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997): mastery experiences; vicarious experiences; verbal persuasion; and physiological and affective states. The implementation of vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states could bring valuable and

healthy experiences to banzhurens and, in turn, enhance their overall mastery experiences, the most powerful source of self-efficacy. For vicarious experiences, school leaders could organise seminars in which experienced and highly self-efficacious banzhurens share how they successfully handle challenges in their work. The intention would be to increase the confidence of novice and low self-efficacious banzhurens in handling similar job tasks.

The school leaders could also strengthen banzhurens' self-confidence through verbal persuasion, including praise, encouragement and emotional support, instead of merely demands. As discussed in Section 6.2.2, the low self-efficacy of the banzhurens in communicating with school leaders was evident in both the quantitative and qualitative results. Positive responses from school leaders would also empower banzhurens' physiological and affective states. In addition, banzhurens themselves could pursue hobbies, regular exercise, or participate in social activities outside of work to cultivate supportive relationships with colleagues, friends, and family.

6.4 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presents the combined findings and discussions from the quantitative and qualitative components, addressing the three research questions of this study. First, while the positive effect of self-efficacy and the negative influence of burnout on job satisfaction were significantly confirmed by the quantitative results, the former was not indicated in the interviews. Furthermore, the lower self-efficacy of banzhurens in communicating with their school leaders, along with their feelings of emotional exhaustion, were investigated both the quantitative and qualitative results. Second, the factors influencing banzhurens' job satisfaction explored in the interviews include students' improvements, a heavy workload, stress from multiple parties, and insufficient rewards. Third, this chapter also proposes some possible ways to improve banzhurens' job satisfaction. In summary, at the school level, banzhurens need more support and empathy from school leaders through professional workshops, verbal

encouragement, and a reduction of unnecessary administrative tasks and inspections. At the state or national level, authorities should increase banzhurens' allowances and establish a more suitable career advancement system for them. This would make the position more attractive to aspiring banzhurens and bolster their motivation.

Chapter 7 Conclusion to the Thesis

This thesis has explored the factors affecting job satisfaction among primary school banzhurens in G City, China. The mixed-methods approach employed in this research has provided insights into the relationships between job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout, alongside identifying additional factors that influenced the banzhurens' job satisfaction, producing a deeper overview of their professional experiences. This chapter outlines the strengths and limitations of the study and presents implications for future research.

7.1 Key Findings

Consistent with previous research, this study confirmed the significant relationships among primary school banzhurens' burnout, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction. On average, the participating banzhurens were mildly dissatisfied with their jobs and experienced a moderate level of burnout, but they were relatively confident in their work tasks. Burnout was negatively correlated with both job satisfaction and self-efficacy, while self-efficacy was positively correlated with job satisfaction. Furthermore, the banzhurens' self-efficacy was found to play a protective role against the impact of burnout on job satisfaction. This finding suggests banzhurens' job satisfaction could be increased by increasing their self-efficacy and decreasing their burnout. Through analysis of variance, it appears that banzhurens' job satisfaction, burnout, and self-efficacy fluctuate across different levels of experience. With their experiences accumulated, their self-efficacy and job satisfaction is likely to increase and their burnout to decrease.

In addition to burnout and self-efficacy, several other factors influencing banzhurens' job satisfaction were identified from the interviews in this study. First, they obtained substantial satisfaction from students' academic and personal progress, which aligned with the traditional Chinese culture's emphasis on students' moral and ethical education. Second, excessive

workloads and school activities, extended working hours, and non-teaching administrative responsibilities adversely impacted the *banzhurens'* job satisfaction. The burden of fragmented and ad hoc tasks further exacerbated their emotional exhaustion and intensified their burnout. Third, stress developed from various sources, including high expectations from school leaders, societal scrutiny, and parental demands, negatively impacted the *banzhurens'* job satisfaction. The *banzhurens'* inner pride and internalised cultural values also intensified their sense of responsibility, leading to self-imposed stress. Finally, the gap between the substantial workload and insufficient financial rewards, along with restricted career advancement opportunities, arose as major sources of dissatisfaction.

This study proposes actionable strategies to enhance the job satisfaction of *banzhurens*. In the short term, some immediate measures can be taken by school leaders to improve *banzhurens'* working conditions and overall well-being. First, school leaders should cultivate a more inclusive and supportive work environment that can contribute significantly to *banzhurens'* sense of belonging and self-efficacy. Additionally, more training and opportunities should be provided for professional development, which would not only enhance *banzhurens'* self-efficacy but also foster career growth. Another crucial measure would be reducing the unnecessary administrative workload that often distracts *banzhurens* from their core responsibilities. Schools might also consider establishing teaching assistant positions to help manage administrative tasks, thereby allowing *banzhurens* to focus more on student development and classroom instruction.

In the longer term, it is recommended that policymakers implement two structural reforms at the national level to ensure the sustained development of the position of *banzhuren*. First, establishing a standardised and transparent professional promotion system tailored to *banzhurens'* unique responsibilities would ensure their contributions are recognised and fairly rewarded, thereby fostering a greater sense of professional value. Second, the authorities should

revise the teacher compensation system from the national level to the county level and increase the banzhuren allowance. The allowance could be distributed based on the banzhuren's professional promotion system, if that is established. This would better reflect the intensity of their workload and responsibilities.

7.2 Strengths and Limitations

The first major contribution of this study has been the establishment of a reliable and valid questionnaire that can be used to measure banzhurens' job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout – three significant factors reflecting the working status of banzhurens. Through structural equation modelling, the relationships between these factors were confirmed. Second, the mixed method employed in this study integrated both quantitative and qualitative data, offering a deeper understanding of banzhurens' job satisfaction and the factors influencing it. Third, an influence that has rarely been explored in previous studies is banzhurens' self-efficacy, especially its positive effect on job satisfaction and its protective role against the impact of burnout on job satisfaction. This study highlights banzhurens' lower levels of self-efficacy in communicating with school leaders, along with the burden caused by extensive school activities. Based on these findings, the study also provides some practical recommendations for policymakers, school administrators, and stakeholders to address systemic issues impacting banzhurens' job satisfaction.

Some limitations of this study need to be considered. The participants' recruitment from one city restricts the relevance of its findings to wider educational contexts. As well, given the limited sample size, some relationships between the sub-constructs of the factors (self-efficacy and burnout) and job satisfaction were not analysed quantitatively, for example, the relationship between emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction. Moreover, due to the influence of Chinese culture and the political atmosphere, some participants were hesitant to respond to questions about their school leaders and school management. This may have constrained their responses

in the interviews, thus influencing the reliability of the findings. While the study offered several practical recommendations, these were not developed into systematic implementation strategies. Future work could build on these findings by designing and evaluating more structured approaches to improving banzhurens' job satisfaction.

7.3 Implications for Future Research

Future research could include different geographic regions and cultural contexts to enable understanding of the extent to which geographic and local cultural factors might impact the job experiences of banzhurens. It might explore the influence of the sub-constructs related to self-efficacy and burnout, addressing research questions such as which sub-construct of self-efficacy/burnout has the strongest influence on job satisfaction. Longitudinal studies might also capture the dynamic relationships between burnout, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction over time and provide deeper insights into causal factors.

Future researchers concerned about banzhurens' professional development might design and test interventions to enhance self-efficacy, reduce workload stress, and improve collaboration between teachers and parents. Education policy makers could consider developing evidence-based strategies for banzhurens' career progression, such as professional development programs, redistributing workloads, and implementing supportive leadership practices. Finally, during the interviews, multiple participants mentioned that they lacked self-efficacy in collaborating on school activities, even though the questionnaire used in this study contained no relevant items. Future researchers could consider expanding the questionnaire to include this type of item.

In concluding this thesis, I sincerely make the following points to highlight the importance of shared responsibility among families, schools, and society in supporting banzhurens and guiding students' development. Parents of students, as well as the government,

media organisations and content creators, should demonstrate greater empathy toward primary school *banzhurens*. These educators bear significant responsibilities, not only in terms of academic instruction but also in fostering students' overall development and managing complex interpersonal dynamics within the education field. However, with the rapid advancement of digital media, the influence of schools and individual teachers on students has diminished compared to previous generations. The internet and social media platforms now play crucial roles in shaping students' values, behaviours, and worldviews –sometimes even exceeding the impact of traditional educational environments. Therefore, responsible media practices, consistent parental guidance, and stronger collaboration between educators and families are equally significant to students' education. A more cooperative approach from all stakeholders is crucial to ensuring that school students receive correct, healthy guidance in both their academic and personal development.

Reference

- Ahmad, S., Zulkurnain, N., & Khairushalimi, F. (2016). Assessing the validity and reliability of a measurement model in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). *British Journal of Mathematics & Computer Science*, 15(3), 1–8.
<https://doi.org/10.9734/BJMCS/2016/25183>
- Akomolafe, M. J., & Ogunmakin, A. O. (2014). Job satisfaction among secondary school teachers: Emotional intelligence, occupational stress and self-efficacy as predictors. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 4(3), 487-498. <https://bit.ly/4iHddt5>
- Alamos, P., Corbin, C. M., Klotz, M., Lowenstein, A. E., Downer, J. T., & Brown, J. L. (2022). Bidirectional associations among teachers' burnout and classroom relational climate across an academic year. *Journal of School Psychology*, 95, 43-57.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2022.09.001>
- Aloe, A. M., Shisler, S. M., Norris, B. D., Nickerson, A. B., & Rinker, T. W. (2014a). A multivariate meta-analysis of student misbehavior and teacher burnout. *Educational Research Review*, 12, 30-44. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2014.05.003>
- Aloe, A. M., Amo, L. C., & Shanahan, M. E. (2014b). Classroom management self-efficacy and burnout: A multivariate meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 26, 101-126.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-013-9244-0>
- Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological bulletin*, 103(3), 411.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.103.3.411>
- Aspers, P., & Corte, U. (2019). What is qualitative in qualitative research. *Qualitative Sociology*, 42(2), 139–160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-019-9413-7>
- Atmaca, Ç., Rızaoğlu, F., Türkdoğan, T., & Yaylı, D. (2020). An emotion focused approach in predicting teacher burnout and job satisfaction. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 90, 103025.
- Bagozzi, R. P., & Yi, Y. (2012). Specification, evaluation, and interpretation of structural equation models. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 40, 8–34.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-011-0278-x>
- Ban, G. (2012). 汉书 [The book of Han]. Zhonghua Book Company.

- Ban, J. W. (2007). 教师媒体道德形象的影响及原因、对策分析 [The influences and reasons of teachers' moral images in media and its betterment]. *Teacher Education Research*, (6), 28-32. <https://bit.ly/44ezf2y>
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191–215. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191>
- Bandura, A. (2002). Social foundations of thought and action. In D. Marks (Ed.), *The health psychology reader* (pp. 94–106). London: Sage.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W.H. Freeman.
- Bandura, A. (2006). Guide for constructing self-efficacy scales. In T. Urdan & F. Pajares (Eds.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents* (pp. 307–337). IAP
- Bolarinwa, O. A. (2015). Principles and methods of validity and reliability testing of questionnaires used in social and health science researches. *Nigerian Postgraduate Medical Journal*, 22(4), 195–201. <https://doi.org/10.4103/1117-1936.173959>
- Brezicha, K. F., Ikoma, S., Park, H., & LeTendre, G. K. (2020). The ownership perception gap: Exploring teacher job satisfaction and its relationship to teachers' and principals' perception of decision-making opportunities. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 23(4), 428–456. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2018.1562098>
- Burić, I., & Kim, L. E. (2020). Teacher self-efficacy, instructional quality, and student motivational beliefs: An analysis using multilevel structural equation modeling. *Learning and Instruction*, 66, Article 101302. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2019.101302>
- Burić, I., & Macuka, I. (2018). Self-efficacy, emotions and work engagement among teachers: A two wave cross-lagged analysis. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 19(7), 1917–1933. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-017-9903-9>
- Burns, N., Grove, S. K., & Gray, J. (2015). *Understanding nursing research: Building on evidence-based practice* (6th ed.). Elsevier Saunders.
- Caprara, G. V., Barbaranelli, C., Steca, P., & Malone, P. S. (2006). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs as determinants of job satisfaction and students' academic achievement: A study at the school level. *Journal of School Psychology*, 44(6), 473–490. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2006.09.001>
- Carmines, E. G., & McIver, J. (1981). Analysing models with unobserved variables: Analysis of covariance structure. *Social Management: Current Issues*, 1(1), 65–115.

- Chang, M. L. (2009). An appraisal perspective of teacher burnout: Examining the emotional work of teachers. *Educational Psychology Review*, 21(3), 193–218.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-009-9106-y>
- Check, J., & Schutt, R. K. (2012). Survey research. In J. Check & R. K. Schutt (Eds.). *Research methods in education*. (pp.159–185). Sage Publications.
- Chen, G. S. (2007). 班主任制 [The Banzhuren system]. *Shanghai Educational Research*, 11, 4-6. <https://bit.ly/44deEfg>
- Chen, J. (2020). 初中班主任职业压力、工作满意度与职业倦怠的关系研究 [A Research of the relationship among occupational stress, job satisfaction and job burnout of junior middle school head teachers] [Master thesis, Huazhong University of Science and Technology]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/4hOyGzD>
- Chen, J. S. & Xie, L. L. (2014). 师者一解——从韩愈的《师说》谈起 [An Interpretation of Teachers——Discussing from HAN Yu's Comments on Teachers]. *University Education Science*, (05), 103-106. <https://bit.ly/4cDpldf>
- Cheng, G., Yu, W. S., & Deng, M. (2019). The effect of teacher incentives on organizational commitment — mediating role of job satisfaction. *Teacher Education Research*, 3, 61-69.
<https://doi.org/10.13445/j.cnki.t.e.r.2019.03.010>
- Collie, R. J., Shapka, J. D., & Perry, N. E. (2012). School climate and social-emotional learning: Predicting teacher stress, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(4), 1189–1204. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029356>
- Cranny, C. J., Smith, P. C., & Stone, E. F. (1992). *Job satisfaction: How people feel about their jobs and how it affects their performance*. Lexington Press.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed.). Sage publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications Inc.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE.
- Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika*, 16(3), 297–334. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02310555>
- Crossman, A., & Harris, P. (2006). Job satisfaction of secondary school teachers. *Educational Management, Administration & Leadership*, 34(1), 29–46.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143206059538>

- Cui, Y. W. & Long, B. X. (2024). 网络舆情下教师专业成长的文化冲击及其突围 [The cultural impact and breakthrough of teacher professional growth under internet public opinion]. *Education Research Monthly*, (05), 73-79. <https://bit.ly/3Ya4aJN>
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., & Leiter, M. (2014). Burnout and job performance: the moderating role of selection, optimization, and compensation strategies. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 19(1), 96-107. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035062>
- Deng, N., & Sun, Y. C. (2021). 情绪智力对班主任的离岗意愿的影响研究——基于情绪劳动与情绪耗竭的中介作用 [A study on the influence of emotional intelligence on the turnover intention of the head teacher: The mediating effect of emotional labor and emotional exhaustion]. *Basic Education*, 18(05), 51-61. <https://bit.ly/4jaaR6j>
- Department of Education of Henan Province. (2023). 河南省教育厅关于印发《河南省义务教育课程实施办法（试行）》的通知 [Notice on issuing the Implementation Measures for Compulsory Education Curriculum in Henan Province (Trial)]. <https://www.henan.gov.cn/2023/09-13/2814792.html>
- DeVellis, R. F. (2017). *Scale development: theory and applications* (Fourth edition.). Sage.
- DeVellis, R. F., & Thorpe, C. T. (2021). *Scale development: Theory and applications* (Fifth edition). Sage.
- DiCicco-Bloom, B., & Crabtree, B. F. (2006). The qualitative research interview. *Medical Education*, 40(4), 314–321. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2929.2006.02418.x>
- Ding, B. R., & Wang, Y. J. (2018). 基础教育中的班主任工作特征与留岗意愿——以工作满意度为中介变量 [Headteachers' job characteristics and willingness of job retention in basic education — Job satisfaction as an intermediate variable]. *Educational Science*, 34(01), 54-62. <https://bit.ly/4i4ehXG>
- Dong, Y. F. (2020). 小学教师的职业压力、工作满意度、职业倦怠及其相互关系研究 [A study on primary school teachers' occupational stress, job satisfaction, burnout, and their interrelationships] [Master thesis, Qingdao University]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/42osr10>
- Dreer, B. (2024). Teachers' well-being and job satisfaction: the important role of positive emotions in the workplace. *Educational Studies*, 50(1), 61–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2021.1940872>
- Drost, E. A. (2011). Validity and reliability in social science research. *Education Research and Perspectives*, 38(1), 105–123. <https://doi.org/10.70953/ERPv38.11005>

- Du, S. Z. (2016). “班主任制”走向何方? [Perspective of “Class Headteacher System” in China]. *Education Academic Monthly*, (11), 3–10. <https://bit.ly/3XCaBoD>
- Editorial Office of the China Education Yearbook. (1984). *China Education Yearbook: 1949-1981*. China Encyclopedia Publishing House.
- Education Research Institute of Shaanxi Normal University. (1981). *陕甘宁边区教育资料—小学部分* [Educational materials of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region: Primary education section]. Education Science Press.
- Essien, E. E., & Gimba, J. (2017). Teachers’ level of job satisfaction and academic performance of students in social studies in Federal College of Education Yola, Adamawa State & COE Jalingo Taraba State, Nigeria. *Imperial Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 3(10), 532–535. <https://bit.ly/3RpN4n4>
- Evans, L. (1997). Addressing problems of conceptualisation and construct validity in researching teachers’ job satisfaction. *Educational Research*, 39(3), 319–331. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0013188970390307>
- Feng, J. J. (2016). 论专职班主任及其制度保障 [On full-time *banzhuren*s and their institutional support]. *Banzhuren*, 07, 5–10. <https://bit.ly/43ry6o1>
- Fenstermacher, G. D. (2001). On the concept of manner and its visibility in teaching practice. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 33(6), 639–653. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220270110049886>
- Ford, T. G., Olsen, J., Khojasteh, J., Ware, J., & Urick, A. (2019). The effects of leader support for teacher psychological needs on teacher burnout, commitment, and intent to leave. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 57(6), 615–634. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-09-2018-0185>
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39–50. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3151312>
- Freudenberger, H. J. (1974). Staff burn-out. *Journal of Social Issues*, 30(1), 159–165. <https://bit.ly/42iQGwy>
- Fu, H. (2016). 中小学班主任制度变革的新进展与前瞻 [New Progress and Prospect of System Reform of Class Headteacher in Chinese Schools in P.R.C.] *Education Academic Monthly*, (11), 20–26. <https://doi:10.16477/j.cnki.issn1674-2311.2016.11.003>
- Fütterer, T., van Waveren, L., Hübner, N., Fischer, C., & Sälzer, C. (2023). I can’t get no (job) satisfaction? Differences in teachers’ job satisfaction from a career pathways perspective.

- Teaching and Teacher Education*, 121, Article103942.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103942>
- Gao, Y. (1986). 吕氏春秋 [Lü's Spring and Autumn]. In 诸子集成 (卷六) [Collected Works of the Masters: Volume 6]. Shanghai Bookstore.
- Geng, S. (2018). 我国中小学班主任工作现状及对策 [The Current situation and countermeasures of primary and secondary school *banzhuren* in China]. *Educational Science Research*, (11), 44–50. <https://bit.ly/4lfBk4C>
- Ghasemzadeh, S., Nemati, M., & Fathi, J. (2019). Teacher self-efficacy and reflection as predictors of teacher burnout: An investigation of Iranian English language teachers. *Issues in Language Teaching*, 8(2), 25–50. https://ilt.atu.ac.ir/article_10964.html
- Gongyi City Department of Education. (2024). *Summary table of students, classes and staff information for primary school in the 2023/2024 academic year*.
- Granziera, H., & Perera, H. N. (2019). Relations among teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, engagement, and work satisfaction: A social cognitive view. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 58, 75–84. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2019.02.003>
- Gu, M. Y. (1998). 教育大辞典 (增订合卷本) [Dictionary of education: Revised and expanded edition]. Shanghai Education Publishing House.
- Hair, J. F. (2009). *Multivariate data analysis* (7th ed.). Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Hair, J. F. (2013). *Multivariate data analysis: Pearson new international edition*. Pearson.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Hajovsky, D. B., Oyen, K. A., Chesnut, S. R., & Curtin, S. J. (2020). Teacher–student relationship quality and math achievement: The mediating role of teacher self-efficacy. *Psychology in the Schools*, 57(1), 111–134. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22322>
- Hancock, D. R., Algozzine, R., Lim, J. H., & ProQuest. (2021). *Doing case study research: A practical guide for beginning researchers* (4th ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Hassan, O., & Ibourk, A. (2021). Burnout, self-efficacy and job satisfaction among primary school teachers in Morocco. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 4(1), Article 100148. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2021.100148>
- Hayes, A. F. (2009). Beyond Baron and Kenny: Statistical mediation analysis in the new millennium. *Communication Monographs*, 76(4), 408–420. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03637750903310360>

- He, Y. F. (2015). 教师道德:期待与角色定位 [Teacher ethics: Expectations and role positioning]. *Ethics Research*, 4, 88-93, 109.
<https://doi.org/10.15995/j.cnki.llxyj.2015.04.017>
- He, Z. (2022). 小学班主任胜任力现状及提升策略研究——以重庆市N区为例 [A study on the current situation and improving strategies of the primary school head teachers competence — A case study of N District in Chongqing]. [Master thesis, Yunnan Normal University]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/4hX3MVH>
- Heale, R., & Twycross, A. (2015). Validity and reliability in quantitative studies. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, 18(3), 66–67. <https://doi.org/10.1136/eb-2015-102129>
- Hinić, D., Grubor, J., & Brulić, L. (2017). Followership styles and job satisfaction in secondary school teachers in Serbia. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 45(3), 503-520. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143215623787>
- Ho, C. L., & Au, W. T. (2006). Teaching satisfaction scale: Measuring job satisfaction of teachers. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 66(1), 172–185.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164405278573>
- Hoglund, W. L., Klinge, K. E., & Hosan, N. E. (2015). Classroom risks and resources: Teacher burnout, classroom quality and children’s adjustment in high needs elementary schools. *Journal of school psychology*, 53(5), 337-357.
<https://doi.org/10.19563/j.cnki.sdzs.2004.06.027>
- Hu, B. Y., Li, Y., Wang, C., Reynolds, B. L., & Wang, S. (2019). The relation between school climate and preschool teacher stress: The mediating role of teachers’ self-efficacy. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 57(6), 748-767.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-08-2018-0146>
- Hu, L. T., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 6(1), 1–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10705519909540118>
- Huang, X., Lin, C. H., & Chi Kin Lee, J. (2020). Moving beyond classroom teaching: A study of multidimensional teacher self-efficacy on job satisfaction and occupational commitment. *Teachers and Teaching*, 26(7-8), 522–542.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2021.1890014>
- Iacobucci, D. (2009). Everything you always wanted to know about SEM (structural equations modeling) but were afraid to ask. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 19(4), 673–680. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2009.09.002>

- Jentsch, A., Hoferichter, F., Blömeke, S., König, J., & Kaiser, G. (2023). Investigating teachers' job satisfaction, stress and working environment: The roles of self-efficacy and school leadership. *Psychology in the Schools, 60*(3), 679–690.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22788>
- Jiang, T. (2018). 班主任核心素养及专业标准体系建构——基于德尔菲法的研究 [Class-advisors' core qualities and professional standards construction]. *Educational Science Research, 12*(2), 78–87. <https://bit.ly/4j3INBM>
- Jiang, Y. X. (2023). 中华传统师德研究 [Research on traditional Chinese teacher ethics]. [Doctoral dissertation, Southwest University]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/3R5c0jN>
- Johnson, B., & Christensen, L. B. (2016). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Turner, L. A. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1*(2), 112–133.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689806298224>
- Johnson, S. M., Kraft, M. A., & Papay, J. P. (2012). How context matters in high-need schools: The effects of teachers' working conditions on their professional satisfaction and their students' achievement. *Teachers College Record, 114*(10), 1–39.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811211401004>
- Jomoad, P. D., Antiquina, L. M. M., Cericos, E. U., Bacus, J. A., Vallejo, J. H., Dionio, B. B., Bazar, J. S., Cocolan, J. V., & Clarin, A. S. (2021) Teachers' workload in relation to burnout and work performance. *International Journal of Educational Policy Research and Review, 8*(2), 48–53. <https://doi.org/10.15739/IJEPRR.21.007>
- Judge, T. A., Thoresen, C. J., Bono, J. E., & Patton, G. K. (2001). The Job Satisfaction-Job Performance Relationship: A Qualitative and Quantitative Review. *Psychological Bulletin, 127*(3), 376–407. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.127.3.376>
- Judge, T. A., Zhang, S. (Carrie), Glerum, D. R., Bowling, N. A., & Sessa, V. I. (2021). Job Satisfaction. In *Essentials of Job Attitudes and Other Workplace Psychological Constructs* (1st ed., Vol. 1, pp. 207–241). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429325755-11>
- Kazdin, A. E. (1973). The effect of vicarious reinforcement on attentive behavior in the classroom. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 6*(1), 71–78.
<https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.1973.6-71>

- Kelloway, E. K. (1998). *Using LISREL for structural equation modelling: A researcher's guide*. Sage.
- Khaliq, A. (2021). Effect of salary, promotion, and relationships with colleagues on secondary school teachers' job satisfaction. *Pakistan Journal of Educational Research and Evaluation*, 4(1), Article 1. <https://bit.ly/4loCcUC>
- Klassen, R. M., & Chiu, M. M. (2010). Effects on teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction: Teacher gender, years of experience, and job stress. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 102(3), 741–756. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019237>
- Klassen, R. M., & Tze, V. M. C. (2014). Teachers' self-efficacy, personality, and teaching effectiveness: A meta-analysis. *Educational Research Review*, 12, 59–76. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2014.06.001>
- Kline, R. B. (2023). *Principles and practice of structural equation modelling* (5th ed.). Guilford Publications.
- Klusmann, U., Aldrup, K., Roloff, J., Lüdtke, O., & Hamre, B. K. (2022). Does instructional quality mediate the link between teachers' emotional exhaustion and student outcomes? A large-scale study using teacher and student reports. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 114(6), 1442.
- Kuai, Y. F., & Zeng, X. L. (2016). 班主任离岗意愿的调查研究 [An investigation on the turnover intention of the head teacher]. *Basic Education*, 13(01), 48–56. <https://bit.ly/41Ov4ce>
- Lauermaun, F., & Berger, J.-L. (2021). Linking teacher self-efficacy and responsibility with teachers' self-reported and student-reported motivating styles and student engagement. *Learning and Instruction*, 76, Article 101441. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2020.101441>
- Leung, D. Y., & Lee, W. W. (2006). Predicting intention to quit among Chinese teachers: Differential predictability of the components of burnout. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping*, 19(2), 129–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615800600565476>
- Li, G., Tsang, K. K., Wang, L., & Liu, D. (2023). Are *banzhurens* (homeroom teachers) more prone to burnout in China? The moderation effect of school culture. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 32(6), 855–866. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-022-00701-1>
- Li, J. J. (2004). 传统式的理论的教育实践及现代意义 [The educational practice and modern significance of traditional teacher ethics theory]. *Journal of Soochow University*, (6), 107-111. <https://doi:10.19563/j.cnki.sdzs.2004.06.027>.

- Li, J. M., Wu, Z. H., & Wang, H. (2017). 新形势下中小学班主任工作状况的调查与反思 [Investigation and reflection on the working situations of class teachers of primary and secondary schools in the new situations]. *Modern Education Management*, 11, 75-81. <https://bit.ly/4j2JE5u>
- Li, M., & Tan, C. B. (2008). 师德崇高性与底线师德 [The loftiness and the bottom line of teacher morality]. *Curriculum, Teaching Material and Method*, (6), 74-78. <https://doi.org/10.19877/j.cnki.kcjcjf.2008.06.017>
- Li, X. B. (2017). 教师专业伦理精神与道德修养 [Teachers' professional ethical spirit and moral cultivation]. Shanghai Sanlian Bookstore.
- Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. In R. S. Woodworth (Ed.), *Archives of Psychology*. https://legacy.voteview.com/pdf/Likert_1932.pdf
- Lin, C. D. (2000). 师德通览 [Comprehensive overview of teacher ethics]. Shandong Education Press.
- Lin, J. Y. (2020). 中班主任工作满意度及激励机制研究——以广州市H区为例 [A study on job satisfaction and incentive mechanism of junior middle school head teachers –Take H District of Guangzhou as an example] [Master thesis, Yunnan University]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/4jacFw7>
- Liu, H. (2003). 教师集体效能、教师自我效能及其对学生学业效能和学习态度影响的层次关系研究 [Teacher collective efficacy, teacher self-efficacy and their effect on students' academic efficacy and attitude to learning-A multilevel structural analysis] [Doctoral dissertation, Beijing Normal University]. Beijing Normal University Library Dissertation Service System. <https://bit.ly/4cg9PDM>
- Liu, H. Y. (2003). 教师集体效能、教师自我效能及其对学生学业效能和学习态度影响的层次关系研究 [Teacher collective efficacy, teacher self-efficacy and their effect on students' academic efficacy and attitude to learning – A multilevel structural analysis] [Doctoral dissertation, Beijing Normal University]. <https://bit.ly/4cg9PDM>
- Liu, P., Liu, L., & Xie, Y. (2018). Leadership of class teachers (Banzhuren) in improving student learning: Case studies of Chinese primary schools. *Frontiers of Education in China*, 13, 28-55. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11516-018-0002-4>
- Liu, S., & Hallinger, P. (2018). Principal instructional leadership, teacher self-efficacy, and teacher professional learning in China: Testing a mediated-effects model. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 54(4), 501-528. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X18769048>

- Liu, S., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2014). Teachers' motivation for entering the teaching profession and their job satisfaction: A cross-cultural comparison of China and other countries. *Learning Environments Research*, *17*, 75-94. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-013-9155-5>
- Liu, S., Keeley, J. W., Sui, Y., & Sang, L. (2021). Impact of distributed leadership on teacher job satisfaction in China: The mediating roles of teacher autonomy and teacher collaboration. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, *71*, 101099-. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2021.101099>
- Liu, Y. C. (2015). 小学优秀班主任核心能力的实证研究 [An empirical study on the core competencies of excellent primary school class teachers]. *Shanghai Educational Research*, (08), 47–50. <https://bit.ly/4hTyUFA>
- Locke, E. A. (1969). What is job satisfaction? *Organizational Behaviour and Human Performance*, *4*(4), 309–336. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073\(69\)90013-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(69)90013-0)
- Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In S. Zedeck (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 1297–1343). Rand McNally.
- Lord, F. M., & Novick, M. R. (2008). *Statistical theories of mental test scores*. IAP.
- Luszczynska, A., & Schwarzer, R. (2015). Social cognitive theory. *Fac Health Sci Publ*, *2015*, 225-251.
- Madigan, D. J., & Kim, L. E. (2021). Towards an understanding of teacher attrition: A meta-analysis of burnout, job satisfaction, and teachers' intentions to quit. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *105*, Article 103425. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103425>
- Madigan, D. J., Kim, L. E., Glandorf, H. L., & Kavanagh, O. (2023). Teacher burnout and physical health: A systematic review. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *119*, Article 102173. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2023.102173>
- Maslach C. (1976). Burned-out. *Human Behavior*, *5*(9), 16–24.
- Maslach, C. (1986). *Maslach burnout inventory: Manual (2nd ed.)*. Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour*, *2*(2), 99–113. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030020205>
- Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Burnout. In G. Fink (Ed.), *Stress: Concepts, cognition, emotion, and behavior* (pp. 351–357). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/C2013-0-12842-5>

- Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job burnout. *Annual review of psychology*, 52(1), 397-422. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.397>
- Meade, A. W., Johnson, E. C., & Braddy, P. W. (2008). Power and sensitivity of alternative fit indices in tests of measurement invariance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(3), 568–592. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.93.3.568>
- Meichenbaum, D. H. (1971). Examination of model characteristics in reducing avoidance behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 17(3), 298–307. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0030593>
- Meng, X. G. (2021). 后韩愈时代的”师说” — ”师道仍不传”的困境与出路 [“On the teacher” in the post-Han Yu era: The dilemma and solutions of “the way of the teacher is no longer passed on”] *Teacher Education Research*, (02), 115-123. <https://doi:10.13445/j.cnki.t.e.r.2021.02.018>.
- Mertens, D. M. (2023). *Mixed methods research: Research methods*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350273191>
- Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China. (1993). 小学德育纲要 [Moral Education Guidelines for Primary School].
- Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China. (2006). 教育部关于进一步加强中小学校校舍建设与管理工作的通知 [Notice on further strengthening the construction and management of school buildings in primary and secondary schools]. http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A03/s7050/200611/t20061114_172008.html
- Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China. (2009). 中小学班主任工作规定 [Regulations on the work of *banzhuren* in primary and secondary schools]. <https://bit.ly/4hWkIvG>
- Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China. (2023). 小学教育专任教师分学历、分专业技术职务情况（总计） [Number of full-time teachers in primary schools by academic qualifications and professional rank (Total)]. <https://bit.ly/4j8H5yQ>
- Mojavezi, A., & Tamiz, M. P. (2012). The Impact of Teacher Self-efficacy on the Students’ Motivation and Achievement. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(3), 483-. <https://doi.org/10.4304/tpis.2.3.483-491>
- Molero Jurado, M. D. M., Pérez-Fuentes, M. D. C., Atria, L., Oropesa Ruiz, N. F., & Gázquez Linares, J. J. (2019). Burnout, perceived efficacy, and job satisfaction: Perception of the educational context in high school teachers. *BioMed Research International*, 2019(1), 1021408. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2019/1021408>

- National People's Congress. (1995). 中华人民共和国劳动法 [Labor Law of the People's Republic of China]. https://www.gov.cn/banshi/2005-05/25/content_905.htm
- Naz, S. (2017). Factors affecting teachers job satisfaction. *Market Forces*, 12(2), 44–59. <https://bit.ly/3FLMDRH>
- Nguni, S., Slegers, P., & Denessen, E. (2006). Transformational and transactional leadership effects on teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior in primary schools: The Tanzanian case. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 17(2), 145-177. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09243450600565746>
- Nie, C. Z., & Xu, X. F. (2024). 新时代师德修养：现实困境、逻辑转向及实践进路 [Teacher's ethics cultivation in the new era: realistic dilemma, logical turn, and practical approach]. *Theory and Practice of Education*, 13, 33-39. <https://doi:CNKI:SUN:JYLL.0.2024-13-005>.
- Nie, Y. Q. (2024). “师德绑架”的伦理探索 [An ethical exploration of “moral kidnapping” of teachers]. *Shanghai Research on Education*, (1), 6–13. <https://doi.org/10.16194/j.cnki.31-1059/g4.2024.01.012>
- Ning, J., & Fang, C. (2020). 从“西语”到“西学”——京师同文馆课程改革的历史考察 [From “Western languages” to “Western learning”: A historical study of curriculum reform at the Tongwenguan in Beijing]. *Higher Education Exploration*, (07), 99–105. <https://bit.ly/3FJRFOJ>
- Noor, S., Tajik, O., & Golzar, J. (2022). Simple random sampling. *International Journal of Education & Language Studies*, 1(2), 78–82. https://www.ijels.net/article_162982.html
- Nunnally, J. C. (1978). An overview of psychological measurement. *Clinical diagnosis of mental disorders: A handbook*, 97–146. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4684-2490-4_4
- Okçu, V., & Çetin, H. (2017). Investigating the relationship among the level of mobbing experience, job satisfaction and burnout levels of primary and secondary school teachers. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 5(1), 148-161. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2017.050119>
- Ololube, N. P. (2006). Teachers job satisfaction and motivation for school effectiveness: An assessment. *Essays in Education*, 18(1), Article 9. <https://openriver.winona.edu/eie/vol18/iss1/9/>
- Oropesa Ruiz, N. F., Atria, L., Pérez-Fuentes, M. del C., Molero Jurado, M. del M., Gázquez Linares, J. J., & Gabriele, G. (2019). Burnout, perceived efficacy, and job satisfaction:

- perception of the educational context in high school teachers. *BioMed Research International*, 2019(2019), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2019/1021408>
- Ortan, F., Simut, C., & Simut, R. (2021). Self-efficacy, job satisfaction and teacher well-being in the K-12 educational system. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(23), Article 12763. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182312763>
- Osguthorpe, R. D. (2005). *On the relationship between the moral character of a teacher and the moral development of a student*. University of Michigan.
- Pajares, F. (1997). Current directions in self-efficacy research. In M. Maehr & P. R. Pintrich (Eds.), *Advances in motivation and achievement* (Vol. 10, pp. 1-49). JAI Press.
- Pan, Y. H., & Zhang, R. B. (2017). 初中班主任工作满意度影响因素的多层分析——基于中国教育追踪数据(2013-2014)的应用 [A multilevel analysis of factors influencing job satisfaction of junior high school class teachers: Application based on China Education Panel Survey data (2013-2014)]. *Education Academic Monthly*, (05), 67–74. <https://bit.ly/42adnmg>
- Parveen, H., & Bano, M. (2019). Relationship Between Teachers' Stress and Job Satisfaction: Moderating Role of Teachers' Emotions. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research*, 34(2), 353–366. <https://doi.org/10.33824/PJPR.2019.34.2.19>
- Pas, E. T., Bradshaw, C. P., & Hershfeldt, P. A. (2012). Teacher-and school-level predictors of teacher efficacy and burnout: Identifying potential areas for support. *Journal of School Psychology*, 50(1), 129-145. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2011.07.003>
- Peng, K. (2022). 小学班主任工作压力及其管理研究——以深圳市龙华区为例 [Research on work stress and stress management of primary school head teachers—Taking Longhua District of Shenzhen as an example]. [Master thesis, Nanchang University].
- Perrachione, B. A., Petersen, G. J., & Rosser, V. J. (2008). Why do they stay? Elementary teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and retention. *The Professional Educator*, 32(2). Article 1. <https://bit.ly/3E7yJsC>
- Pett, M., Lackey, N., & Sullivan, J. (2003). *Making sense of factor analysis: The use of factor analysis for instrument development in health care research*. SAGE Publications.
- Pietarinen, J., Pyhältö, K., Soini, T., & Salmela-Aro, K. (2013). Reducing teacher burnout: A socio-contextual approach. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 35, 62–72. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2013.05.003>

- Pishghadam, R., & Sahebjam, S. (2012). Personality and emotional intelligence in teacher burnout. *The Spanish journal of psychology*, *15*(1), 227-236.
https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_SJOP.2012.v15.n1.37314
- Ponto, J. (2015). Understanding and evaluating survey research. *Journal of the Advanced Practitioner in Oncology*, *6*(2), 168–171. <https://doi.org/10.6004/jadpro.2015.6.2.9>
- Putwain, D. W., & von der Embse, N. P. (2019). Teacher self-efficacy moderates the relations between imposed pressure from imposed curriculum changes and teacher stress. *Educational Psychology*, *39*(1), 51-64.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2018.1500681>
- Qi, X. H., & Huang, L. (2019). 建构与重构:专业化视域下的班主任制度建设 [The historical changes of class teachers in our country: Based on the professionalism of class teacher]. *Educational Science Research*, (12), 73–79. <https://bit.ly/4clklj1q>
- Qian, M. (2011). *中国文化精神* [The spirit of Chinese culture]. Jiuzhou Publishing House.
- Qin, X. X., Wu, J., & Zhang, M. M. (2021). 中小学班主任留岗意愿影响因素研究——基于 5065 位班主任的实证调查 [A study on factors influencing the retention intentions of primary and secondary school class teachers: An empirical investigation based on 5,065 class teachers]. *Educational Science Research*, (11), 54–60. <https://bit.ly/442Xe16>
- Qu, S. Q., & Dumay, J. (2011). The qualitative research interview. *Qualitative Research in Accounting and Management*, *8*(3), 238–264.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/11766091111162070>
- Qu, X. Y., & Tang, Y. L. (2007). *Compilation of historical materials on modern Chinese education history: Evolution of the education system*. Shanghai Education Publishing House.
- Rajendran, N., Watt, H. M., & Richardson, P. W. (2020). Teacher burnout and turnover intent. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, *47*(3), 477–500. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-019-00371-x>
- Ren, Z. Y. (1990). *夸美纽斯教育论著选* [Selected educational writings of Comenius]. People's Education Press.
- Robinson, O. P., Bridges, S. A., Rollins, L. H., & Schumacker, R. E. (2019). A study of the relation between special education burnout and job satisfaction. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, *19*(4), 295-303. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-3802.12448>

- Ronfeldt, M., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2013). How teacher turnover harms student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50(1), 4–36.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831212463813>
- Roni, S. M., Merga, M. K., & Morris, J. E. (2020). *Conducting quantitative research in education*. Springer Singapore.
- Ruan, Y. (2009a). 《十三经注疏·论语注疏》卷 7 《述而》 [Annotations and Commentaries on the Thirteen Classics – Annotations and Commentaries on the Analects, Volume 7, “Shuer”]. Zhonghua Book Company.
- Ruan, Y. (2009b). 《十三经注疏·论语注疏》卷 13 《子路》 [Volume 13 Annotations and Commentaries on the Thirteen Classics – Annotations and Commentaries on the Analects, Volume 7, “zilu”]. Zhonghua Book Company.
- Saloviita, T., & Pakarinen, E. (2021). Teacher burnout explained: Teacher-, student-, and organisation-level variables. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 97, Article 103221.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103221>
- Sarıçam, H., & Sakız, H. (2014). Burnout and teacher self-efficacy among teachers working in special education institutions in Turkey. *Educational Studies*, 40(4), 423–437.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2014.930340>
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Salanova, M. (2007). Efficacy or inefficacy, that’s the question: Burnout and work engagement, and their relationships with efficacy beliefs. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping*, 20(2), 177–196. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615800701217878>
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Van Dierendonck, D. (1995). A Cautionary Note about the Cross-National and Clinical Validity of Cut-off Points for the Maslach Burnout Inventory. *Psychological Reports*, 76(3_suppl), 1083–1090.
<https://doi.org/10.2466/pr0.1995.76.3c.1083>
- Schunk, D. H., & Meece, J. L. (2006). Self-efficacy development in adolescence. *Self-Efficacy Beliefs of Adolescents*, 5(1), 71–96.
- Schunk, D. H., & Usher, E. L. (2012). Social cognitive theory and motivation. *The Oxford handbook of human motivation*, 2, 11–26.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195399820.013.0002>
- Schwarzer, R., & Hallum, S. (2008). Perceived teacher self-efficacy as a predictor of job stress and burnout: Mediation analyses. *Applied psychology*, 57, 152–171.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2008.00359.x>

- Scott, S. B. (2019). Factors influencing teacher burnout and retention strategies. *Williams Honors College, Honors Research Projects*. 798.
https://ideaexchange.uakron.edu/honors_research_projects/798
- Shang, C. J. (2003). 班级授课制的历史、现状与对策 [The history, current situation, and countermeasures of the class-based teaching system]. *Journal of Fujian Institute of Education*, 07, 110-112. <https://bit.ly/3E8ehHW>
- She, L. M. (2021). 走向教师领导: 学校日常生活中的班主任角色构建 [Towards teacher leadership: The role-construction of *banzhuren* in daily school life]. *Educational Science Edition/Journal of Soochow University*, 9(01), 63–70. <https://bit.ly/4caKrzf>
- Shen, B., McCaughtry, N., Martin, J., Garn, A., Kulik, N., & Fahlman, M. (2015). The relationship between teacher burnout and student motivation. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 85(4), 519–532. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12089>
- Shen, J. L., & Zhao, J. X. (2006). 中小学教师职业道德的现实思考 [Reflections on the professional ethics of primary and secondary school teachers]. *Journal of Beijing Normal University (Social Sciences Edition)*, (1), 48-55. <https://bit.ly/4j36BGq>
- Shoji, K., Cieslak, R., Smoktunowicz, E., Rogala, A., Benight, C. C., & Luszczynska, A. (2016). Associations between job burnout and self-efficacy: A meta-analysis. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, 29(4), 367–386. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2015.1058369>
- Simms, L. J., Zelazny, K., Williams, T. F., & Bernstein, L. (2019). Does the number of response options matter? Psychometric perspectives using personality questionnaire data. *Psychological Assessment*, 31(4), 557–566. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pas0000648>
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2009). Does school context matter? Relations with teacher burnout and job satisfaction. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(3), 518–524.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2008.12.006>
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2010). Teacher self-efficacy and teacher burnout: A study of relations. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(4), 1059–1069.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.11.001>
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2011). Teacher job satisfaction and motivation to leave the teaching profession: Relations with school context, feeling of belonging, and emotional exhaustion. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(6), 1029–1038.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2011.04.001>
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2014). Teacher self-efficacy and perceived autonomy: Relations with teacher engagement, job satisfaction, and emotional

- exhaustion. *Psychological reports*, 114(1), 68-77.
<https://doi.org/10.2466/14.02.PR0.114k14w0>
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2017). Motivated for teaching? Associations with school goal structure, teacher self-efficacy, job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 67, 152–160. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.06.006>
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2020). Teacher burnout: Relations between dimensions of burnout, perceived school context, job satisfaction and motivation for teaching. A longitudinal study. *Teachers and Teaching*, 26(7-8), 602–616.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2021.1913404>
- Smetackova, I. (2017). Self-efficacy and burnout syndrome among teachers. *The European Journal of Social & Behavioural Sciences*, 20(3), 228–241.
<https://doi.org/10.15405/ejsbs.219>
- Smetackova, I., Viktorova, I., Pavlas Martanova, V., Pachova, A., Francova, V., & Stech, S. (2019). Teachers between job satisfaction and burnout syndrome: What makes difference in Czech elementary schools. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 2287–2287.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02287>
- Sökmen, Y., & Sarikaya, İ. (2022). The mediating role of self-efficacy between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of primary school teachers. *European Review of Applied Psychology*, 72(4), 100779–100779. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erap.2022.100779>
- Song, Q. (2022). 初中班主任工作压力研究——以KF市区初中班主任为例 [Research on work pressure of head teachers in junior middle school — taking the head teacher of junior middle school in KF City as an example]. [Master thesis, Henan University]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/4ji3utN>
- Soto, J. A., Levenson, R. W., & Ebling, R. (2005). Cultures of Moderation and Expression: Emotional Experience, Behavior, and Physiology in Chinese Americans and Mexican Americans. *Emotion*, 5(2), 154–165. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1528-3542.5.2.154>
- Stoker, P., Tian, G., & Kim, J. Y. (2020). Analysis of variance (ANOVA). In R. Ewing & K. Park (Eds.), *Basic quantitative research methods for urban planners* (pp. 197–219). Routledge.
- Sun, Y. Q. (2024). 家长参与学校教育限度的研究 [Research on the limits of parental involvement in school education]. *Theory and Practice of Education*, (11), 20-23.
<https://bit.ly/42yHk0E>

- Sürücü, L., & Maslakçi, A. (2020). Validity and reliability in quantitative research. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*, 8(3), 2694–2726.
<https://doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v8i3.1540>
- Swider, B. W., & Zimmerman, R. D. (2010). Born to burnout: A meta-analytic path model of personality, job burnout, and work outcomes. *Journal of Vocational behavior*, 76(3), 487–506. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.01.003>
- Taherdoost, H. (2016). Validity and reliability of the research instrument: How to test the validation of a questionnaire/survey in a research. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management (IJARM)*, 5. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3205040>
- Taherdoost, H. (2019). What is the best response scale for survey and questionnaire design; review of different lengths of rating scale/attitude scale/Likert Scale. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management (IJARM)*, 8(1), 1–12.
<https://hal.science/hal-03741841>
- Taherdoost, H. (2022). What are different research approaches? Comprehensive review of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method research, their applications, types, and limitations. *Journal of Management Science & Engineering Research*, 5(1), 53–63.
<https://doi.org/10.30564/jmser.v5i1.4538>
- Tan, C. B. (2005). 论教师” 职业道德” 向” 专业道德” 的观念转移 [On the conceptual shift from “occupational ethics” to “professional ethics” for teachers]. *Educational Research*, (01), 48–51. <https://doi:CNKI:SUN:JYYJ.0.2005-01-009>.
- Tavakol, M., & Dennick, R. (2011). Making sense of Cronbach’s alpha. *International Journal of Medical Education*, 2, 53–55. <https://doi.org/10.5116/ijme.4dfb.8dfd>
- Toropova, A., Myrberg, E., & Johansson, S. (2021). Teacher job satisfaction: The importance of school working conditions and teacher characteristics. *Educational Review*, 73(1), 71–97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1705247>
- Tracy, S. J. (2020). *Qualitative research methods: Collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact* (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Troesch, L. M., & Bauer, C. E. (2017). Second career teachers: Job satisfaction, job stress, and the role of self-efficacy. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 67, 389–398.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.07.006>
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17(7), 783–805.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(01\)00036-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(01)00036-1)

- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2007). The differential antecedents of self-efficacy beliefs of novice and experienced teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(6), 944–956. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2006.05.003>
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & McMaster, P. (2009). Sources of self-efficacy: Four professional development formats and their relationship to self-efficacy and implementation of a new teaching strategy. *The elementary school journal*, 110(2), 228-245. <https://doi.org/10.1086/605771>
- Tschannen-Moran, M., Hoy, A. W., & Hoy, W. K. (1998). Teacher efficacy: Its meaning and measure. *Review of Educational Research*, 68(2), 202–248. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543068002202>
- Van Droogenbroeck, F., Spruyt, B., & Vanroelen, C. (2014). Burnout among senior teachers: Investigating the role of workload and interpersonal relationships at work. *Teaching and teacher education*, 43, 99-109. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2014.07.005>
- Vandenberg, R. J., & Lance, C. E. (2000). A review and synthesis of the measurement invariance literature: Suggestions, practices, and recommendations for organizational research. *Organizational Research Methods*, 3(1), 4–70. <https://doi.org/10.1177/109442810031002>
- Vetter, T. R. (2017). Descriptive statistics: Reporting the answers to the 5 basic questions of who, what, why, when, where, and a sixth, so what? *Anesthesia & Analgesia*, 125(5), 1797–1802. <https://doi.org/10.1213/ANE.0000000000002471>
- Von der Embse, N. P., Sandilos, L. E., Pendergast, L., & Mankin, A. (2016). Teacher stress, teaching-efficacy, and job satisfaction in response to test-based educational accountability policies. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 50, 308-317. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2016.08.001>
- Wang, H., Cousineau, C., Wang, B., Zeng, L., Sun, A., Kohrman, E., Li, N., Tok, E., Boswell, M., & Rozelle, S. (2022). Exploring teacher job satisfaction in rural China: Prevalence and correlates. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(6), Article 3537. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19063537>
- Wang, H., Hall, N. C., & Rahimi, S. (2015). Self-efficacy and causal attributions in teachers: Effects on burnout, job satisfaction, illness, and quitting intentions. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 47, 120–130. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2014.12.005>

- Wang, L. (2022). 农村小学班主任工作压力研究 [A study on the work stress of class teachers in rural primary schools]. [Master thesis, Northeast Normal University]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/4i45mp8>
- Wang, M. (2014). 潜变量建模与 Mplus 应用·基础篇 [Latent Variable Modeling and Mplus Application: Fundamentals]. Chongqing University Press
- Wang, W. J., & Zeng, R. Q. (2023). 中华优秀传统文化涵养师德：内在规律与实践路径 [Cultivating teacher morality through excellent traditional Chinese culture: Internal principles and practical pathways]. *Journal of Chinese Education*, (6), 86-90. <https://doi:CNKI:SUN:ZJYX.0.2023-06-014>.
- Wang, Y., Wen, Z., Li, W., & Fang, J. (2022). 新世纪 20 年国内结构方程模型方法研究与模型发展 [Methodological research and model development on structural equation models in China's mainland from 2001 to 2020]. *Advances in Psychological Science*, 30(8), 1715–1733. <https://bit.ly/41Pc8dp>
- Watson, R. (2015). Quantitative research. *Nursing Standard*, 29(31), 44–48. <https://doi.org/10.7748/ns.29.31.44.e8681>
- Wei, T., & Yang, S. Y. (2023). 作为“个体成长”的师德养成：基于传统文化的启示 [Teacher ethics development as “individual growth”: Insights from traditional Chinese culture]. *Journal of Chinese Education*, (3), 85-90. <https://doi:CNKI:SUN:ZJYX.0.2023-03-020>.
- Weiss, H. M. (2002). Deconstructing job satisfaction: Separating evaluations, beliefs and affective experiences. *Human Resource Management Review*, 12(2), 173-194. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822\(02\)00045-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822(02)00045-1)
- Woodcock, S., Sharma, U., Subban, P., & Hitches, E. (2022). Teacher self-efficacy and inclusive education practices: Rethinking teachers' engagement with inclusive practices. *Teaching and teacher education*, 117, Article 103802. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103802>
- Wu, H. (2024). 乡村小学班主任家庭教育指导的现实困境与路径选择 [The practical dilemmas and path choices of family education guidance by rural primary school class teachers]. *Teaching and Management*, (08), 10-12+25. <https://doi:CNKI:SUN:JXGL.0.2024-08-003>.
- Xiao, Y., Liu, H., & Hau, K. T. (2019). A comparison of CFA, ESEM, and BSEM in test structure analysis. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 26(5), 665–677. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10705511.2018.1562928>

- Xu, T. F. (2006). 论我国教师专业伦理的建构 [On the construction of teachers' professional ethics in China]. *Educational Research*, 7, 48-51. <https://doi:CNKI:SUN:JYYJ.0.2006-07-009>.
- Xu, X. C., Zuo, Y., & Li, X. Y. (2023). “双减”背景下教师工作负担的现实表征、深层根源及减负路向—基于新浪微博 43500 条直接评论的剖析 [The realistic representation, deep roots and ways of reducing teacher's work burden in the context of “Double Reduction” —Analysis based on 43500 comments on Sina Weibo]. *Teacher Education Research*, (6), 68-75. <https://doi.org/10.13445/j.cnki.t.e.r.2023.06.010>
- Yang, H. (2016). 中小学班主任工作倦怠与工作满意度的关系研究 ——以北京市朝阳区为例 [Study on the relationship between job burnout and job satisfaction of primary and secondary school class teachers: With Chaoyang District in Beijing as an example]. *Journal of Beijing Institute of Education (Natural Science Edition)*, 11(01), 20-26. <https://bit.ly/3FOdNY3>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Yorulmaz, Y. I., Colak, İ., & Altinkurt, Y. (2017). A meta-analysis of the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and burnout. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 17(71), 175-192. <https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2017.71.10>
- Yu, R. P. (2023). 从西语到西学：清末京师同文馆创办始末 [From Western languages to Western studies: The founding and development of the Beijing Tongwen Institute in the late Qing dynasty]. *Beijing Archives*, (02), 55-57. <https://bit.ly/4iXtB9B>
- Yu, Z. Y., & Wang, K. S. (2021). 立德树人：师德的养成之道 [Moulding high morals and cultivating talents based on people orientation: the approaches to developing teachers' ethics]. *Educational Research*, (3), 149-159. <https://doi:CNKI:SUN:JYYJ.0.2021-03-020>.
- Yuan, J. (2019). 小学班主任工作满意度现状及其影响因素实证研究 ——以郑州市 268 所小学为例 [An empirical study of job satisfaction of primary school head teachers: Taking 268 primary schools in Zhengzhou as an example]. *Contemporary Education Forum*, 01, 83-96. <https://bit.ly/4i4h5nG>
- Yulianti, P., Atomzeal, M. O., & Arina, N. A. (2018). Burnout, self-efficacy and work satisfaction among special education teacher. *KnE Social Sciences*, 1180–1191. <https://DOI 10.18502/kss.v3i10.3460>

- Zee, M., & Koomen, H. M. (2016). Teacher self-efficacy and its effects on classroom processes, student academic adjustment, and teacher well-being: A synthesis of 40 years of research. *Review of Educational Research*, 86(4), 981-1015.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654315626801>
- Zee, M., Koomen, H. M., Jellesma, F. C., Geerlings, J., & de Jong, P. F. (2016). Inter-and intra-individual differences in teachers' self-efficacy: A multilevel factor exploration. *Journal of School Psychology*, 55, 39-56.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2015.12.003>
- Zhang, B. X., Ji, C. X., & Qian, X. F. (2022). 夸美纽斯是班级授课制的“创立者”吗 [Is Comenius the “founder” of the class-based teaching system?] *Higher Education Research*, (6), 80-94.
- Zhang, C. (2022). 中小学班主任工作负担:现实表征、深层困局与防范机制 [The workload of head teachers in primary and secondary schools: representation of reality, deep dilemma and preventive mechanism]. *Modern Education Management*, (09), 46-53.
<https://bit.ly/3FIGaa0>
- Zhang, D. N. (1989). 中国伦理思想研究 [Research on Chinese ethical thought]. Shanghai People's Publishing House.
- Zhang, L. L., & Zhang, Z. (2024). 新时代我国教师师德考核评价体系研究: 评价依据、借鉴与要件 [Research on the evaluation system of teacher ethics assessment in China in the New Era: Evaluation basis, reference and requirements]. *Educational Science Research*, (7), 77-82. <https://doi:CNKI:SUN:JYKY.0.2024-07-010>.
- Zhang, X., Wong, J. L., & Wang, X. (2022). How do the leadership strategies of middle leaders affect teachers' learning in schools? A case study from China. *Professional Development in Education*, 48(3), 444-461.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2021.1895284>
- Zhang, Y. Y. (2023). 中小学职初期班主任工作的现状、问题与对策——以上海市静安区为例 [The current situation, problems, and countermeasures of novice *banzhurens* in primary and secondary schools: A case study of Jing'an District, Shanghai]. *Modern Teaching*, (18), 36-42. <https://bit.ly/4iWOpy3>
- Zhao, F. J., & Liu, J. C. (2018). 我国中小学班主任工作现状问卷调查与分析 [The questionnaire survey and analysis on the work status of primary and secondary school headteachers in China]. *Educational Science Research*, (11), 38-43.
<https://bit.ly/4hUVldQ>

- Zhao, X., & Jeon, L. (2024). Examining the associations between teacher job satisfaction, workplace climate, and well-being resources within Head Start Programs. *Early Education and Development, 35*(5), 933–949.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2023.2221765>
- Zheng, P. J. (2019). 乡村小学班主任工作满意度提升机制研究 [A study on the improvement mechanism of class teacher's job satisfaction in rural primary schools] [Master thesis, Northeast Normal University]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/3FOFgZE>
- Zhou, C. S., Sha, J. Y., Xu, Y. Y., & Li, C. M. (2024). 社会支持在班主任工作压力与职业倦怠间的中介作用 [The mediating role of social support between class teachers' work stress and occupational burnout]. *Occupation and Health, 40*(10), 1318-1323.
<https://bit.ly/3FMmkLc>
- Zhou, J. (2015). 农村学校教师流动及流失问题研究现状与发展趋势 [Current situation and development trends of research on teacher mobility and attrition in rural schools]. *Teacher Education Research, (1)*, 60-67. <https://doi.org/10.13445/j.cnki.t.e.r.2015.01.007>
- Zhu, Y. X. (1986). 中国近代学制史料 [Historical materials on modern Chinese education system]. East China Normal University Press.

Appendix A - Questionnaire

Job Satisfaction	<p>1. 从多方面来看，做班主任接近我的理想职业 [In many aspects, being a banzhuren is close to the expectation of my dream job]</p> <p>2. 我对做班主任感到满意 [I am satisfied with being a banzhuren]</p> <p>3. 到目前为止，在班主任的职位上我已经得到了我想要的 [So far, in the position of a banzhuren, I have gotten what I wanted]</p> <p>4. 如果可以重新选择职业，我仍然会选择做班主任 [If I could choose my occupation again, I would still choose to be a banzhuren]</p>
Self-efficacy- instructional strategy	<p>5. 我可以使学生掌握不同的学习方法 [I can help students master different learning methods]</p> <p>6. 我可以提高学生的求知欲 [I can cultivate students' curiosity and thirst for knowledge]</p> <p>7. 我可以帮助学生明确在学习和其他方面的责任 [I can help students understand their responsibilities in both academic and non-academic aspects]</p> <p>8. 我可以使学生正确评价自己 [I can enable students to assess themselves accurately]</p>
Self-efficacy - management and administration	<p>9. 我可以让学生了解我对他们的期望 [I can make students aware of my expectations for them]</p> <p>10. 我可以鼓励学生视我为朋友 [I can encourage students to view me as a friend]</p> <p>11. 我可以处理好同学之间的纠纷 [I can handle conflicts among students effectively]</p> <p>12. 我可以为学生提供一个具有安全感的学校环境 [I can create a safe and secure school environment for students]</p>

Self-efficacy - interpersonal support	<p>13. 我可以与同事一起分享教学经验，提高教学质量 [I can share teaching experiences with colleagues to improve teaching quality]</p> <p>14. 我可以将自己的想法或看法与领导交流 [I can communicate my ideas and perspectives with leadership]</p> <p>15. 我可以获得家长对我工作的理解和支持 [I can obtain understanding and support from parents regarding my work]</p> <p>16. 我可以使学习困难学生的家长相信通过努力孩子能进步 [I can convince parents of struggling students that their children can make progress through effort]</p>
Burnout-Emotional Exhaustion	<p>17. 我觉得工作让我的情绪衰竭 [I feel emotionally drained from my work]</p> <p>18. 每天早上起床，即将面对一天的工作让我感到疲惫 [I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job]</p> <p>19. 我对工作感到精疲力尽 [I feel burned out from my work]</p> <p>20. 工作中我经常有挫折感 [I feel frustrated by my job]</p> <p>21. 整天和学生或同事待在一起感到压力很大 [Working with people directly puts too much stress on me]</p> <p>22. 我感觉自己快要崩溃了 [I feel like I'm at the end of my rope]</p>
Burnout- Depersonalisation	<p>23. 从事这份工作后，我觉得对人变得更冷淡了 [I've become more callous toward people since I took this job]</p> <p>24. 我担心这份工作会让我在情感上变得冷酷 [I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally]</p>

Appendix B – Publications

Research Article

<https://doi.org/10.12973/ijem.11.2.173>



International Journal of Educational Methodology

Volume 11, Issue 2, 173 - 188.

ISSN: 2469-9632

<https://www.ijem.com/>

Factors Influencing Banzhurens' Job Satisfaction: An Exploratory Study on a Newly Developed Questionnaire

Ka Bai^{*}

University of Technology Sydney, AUSTRALIA

Mun Yee Lai

University of Technology Sydney, AUSTRALIA

Received: January 8, 2025 • Revised: March 11, 2025 • Accepted: April 7, 2025

Abstract: In primary and middle schools in China, *banzhuren* is the teacher responsible for managing and overseeing a specific class of students. The lower job satisfaction of *banzhurens* has been a longstanding issue. This study employs a quantitative method to investigate the impact of *banzhurens*' self-efficacy and burnout on their job satisfaction. A total of 624 primary school *banzhurens* from G City (in Henan province, China) participated in an online survey assessing their perceived job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout. The data were analysed using structural equation modelling analysis. The results revealed that (a) *banzhurens*' burnout negatively influenced their self-efficacy and job satisfaction; (b) *banzhurens*' job satisfaction was positively influenced by self-efficacy; (c) *banzhurens*' self-efficacy could mediate the adverse effects of burnout on job satisfaction. Therefore, we suggest that *banzhurens*' job satisfaction can be enhanced by increasing their self-efficacy, particularly in terms of communication with leaders, and by reducing their burnout.

Keywords: Burnout, Chinese *banzhurens*, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, teachers.

To cite this article: Bai, K., & Lai, M. Y. (2025). Factors influencing *banzhurens*' job satisfaction: An exploratory study on a newly developed questionnaire. *International Journal of Educational Methodology*, 11(2), 173-188. <https://doi.org/10.12973/ijem.11.2.173>

Introduction

In primary schools in China, every class has a teacher designated as *banzhuren*, who has overall responsibility for and authority over all aspects of the students in their class (He, 2022). The term *banzhuren* is derived from Mandarin pronunciation and is often translated as classroom teacher, homeroom teacher, head teacher, or class teacher; however, a *banzhuren's* responsibilities and scope of work extend far beyond what is commonly associated with these roles (G. Li et al., 2023). According to the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2009), *banzhurens* are selected from among the subject specialist teachers of a class. The selected teacher serves as both a subject specialist teacher and *banzhuren*, thus holding a dual role for the designated class. The role of *banzhuren* exists to ensure the smooth and effective daily operations of a class, which is essential in the Chinese educational system, particularly in primary schools. Meanwhile, these responsibilities often come with heavy workloads and excessive daily hours, causing *banzhurens* to face various work-related stresses and a sense of helplessness. (Geng, 2018). They express their unwillingness to continue to work as a *banzhuren* (Qin et al., 2021), and their job satisfaction is rather low compared with the subject specialist teachers (Yuan, 2019). Thus, there has been an increase in research focusing on job satisfaction and work dilemmas faced by *banzhurens* in recent years. However, this issue is still being researched, and education policymakers have yet to implement relevant policies to improve the circumstances of *banzhurens*. Given the extensive global research on teachers' job satisfaction, self-efficacy has been identified as a significant positive factor contributing to it (for example, Huang et al., 2020; Troesch & Bauer, 2017). In contrast, burnout is a major determinant of teachers' intentions to leave the profession (Madigan & Kim, 2021). Burnout has been highly discussed in studies concerning teachers' job satisfaction and/or intention to quit (such as Okçu & Çetin, 2017; Oropesa Ruiz et al., 2019). Although a large number of research have explored the factors influencing teachers' job satisfaction, little attention has been given to understanding how *banzhurens*' job satisfaction is influenced by their self-efficacy and burnout. This study explores this issue by developing a questionnaire to investigate the relationships between *banzhurens*' job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout.

* Corresponding author:

Ka Bai, University of Technology Sydney, Australia. ✉ ka.bai@student.uts.edu.au

© 2025 The author(s); licensee IJEM by RAHPSODE LTD, UK. Open Access - This article is distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).



网易曲

Literature Review

Banzhuren in the Chinese Context

The occupation of *banzhuren* is unique to the teaching system, where school students are grouped and taught in classrooms. In 1862, the Qing government established the Beijing Tongwen Institute, modelled after Western education systems, thus introducing the classroom-based teaching system in China (Ning & Fang, 2020; Shang, 2003). The Beijing Tongwen Institute was an educational organisation where students were taught through grade-based instruction and classroom-based teaching, and the educators were assigned to two main departments: the teaching department and the administrative department (Yu, 2023). The responsibilities of educators in the administrative department were similar to the administrative tasks of today's *banzhuren*, including completing administrative paperwork, supervising students' learning, recording students' performance, and dealing with students' behavioural issues (Zhu, 1986). The term "*banzhuren*" first emerged in Primary School Instruction Guidelines (compiled by the Education Department of Suide County (Yulin City, Shaanxi Province) in 1942, which emphasised the responsibility of *banzhuren* for students' moral guidance (Education Research Institute of Shaanxi Normal University, 1981, p. 278).

Since implementing the *banzhuren* system, numerous Chinese scholars have conducted in-depth research on its various aspects. To assist *banzhurens* in improving their job performance, the following six core competencies for being an effective primary school *banzhuren* have been identified: research ability, a child-centred perspective, patience, innovative skills, coordination skills, and foresight (Y.-C. Liu, 2015). Built on these six essential competencies, the framework of *banzhuren*'s Professional Standards (Jiang, 2018) was developed to provide guidelines for *banzhuren* to effectively perform their duties. The standards are organised into four foundational categories, three core categories, and four ideal categories. The foundational standards are: adopting a student-centred approach, prioritising teacher ethics, emphasising capability, and committing to lifelong learning. The core standards are: class construction, student guidance, and communication and coordination. The ideal standards are: ethical integrity, excellent professional skills, leadership in professionalism, and educational innovation. Overall, the role of *banzhuren* can be defined as a teacher who is in charge of a class, an organiser, a builder, a leader of the communities of students and parents, and a vital person who helps and guides students' growth and human development (Qi & Huang, 2019).

Due to *banzhurens*' work characteristics and the significant demands placed on them, it is not difficult to understand their career dilemmas. First, as illustrated by the policies and research discussed in the former section, *banzhurens* take on excessive expectations and responsibilities for students' education and development. Second, scholars have pointed out that the boundaries of *banzhuren*'s responsibilities are vague. For example, C. Zhang (2022) found that some of the core work tasks of *banzhurens*, such as managing daily class affairs and paying attention to individual student development, are fragmentary, endless, and hard to define. Third, *banzhurens*' career development is not supported by state education policies. Specifically, the Chinese professional promotion system weighs teachers' subject teaching performance and achievements as being more important than *banzhurens*' work performance (Feng, 2016). Finally, the heavy workload of *banzhurens* is of great concern. For instance, *banzhurens* usually work more than eight hours daily (F.-J. Zhao & Liu, 2018). Their average weekly work time, including teaching, lesson preparation, grading homework and exam papers, and communicating with students' parents, has been estimated as close to 50 hours (Pan & Zhang, 2017), which is nearly 10 hours more than standard hours.

Teacher Job Satisfaction

Teacher job satisfaction is defined as the emotional responses to one's job that result from evaluating various aspects of it to determine whether their value judgments or work expectations are being met. (Cranny et al., 1992; Locke, 1969, 1976). Among teachers, higher job satisfaction usually indicates better job performance, motivation, productivity, and a lower attrition rate within their profession (Brezicha et al., 2020; Ololube, 2006). Student achievement has also been shown to increase when teachers' higher-level job satisfaction produces stronger work commitments (Essien & Gimba, 2017; Ronfeldt et al., 2013). Teachers are also less likely to quit when they perceive that their job realities meet their expectations (Madigan & Kim, 2021; Perrachione et al., 2008).

Job satisfaction can also act as a mediator for other factors that influence teachers' attrition rates. For example, teachers' job satisfaction was found to be a key variable that mediated the effects of Norwegian teachers' feelings of belonging and emotional exhaustion on their intention to leave teaching (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Therefore, job satisfaction is important not only for the teachers themselves but for their schools, their students, and the education system.

For *banzhurens* in China, studies have revealed that participating *banzhurens* had a moderate level of job satisfaction (Chen, 2020; Kuai & Zeng, 2016; Pan & Zhang, 2017; Yang, 2016). However, job satisfaction levels would vary based on their personal and professional characteristics, such as gender and length of service. Research on the effect of gender on job satisfaction remains inconclusive. While some studies indicate no significant correlation between gender and job satisfaction or intention to leave (Kuai & Zeng, 2016; Pan & Zhang, 2017; Yuan, 2019), other studies revealed that male *banzhurens* had significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than females (Ding & Wang, 2018; Lin, 2020). Moreover,

mid-career *banzhurens* with 10 to 12 years of experience showed the lowest levels of job satisfaction (Yuan, 2019), similar to the results found among teachers in England (Crossman & Harris, 2006).

Of the other factors influencing job satisfaction, insufficient monetary allowance was identified as one aspect that *banzhurens* were least satisfied with (Chen, 2020; Yuan, 2019); among *banzhurens* working in rural areas, only 10% were satisfied with their allowance (Zheng, 2019). Workload is another vital factor that impacts job satisfaction. In Zheng's (2019) study, over 80% of the participants stated they were bearing a heavy workload and scope of responsibility, which decreased their job satisfaction. Not surprisingly, turnover intentions can be high, with only about 40% of *banzhurens* expressing their willingness to continue in this role (J.-M. Li et al., 2017; Qin et al., 2021). One possible reason for this high turnover intention statistic is that the participating *banzhurens* existed in environments where the stress of unrealistic expectations from schools, students, and families outweighed the support they needed (Ding & Wang, 2018).

Furthermore, in their analysis of the influence of internal and external factors on *banzhurens'* intention to leave, Kuai and Zeng (2016) found that internal factors were stronger than external factors. More specifically, *banzhurens'* decisions to leave the position stemmed more from a lack of achievement, autonomy, self-esteem, and leadership support than from heavy workloads or insufficient financial compensation. For increasing *banzhurens'* job satisfaction, fostering interpersonal support and emotional intelligence may be effective strategies. Studies indicate that *banzhurens* with better interpersonal support demonstrated a higher level of job satisfaction (Pan & Zhang, 2017). Emotional intelligence can also have a positive effect on *banzhurens'* willingness to remain in the position (Deng & Sun, 2021).

Teacher Self-efficacy and Job Satisfaction

The theory of self-efficacy was first introduced by Bandura in 1977, and he further situated this term in the construct of the social cognitive theory of human behaviour in 1986 (Pajares, 1997). Applying Bandura's conception of self-efficacy to the topic of this study, a *banzhuren's* self-efficacy may be defined as their belief in their own ability to execute a course of activities to facilitate educational tasks and goals (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). This belief determines each *banzhuren's* choice of behaviours (whether and how to pursue the courses of action), how much effort they will expend, and how long they will persevere when facing difficulties (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy possesses a dynamic and cyclical nature (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). More specifically, people with higher self-efficacy tend to invest more effort and persistence in their tasks, resulting in improved performance across various areas. This improved performance, in turn, enhances their self-efficacy. Conversely, those with lower self-efficacy may avoid taking action or give up easily, leading to poor outcomes that further diminish their self-efficacy. Teachers' self-efficacy is most malleable in the early stage of their career and, with their working experience accumulated, their self-efficacy will increase and become firmly established (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

The positive influence of teachers' self-efficacy on job satisfaction has been confirmed by extensive research conducted in various countries (Collie et al., 2012; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Ortan et al., 2021; Troesch & Bauer, 2017; H. Wang et al., 2015) revealing a general conclusion: teachers with a high level of self-efficacy report greater job satisfaction. Among the various antecedents of teacher job satisfaction, including school conditions, leadership, job stress, salary, students' discipline, social support, self-efficacy, and demographic factors such as gender and age (Brezicha et al., 2020; Johnson et al., 2012; Toropova et al., 2021; H. Wang, Cousineau, et al., 2022; Y. Wang, Wen, et al., 2022; X. Zhao & Jeon, 2024), self-efficacy is considered one of the most influential contributors to job satisfaction (Naz, 2017). Akomolafe and Ogunmakin (2014) concluded that teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy tend to think more positively about their work and are able to handle challenging work tasks more effectively, thereby contributing to their job satisfaction. Moreover, teachers' self-efficacy in different aspects of their work can also have varying effects on their job satisfaction. For instance, Huang et al. (2020) showed that teacher self-efficacy in teacher-student relationships and school decision making had a more positive influence on teachers' job satisfaction and commitment than self-efficacy in classroom teaching. Building on the previous research about the relationship between self-efficacy and job satisfaction, the first hypothesis in this study is:

H1: Banzhurens' self-efficacy positively affects their job satisfaction.

Teacher Burnout and Its Relationship with Self-efficacy and Job Satisfaction

The concept of burnout was first identified by Freudenberger (1974) as a state that occurred among staff members working in free clinics. Freudenberger proposed that the behavioural signs of burnout are "a staff member's quickness to anger and instantaneous irritation and frustration responses" (p.160), and verbally expressing a negative attitude. Subsequently, Maslach and Jackson (1986) developed the Maslach Burnout Inventory scale to assess individuals' levels of job burnout. They described three aspects of burnout syndromes in the workplace: increased feelings of emotional exhaustion, negative and cynical attitudes about one's client, and the tendency to evaluate oneself negatively. Consequently, burnout was predominantly defined by three main components: exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Of these, emotional exhaustion is regarded as the key element in the teaching profession because teachers often engage in emotional labour (Chang, 2009; Maslach & Jackson, 1986; Skaalvik &

Skaalvik, 2010). For *banzhurens* in particular, their work requires them to establish interpersonal relationships with their students, colleagues and students' parents (Zhou et al., 2024), which may frequently lead them to feel emotionally exhausted.

Previous studies conducted in various regions have clearly defined the negative relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and burnout. For example, self-efficacy was found to be a strong negative predictor of burnout among Iranian English-language teachers (Ghasemzadeh et al., 2019). Moreover, the negative association between self-efficacy and burnout was found to be bidirectional among primary school teachers in Morocco (Hassan & Ibourk, 2021), primary and middle school teachers in Norway (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010), and grammar school teachers in Czechia (Smetackova, 2017). However, these relationships have been rarely examined in the studies concerning Chinese teachers or *banzhurens*. Based on such studies about the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and burnout, the second hypothesis of this study is:

H2: Banzhurens' burnout negatively affects their self-efficacy.

In contrast to the positive influence of self-efficacy on job satisfaction, burnout has a negative influence on teachers' job satisfaction (Hassan & Ibourk, 2021; Okçu & Çetin, 2017; Oropesa Ruiz et al., 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009) and is a key determinant of teachers' turnover intentions (Madigan & Kim, 2021; Rajendran et al., 2020). Yorulmaz et al.'s (2017) analysis of 29 studies examining the relationships between teachers' job satisfaction and burnout in Turkey found that teachers' emotional exhaustion and reduced accomplishment were negatively correlated to job satisfaction on a medium level, and teachers' depersonalisation and job satisfaction were negatively correlated at a low level. While Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2020) found that teachers' job satisfaction was positively predicted by self-perceived accomplishment (positively measured) and negatively predicted by emotional exhaustion, cynicism (depersonalisation) had no significant influence on job satisfaction. The negative relationship between burnout and job satisfaction among Chinese teachers has also been examined (e.g., Leung & Lee, 2006). Among *banzhurens*, job burnout was significantly higher than for subject specialist teachers (Dong, 2020), and burnout was one of the important factors that decreased their job satisfaction (Yang, 2016). Moreover, in Chen's (2020) study, *banzhurens'* career stress negatively impacted their job satisfaction and further increased their sense of burnout. On the basis of these studies, the third hypothesis of this study is:

H3: Banzhurens' burnout negatively affects their job satisfaction.

Based on the existing research, teacher burnout negatively influences self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Conversely, self-efficacy has a positive effect on job satisfaction. This raises the question of whether self-efficacy can serve as a protective factor against the negative impact of burnout on job satisfaction. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis of this study is:

H4: Banzhurens' self-efficacy mediates the effect of their burnout on job satisfaction.

In conclusion, job satisfaction among teachers is a well-explored topic globally, with extensive research examining the effects of self-efficacy and burnout across various regions. However, the extent to which job satisfaction is influenced by burnout and self-efficacy remains underexplored among *banzhurens* in the Chinese context. This study seeks to address this research gap.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach, specifically structural equation modelling, to explore the relationships between *banzhurens'* self-efficacy, burnout, and job satisfaction. According to the hypotheses proposed in the previous section, the research framework is displayed in Figure 1.

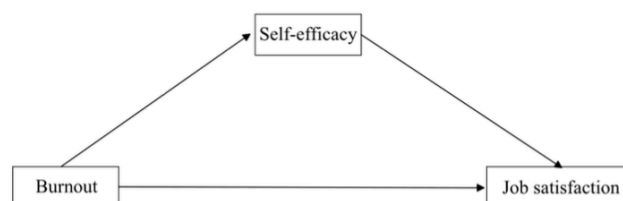


Figure 1. Research Framework

Research Instrument

A questionnaire consisting of three constructs measuring participants' job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout was distributed through the Qualtrics platform. Participants responded to the questionnaire items using a 7-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree (Simms et al., 2019). The questionnaire items were selected from existing research (Ho & Au, 2006; H. Liu, 2003; Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Since the target participants in this study were Chinese primary school *banzhurens*, the items related to burnout and job satisfaction were rephrased and translated into Mandarin from English. Furthermore, the items related to self-efficacy were translated from Mandarin into English, as illustrated in the Appendix, to assist the readers of this study. There were three steps in the translation process. First, we translated the English items into Chinese through ChatGPT. Second, we revised and refined the translations to ensure the expressions were appropriate and accurate. Third, we translated them back into English through ChatGPT to confirm that the original meanings remained unchanged. In summary, the instrument (questionnaire) used in this study consists of three constructs: job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout, with sub-constructs under the constructs of self-efficacy and burnout.

Job satisfaction scale: Four items from Ho and Au's (2006) Teaching Satisfaction Scale (TSS) were adopted to measure *banzhurens*' job satisfaction. The expressions were changed to fit the purpose of this study. For example, the original item, "In most ways, being a teacher is close to my ideal", was rephrased to "In many aspects, being a *banzhuren* is close to the expectation of my dream job". The Cronbach's α of this scale was .877. The scale factor loadings were between .705 and .874. The composite reliability (CR) is .877, and the average variance extracted (AVE) is .643.

Self-Efficacy Scale: *Banzhurens*' self-efficacy was measured by the items selected from the Primary School Teacher Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (H. Liu, 2003), which consisted of three sub-constructs – instructional strategies, management and administration, and interpersonal support – adding up to 56 items in total. To serve the purpose of this study and according to the theory and previous research (Bandura, 2006; Geng, 2018; Huang et al., 2020), only the items that were highly related to *banzhurens*' daily work were used. Consequently, the scale of self-efficacy used in this study had 12 items, and the original three sub-constructs of the survey were not changed. The Cronbach's α was .929. The scale factor loadings were between .533 and .805. The CR is .933, and the AVE is .542.

Burnout scale: The Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986) (MBI), a widely used scale (e.g., Pietarinen et al., 2013; Shen et al., 2015), was adopted in this study. The MBI consists of three sub-constructs: emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment, and depersonalisation. However, in this study, the items under the sub-construct of personal accomplishment had a strong similarity with the items of self-efficacy. Moreover, emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation have been confirmed as two central elements of burnout (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010;). Consequently, the personal accomplishment items were excluded from this study to minimise multicollinearity among the items, while eight items measuring emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation were retained. Some items were rephrased to better serve the purpose of this study. For example, the item "Working with people directly puts too much stress on me" was rephrased to "Working with people (colleagues and students) directly puts too much stress on me", and to enhance understanding for Chinese participants, the item "I feel like I'm at the end of my rope" was translated and rephrased as "I feel like I'm reaching my limit." The Cronbach's α of this scale was .915. The range of factor loadings is [.656, .884]. The CR is .916, and the AVE is .581.

Sample

The participants were primary school *banzhurens* who worked in G City, a small city in Henan province in China. Convenience sampling was used. The number of *banzhurens* completing the questionnaire was 624. After deleting the incomplete responses or those not finished within the 200 seconds allowed, 516 valid responses were kept for the analysis. This amounted to around 40% of the total number of *banzhurens* in G City.

Of the 516 responses, 96.9% (500) were female and 3.1% (16) were male. According to the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2023), 78.7% of full-time teachers in primary schools in Henan province were female. This indicates that a gender disproportion in the data collected. The age of the participants was broken down into three groups: 76 (14.7%) *banzhurens* were under 30 years old; 421 (81.6%) were aged 31 to 50 years old; and 19 (3.68%) were over 50 years old. The *banzhurens*' experiences in this role were also categorised into three groups: 139 (26.9%) teachers had been *banzhurens* for less than 5 years; 221 (42.8%) for 6 to 20 years; and 156 (30.2%) for more than 20 years.

Data Analysis

The data was collected in November and December 2023. The first step in the data analysis after the completion of data collection was data cleaning using StataSE 16. The 516 valid responses were kept. The second step was descriptive analysis. Then, a set of rigorous reliability and validity tests were conducted by SPSS29 and Mplus8 as the third step to verify that the instruments used were reliable, accurate and effective. The indicators of reliability tests – coefficients of α were computed by SPSS 29, and the indicators of validity test – factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted were computed by Mplus8 and Microsoft Excel 2024.

The fourth step was confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine the fitness of the measurement model. The model fit indices employed were well established by previous studies; they included χ^2 (Chi-Square) / *df* (degree of freedom), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis's Index (TLI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardised root mean square residual (SRMR). Referring to Carmines and Mclver (1981), χ^2/df below 5.0 indicates an acceptable fit of the model. According to Y. Wang, Wen, et al. (2022), model fit can be acceptable if (a) CFI and TLI $\geq .90$; (b) RMSEA and SRMR $\leq .08$; and model fit can be excellent if (a) CFI and TLI $\geq .95$; (b) RMSEA and SRMR $\leq .05$.

Before conducting structural analysis, we examined the distribution of the data for the four variables (including the control variable, which was elaborated at the end of this section) through SPSS 29 and confirmed that they follow a normal distribution. Finally, the structural relationships and mediation effect test were conducted by Mplus8 to test four hypotheses. The technique used for testing structural relationships was maximum likelihood estimation, which is suitable for continuous variables and normally distributed data. The technique for mediation effects testing was Bootstrap, which is verified as having a higher statistical power compared with the other methods (Hayes, 2009). Therefore, mediation effect tests were conducted by the method of bootstrapping with 5000 replicates.

The questionnaire also collected data on the participants' genders, ages and years of being *banzhuren*. Due to the disproportionate data for participants' gender distribution, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was not performed for gender groups. Participants' ages and years of experience are highly correlated with each other: years of experience can reflect on teachers' workability and performance more directly, and it is a variable that has been commonly applied in previous studies exploring teachers' job satisfaction, self-efficacy and burnout (e.g., Jentsch et al., 2023; Lauermann & Berger, 2021; Toropova et al., 2021). Thus, years of experience was a variable selected for ANOVA using StataSE 16, and it was controlled in the structural analysis and mediation tests since the variances are significant.

Results

Measurement Model

The CFA was conducted four times to test the model fit for the three scales and the whole questionnaire. The results (in Table 1) show that the χ^2/df ranges from 1.000 to 3.580. RMSEA ranges from .046 to .071, and SRMR ranges from .009 to .066. TLI ranges from .913 to .998, and CFI ranges from .922 to .994. Thus, the questionnaire, as well as each construct, was acceptable.

Table 1. Fit Indices of Three Scales and the Whole Questionnaire

Fit indices*	χ^2_a	df ^b	χ^2/df^c	RMSEA ^d	SRMR ^e	TLI ^f	CFI ^g
JS	4.193	2	2.097	.046	.009	.998	.994
TSE	120.097	51	2.355	.051	.022	.982	.976
BNT	46.384	46.38	1.000	.053	.022	.984	.989
Whole questionnaire	891.499	249	3.580	.071	.066	.913	.922
Standards (Good fit)	-	-	< 5	< .08	< .08	> .900	> .900

* JS, job satisfaction, TSE, self-efficacy and BNT, burnout.

^a Chi-Square statistic

^b Degree of freedom

^c The ratio of χ^2 to the degrees of freedom (df)

^d Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

^e Standardised Root Mean Square Residual

^f Tucker-Lewis's Index

^g Comparative Fit Index

Additionally, discriminant validity was assessed. By comparing all pairwise construct correlations with the square root of AVE (the bold numbers in Table 2), the results show that discriminant validity was confirmed, as the diagonal elements (AVE) exceeded those of the off-diagonal elements (pairwise construct correlations) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Therefore, the results (see Table 2) demonstrate that the constructs within the questionnaire are distinctly different from one another. Thus, the questionnaire exhibits good discriminant validity.

Table 2. The Discriminatory Validity Test of the Whole Scale

Construct [§]	Mean	SD*	JS	TSE	BNT
JS	3.504	1.592	.802		
TSE	5.240	0.891	.583	.736	
BNT	4.485	1.402	-.628	-.478	.762

[§]JS, job satisfaction, TSE, self-efficacy and BNT, burnout.

* Standard deviation

Descriptive Analysis

The overall mean of the participating *banzhurens'* job satisfaction is 3.50 ± 0.89 . This indicates that, in general, the *banzhurens* were slightly dissatisfied with their jobs. *Banzhurens* with longer years of experience demonstrated more satisfaction with their job. The mean of the *banzhurens'* overall self-efficacy is 5.24 ± 0.89 , suggesting that they were relatively confident about their work-related tasks. *Banzhurens'* self-efficacy increased with the years of experience accumulated, especially regarding the aspect of management and administration. The overall mean of *banzhurens'* burnout is 4.49 ± 1.40 . Their burnout decreased with the increase in years of experience. In comparison to job satisfaction and burnout, the *banzhurens'* scores on self-efficacy exhibit a lower standard deviation, indicating that the responses for each item are more consistent and less dispersed from the mean. Regarding the two aspects of burnout, the participants reported more emotional exhaustion than depersonalisation. When comparing self-efficacy regarding instructional strategy and management and administration, the participants showed comparatively lower self-efficacy concerning interpersonal support, particularly in communicating with their school leaders.

The results of ANOVA indicate that the *banzhurens* with different years of experience have significantly different levels of job satisfaction ($p < .10$), self-efficacy ($p < .05$) and burnout ($p < .10$). Thus, the variable for years of being *banzhuren* is controlled in the following analysis.

Hypothesis Test: Structural Model Analysis

To confirm the first three hypotheses, structural model analysis was conducted while controlling for the variable of years of experience to eliminate their influence on the SEM model (Table 3). The results indicate that *banzhurens'* self-efficacy significantly affected their job satisfaction positively, with a standardised path coefficient of .361 ($p < .001$). Burnout had a significant negative impact on job satisfaction (standardised path coefficient of -.554, $p < .001$). Moreover, burnout also negatively influenced self-efficacy, with a standardised path coefficient of -.451 ($p < .001$). Therefore, the first three hypotheses are verified. As well, through comparing the standardised coefficients, burnout exhibited a stronger effect on job satisfaction compared to self-efficacy.

Table 3. Summary of Structural Model Results

Hypothesis	Paths	Unstd. ^a	S.E. ^b	Z ^c	P ^d	Std. ^e
H1	TSE → JS	0.736	0.086	8.578	***	.361
H2	BNT → TSE	-0.223	0.024	-9.472	***	-.451
H3	BNT → JS	-0.560	0.042	-13.19	***	-.554

^a Unstandardized coefficient of the path

^b Standard error

^c *t*-value, used to calculate the *p*-value

^d *p*-value < .1 *; *p*-value < .05 **; *p*-value < .001 ***

^e Standardized coefficient

Hypothesis Test: Mediation Effect Test

The structural model in the previous section indicates that job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout are significantly related to one another, which raises the question of the role of self-efficacy as a mediating variable in the tested SEM. Therefore, a mediation effect test was conducted, and the variable years of experience was controlled to eliminate its influence on the mediation effect model.

The results are summarised in Table 4. Under the 95% confidence interval, all three path results of the bootstrapping tests do not include zero, which means self-efficacy had a mediating effect on the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis was verified. The results also indicated that teacher burnout had a total negative effect on job satisfaction at 0.297. Within this (can also see Figure 2), the direct negative effect (after the mediating variable self-efficacy was controlled) of burnout on job satisfaction is 0.110, and the indirect effect of burnout on job satisfaction, which was mediated via self-efficacy (i.e., $a*b$), is -0.187. The ratio of the indirect effect to the total effect (i.e., $a*b/c$) is often interpreted as the proportion of the total effect that is mediated (Hayes, 2009). Thus, for the mediation hypothesis, adding teachers' self-efficacy to the model reduced 62.96% of these effects. This shows that self-efficacy mediated 62.96% of the negative influence from burnout to job satisfaction.

Table 4. The Results of the Mediation Effect Analysis

BNT*→TSE*→JS*	Indirect effect				Proportion of relative effect
	B (a*b)	SE ^a	Z ^b	Bootstrapping 95% CI ^c	
	-0.187	0.029	-6.429	[-0.243 -0.129]	62.96%
BNT→JS	Direct effect				Proportion of relative effect
	B (c')	SE	Z	Bootstrapping 95% CI	
	-0.110	0.017	-6.642	[-0.143 -0.077]	37.04%
BNT→JS	Total effect				Proportion of relative effect
	B (c)	SE	Z	Bootstrapping 95% CI	
	-0.297	0.032	-9.25	[-0.358 -0.229]	100.00%

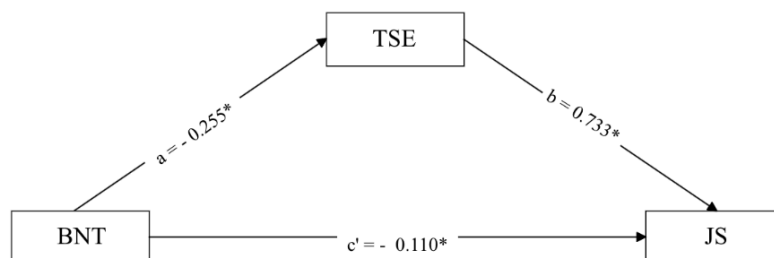
*JS, teachers' job satisfaction; TSE, teachers' self-efficacy; BNT, teachers' burnout

B Unstandardized coefficient of the path

^a Standard error

^b *t*-value, used to calculate the *p*-value

^c Bootstrap confidence intervals



^a The variable for years of experience was controlled but not shown in this figure.

* Unstandardized coefficient of the path

Figure 2. The Structure of Mediation Effects ^a

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the relationships between self-efficacy, burnout, and job satisfaction among Chinese primary school *banzhurens* in G city of Henan Province in China. In addition, it examined whether self-efficacy played a mediating role in the effect of burnout on job satisfaction. Within the framework of structural equation modelling, the models used in this study are validated, and the goodness of fit indexes are acceptable (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kelloway, 1998).

Effect of Burnout

Burnout was verified as significantly negatively influencing the participating *banzhurens*' job satisfaction. In other words, the *banzhurens*' job satisfaction decreased if their burnout increased. A few Chinese studies also found negative relationships between *banzhurens*' burnout and job satisfaction (e.g., Yang, 2016). Regarding the impacts of different sub-constructs of burnout, studies from Asian and Western countries (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Yorulmaz et al., 2017) reported a significant influence of emotional exhaustion. A possible reason the *banzhurens* felt burnout might be their excessive emotional exhaustion from their heavy workloads and overwhelming responsibilities (Zhou et al., 2024). As mentioned earlier, their responsibilities involve completing school assessments, managing classroom affairs, and providing guidance and support for individual student development (C. Zhang, 2022). In effect, they become their students' "nanny", "coach", "manager", and "liaison" to varying degrees, whether actively or passively (She, 2021). Teachers' heavy workloads resulting in burnout have also been widely reported elsewhere (e.g., Jomoad et al., 2021). Furthermore, because educational policy documents repeatedly emphasise the significance of the role of *banzhurens* in students' overall education, other school members, such as subject specialist teachers and school leaders, tend to perceive them as having the primary responsibility for their students' all-round development (Du, 2016).

Burnout also significantly negatively affects *banzhurens*' self-efficacy, as confirmed through structural equation modelling in this study and reported by Shoji et al. (2016) and Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010). Bandura (1977) also proposed that the level of emotional and physiological arousal affects a person's self-perception of their efficacy in the workplace. Therefore, it is likely that when *banzhurens* frequently endure negative mental states such as emotional exhaustion, fatigue, or depersonalisation, their confidence in managing work tasks will also diminish. Conversely, the

positive emotions they experience at work, such as joy, happiness, and a sense of achievement, will enhance their self-efficacy.

Effect of Self-efficacy

The first hypothesis – *banzhurens'* self-efficacy positively affects their job satisfaction– was confirmed through structural equation modelling. This positive relationship among teachers has also been reported in Canada (Klassen & Chiu, 2010), Romania (Ortan et al., 2021), Germany (Jentsch et al., 2023), and Australia (Granziera & Perera, 2019). One of the possible reasons for the positive influence of self-efficacy on job satisfaction may be that teachers with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to accept and try new teaching methods and classroom management strategies and to pursue better work conditions that support their efforts; these factors may lead to effective teaching (such as student academic achievement) (Caprara et al., 2006; Klassen & Tze, 2014) as well as less job stress and burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010), contributing to a higher level of job satisfaction

It is worth noting that among the 12 items of the self-efficacy assessment scale, the only item with a score below 5 is "*I can communicate my ideas and perspectives with leadership*" (mean rating of 4.41 ± 1.59). There are two possible reasons for this. First, the participating *banzhurens* themselves may lack appropriate communication skills. Second, they may not have received satisfactory or expected responses after sincere communication with their school leaders. It is anticipated that the low rating on this item is more likely a result of the second reason. This is because, in some schools in China, school leaders usually adopt bureaucratic leadership approaches and professional strategies that value only praise and effort, while discouraging suggestions and demands (X. Zhang et al., 2022).

The fourth hypothesis about *banzhurens'* self-efficacy mediating the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction was tested as valid. This result indicates that the *banzhurens'* self-efficacy could have reduced the negative influence of their burnout on job satisfaction. In other words, self-efficacy can be regarded as a protective factor against burnout (Shoji et al., 2016). Based on the scores of the participating *banzhurens'* self-efficacy, improving self-efficacy regarding interpersonal support, particularly in communication with school leaders, may be an effective strategy to boost their job satisfaction. This aligns with the findings in previous studies that school leaders' support is crucial for lessening *banzhurens'* emotional exhaustion (Zhou et al., 2024) and increasing their job satisfaction (Kuai & Zeng, 2016). While establishing a positive work environment, school leaders should also emphasise the "relational leadership" strategy, fostering positive norms of trust, mutual respect, and collective responsibility with *banzhurens* (S. Liu & Hallinger, 2018).

Conclusion

One of the major contributions of this study is the establishment and verification as reliable and valid of a questionnaire that measures *banzhurens'* job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and burnout – three significant factors reflecting the working status of *banzhurens*. Moreover, this study confirmed the positive relationship between *banzhurens'* self-efficacy and job satisfaction, along with the negative impact of burnout on both self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Additionally, *banzhurens'* self-efficacy serves a protective role against the impact of burnout on job satisfaction. We suggest that school leaders and other relevant authorities enhance *banzhurens'* job satisfaction by lessening their burnout, specifically through decreased workloads, by demonstrating greater respect, understanding, and support for them, and by encouraging communication to bolster their self-efficacy.

Limitations

Some limitations of this study need to be considered. First, because this is quantitative research, we could not capture the in-depth story behind the three variables. Second, the data was collected from a small city in China; thus, the results cannot be generalised or applied to the entire country of China. Third, although many factors contribute to a lack of job satisfaction, including insufficient allowance, interpersonal support, work stress, and opportunities for professional development, we selected for investigation only two factors – self-efficacy and burnout – which are extensively discussed among teachers in general but rarely mentioned among *banzhurens*.

Recommendations

We recommend that future research investigate the effect of *banzhurens'* self-efficacy and burnout through both quantitative and qualitative methods to better understand how these factors influence job satisfaction and which sub-construct of these two factors holds the greatest significance. Additionally, research could explore whether and how other relevant factors contribute to *banzhurens'* job satisfaction. Collecting data from various locations would provide deeper insights into the work-related dilemmas faced by Chinese primary school *banzhurens*.

Ethics Statements

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by the Human Research Ethics Committees of the University of Technology Sydney, with approval number ETH23-8528. The participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

Generative AI Statement

As the authors of this work, we used the AI tools ChatGPT and Grammarly for the purpose of translating and grammar checking. After using these AI tools, we reviewed and verified the final version of our work. We, as the authors, take full responsibility for the content of our published work.

Authorship Contribution Statement

Bai: Concept and design, data acquisition, data analysis/interpretation, writing. Lai: Drafting manuscript, critical revision of manuscript, supervision, final approval.

References

- Akomolafe, M. J., & Ogunmakin, A. O. (2014). Job satisfaction among secondary school teachers: Emotional intelligence, occupational stress and self-efficacy as predictors. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 4(3), 487-498. <https://doi.org/10.5901/jesr.2014.v4n3p487>
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191-215. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191>
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W.H. Freeman.
- Bandura, A. (2006). Guide for constructing self-efficacy scales. In T. Urdan & F. Pajares (Eds.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents* (pp. 307–337). Information Age Publishing.
- Brezicha, K. F., Ikoma, S., Park, H., & LeTendre, G. K. (2020). The ownership perception gap: Exploring teacher job satisfaction and its relationship to teachers' and principals' perception of decision-making opportunities. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 23(4), 428-456. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2018.1562098>
- Caprara, G. V., Barbaranelli, C., Steca, P., & Malone, P. S. (2006). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs as determinants of job satisfaction and students' academic achievement: A study at the school level. *Journal of School Psychology*, 44(6), 473-490. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2006.09.001>
- Carmines, E. G., & McIver, J. P. (1981). Analyzing models with unobserved variables: Analysis of covariance structure. In G. W. Bohrnstedt, & E. F. Borgatta (Eds.), *Social measurement: Current issues* (pp. 65-115). Sage.
- Chang, M.-L. (2009). An appraisal perspective of teacher burnout: Examining the emotional work of teachers. *Educational Psychology Review*, 21, 193-218. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-009-9106-y>
- Chen, J. (2020). 初中班主任职业压力、工作满意度与职业倦怠的关系研究 [A Research of the relationship among occupational stress, job satisfaction and job burnout of junior middle school head teachers] [Master thesis, Huazhong University of Science and Technology]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/4hOyGzD>
- Collie, R. J., Shapka, J. D., & Perry, N. E. (2012). School climate and social-emotional learning: Predicting teacher stress, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(4), 1189-1204. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029356>
- Cranny, C. J., Smith, P. C., & Stone, E. F. (1992). *Job satisfaction: How people feel about their jobs and how it affects their performance*. Lexington Press.
- Crossman, A., & Harris, P. (2006). Job satisfaction of secondary school teachers. *Educational Management, Administration and Leadership*, 34(1), 29-46. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143206059538>
- Deng, N., & Sun, Y.-C. (2021). 情绪智力对班主任的离岗意愿的影响研究——基于情绪劳动与情绪耗竭的中介作用 [A study on the influence of emotional intelligence on the turnover intention of the head teacher: The mediating effect of emotional labor and emotional exhaustion]. *Journal of Schooling Studies*, 18(05), 51-61. <https://bit.ly/4jaaR6j>
- Ding, B., & Wang, Y. (2018). 基础教育中的班主任工作特征与留岗意愿——以工作满意度为中介变量 [Headteachers' job characteristics and willingness of job retention in basic education — Job satisfaction as an intermediate variable]. *Educational Science*, 34(01), 54-62. <https://bit.ly/4i4ehXG>

- Dong, Y.-F. (2020). 小学教师的职业压力、工作满意度、职业倦怠及其相互关系研究 [A study on primary school teachers' occupational stress, job satisfaction, burnout, and their interrelationships] [Master thesis, Qingdao University]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/42osr10>
- Du, S.-Z. (2016). “班主任制”走向何方? [Perspective of “Class Headteacher System” in China]. *Education Academic Monthly*, (11), 3-10. <https://bit.ly/3XCaBoD>
- Education Research Institute of Shaanxi Normal University. (1981). 陕甘宁边区教育资料——小学部分 [Educational materials of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region——Primary education section]. Education Science Press.
- Essien, E. E., & Gimba, J. (2017). Teachers' level of job satisfaction and academic performance of students in social studies in Federal College of Education Yola, Adamawa State & COE Jalingo Taraba State, Nigeria. *Imperial Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 3(10), 532-535. <https://bit.ly/3RpN4n4>
- Feng, J.-J. (2016). 论专职班主任及其制度保障 [On full-time *banzhuren*s and their institutional support]. *Banzhuren*, (07), 5-10. <https://bit.ly/43ry6o1>
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3151312>
- Freudenberger, H. J. (1974). Staff burn-out. *Journal of Social Issues*, 30(1), 159-165. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1974.tb00706.x>
- Geng, S. (2018). 我国中小学班主任工作现状及对策 [The Current situation and countermeasures of primary and secondary school *banzhuren* in China]. *Educational Science Research*, (11), 44-50. <https://bit.ly/4lfBk4C>
- Ghasemzadeh, S., Nemati, M., & Fathi, J. (2019). Teacher self-efficacy and reflection as predictors of teacher burnout: An investigation of Iranian English language teachers. *Issues in Language Teaching*, 8(2), 25-50. https://ilt.atu.ac.ir/article_10964.html
- Granziera, H., & Perera, H. N. (2019). Relations among teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, engagement, and work satisfaction: A social cognitive view. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 58, 75-84. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2019.02.003>
- Hassan, O., & Ibourk, A. (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2019.02.003> Primary school teachers in Morocco. *Social Sciences and Humanities Open*, 4(1), Article 100148. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssho.2021.100148>
- Hayes, A. F. (2009). Beyond Baron and Kenny: Statistical mediation analysis in the new millennium. *Communication Monographs*, 76(4), 408-420. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03637750903310360>
- He, Z. (2022). 小学班主任胜任力现状及提升策略研究——以重庆市N区为例 [A study on the current situation and improving strategies of the primary school head teachers' competence — A case study of N District in Chongqing]. [Master thesis, Yunnan Normal University]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/4hX3MVH>
- Ho, C.-L., & Au, W.-T. (2006). Teaching satisfaction scale: Measuring job satisfaction of teachers. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 66(1), 172-185. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164405278573>
- Hu, L.-T., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 6(1), 1-55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10705519909540118>
- Huang, X., Lin, C.-H., & Lee, J. C. K. (2020). Moving beyond classroom teaching: A study of multidimensional teacher self-efficacy on job satisfaction and occupational commitment. *Teachers and Teaching*, 26(7-8), 522-542. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2021.1890014>
- Jentsch, A., Hoferichter, F., Blömeke, S., König, J., & Kaiser, G. (2023). Investigating teachers' job satisfaction, stress and working environment: The roles of self-efficacy and school leadership. *Psychology in the Schools*, 60(3), 679-690. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22788>
- Jiang, T. (2018). 班主任核心素养及专业标准体系建构——基于德尔菲法的研究 [Class-advisors' core qualities and professional standards construction]. *Educational Science Research*, (12), 78-87. <https://bit.ly/4j3INBM>
- Johnson, S. M., Kraft, M. A., & Papay, J. P. (2012). How context matters in high-need schools: The effects of teachers' working conditions on their professional satisfaction and their students' achievement. *Teachers College Record*, 114(10), 1-39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811211401004>
- Jomoad, P. D., Antiquina, L. M. M., Cericos, E. U., Bacus, J. A., Vallejo, J. H., Dionio, B. B., Bazar, J. S., Cocolan, J. V., & Clarin, A. S. (2021). Teachers' workload in relation to burnout and work performance. *International Journal of Educational Policy Research and Review*, 8(2), 48-53. <https://doi.org/10.15739/IJEP RR.21.007>

- Kelloway, E. K. (1998). *Using LISREL for structural equation modelling: A researcher's guide*. Sage.
- Klassen, R. M., & Chiu, M. M. (2010). Effects on teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction: Teacher gender, years of experience, and job stress. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 102*(3), 741-756. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019237>
- Klassen, R. M., & Tze, V. M. C. (2014). Teachers' self-efficacy, personality, and teaching effectiveness: A meta-analysis. *Educational Research Review, 12*, 59-76. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2014.06.001>
- Kuai, Y.-F., & Zeng, X.-L. (2016). 班主任离岗意愿的调查研究 [An investigation on the turnover intention of the head teacher]. *Journal of Schooling Studies, 13*(01), 48-56. <https://bit.ly/41Ov4ce>
- Lauerermann, F., & Berger, J.-L. (2021). Linking teacher self-efficacy and responsibility with teachers' self-reported and student-reported motivating styles and student engagement. *Learning and Instruction, 76*, Article 101441. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2020.101441>
- Leung, D. Y. P., & Lee, W. W. S. (2006). Predicting intention to quit among Chinese teachers: Differential predictability of the components of burnout. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping, 19*(2), 129-141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615800600565476>
- Li, G., Tsang, K. K., Wang, L., & Liu, D. (2023). Are *banzhuren*s (homeroom teachers) more prone to burnout in China? The moderation effect of school culture. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher, 32*, 855-866. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-022-00701-1>
- Li, J.-M., Wu, Z.-H., & Wang, H. (2017). 新形势下中小学班主任工作状况的调查与反思 [Investigation and reflection on the working situations of class teachers of primary and secondary schools in the new situations]. *Modern Education Management, (11)*, 75-81. <https://bit.ly/4j2IE5u>
- Lin, J.-Y. (2020). 中班主任工作满意度及激励机制研究——以广州市H区为例 [A study on job satisfaction and incentive mechanism of junior middle school head teachers -Take H District of Guangzhou as an example] [Master thesis, Yunnan University]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/4jacFw7>
- Liu, H. (2003). 教师集体效能、教师自我效能及其对学生学业效能和学习态度影响的层次关系研究 [Teacher collective efficacy, teacher self-efficacy and their effect on students' academic efficacy and attitude to learning-A multilevel structural analysis] [Doctoral dissertation, Beijing Normal University]. Beijing Normal University Library Dissertation Service System. <https://bit.ly/4cg9PDM>
- Liu, S., & Hallinger, P. (2018). Principal instructional leadership, teacher self-efficacy, and teacher professional learning in China: Testing a mediated-effects model. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 54*(4), 501-528. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X18769048>
- Liu, Y.-C. (2015). 小学优秀班主任核心能力的实证研究 [An empirical study on the core competencies of excellent primary school class teachers]. *Shanghai Educational Research, (08)*, 47-50. <https://bit.ly/4hTyUFA>
- Locke, E. A. (1969). What is job satisfaction? *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 4*(4), 309-336. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073\(69\)90013-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(69)90013-0)
- Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In S. Zedeck (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 1297-1343). Rand McNally.
- Madigan, D. J., & Kim, L. E. (2021). Towards an understanding of teacher attrition: A meta-analysis of burnout, job satisfaction, and teachers' intentions to quit. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 105*, Article 103425. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103425>
- Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1986). *Maslach burnout inventory: Manual* (2nd ed.). Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour, 2*(2), 99-113. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030020205>
- Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Burnout. In G. Fink (Ed.), *Stress: Concepts, cognition, emotion, and behavior* (pp. 351-357). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/C2013-0-12842-5>
- Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. (2009). 中小学班主任工作规定 [Regulations on the work of *banzhuren* in primary and secondary schools]. <https://bit.ly/4hWklvG>
- Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. (2023). 小学教育专任教师分学历、分专业技术职务情况 (总计) [Number of full-time teachers in primary schools by academic qualifications and professional rank (Total)]. <https://bit.ly/4j8H5yQ>
- Naz, S. (2017). Factors affecting teachers job satisfaction. *Market Forces, 12*(2), 44-59. <https://bit.ly/3ELMDRH>

- Ning, J., & Fang, C. (2020). 从“西语”到“西学”——京师同文馆课程改革的历史考察 [From "Western languages" to "Western learning": A historical study of curriculum reform at the Tongwen Guan in Beijing]. *Higher Education Exploration*, (07), 99-105. <https://bit.ly/3FJRF0J>
- Okçu, V., & Çetin, H. (2017). Investigating the relationship among the level of mobbing experience, job satisfaction and burnout levels of primary and secondary school teachers. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 5(1), 148-161. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2017.050119>
- Lolube, N. P. (2006). Teachers job satisfaction and motivation for school effectiveness: An assessment. *Essays in Education*, 18(1), Article 9. <https://openriver.winona.edu/eie/vol18/iss1/9/>
- Oropesa Ruiz, N. F., Atria, L., Pérez-Fuentes, M. d. C., Molero Jurado, M. d. M., & Gázquez Linares, J. J. (2019). Burnout, perceived efficacy, and job satisfaction: Perception of the educational context in high school teachers. *BioMed Research International*, 2019(1), Article 1021408. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2019/1021408>
- Ortan, F., Simut, C., & Simut, R. (2021). Self-efficacy, job satisfaction and teacher well-being in the K-12 educational system. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(23), Article 12763. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182312763>
- Pajares, F. (1997). Current directions in self-efficacy research. In M. Maehr, & P. R. Pintrich (Eds.), *Advances in motivation and achievement* (Vol. 10, pp. 1-49). JAI Press.
- Pan, Y.-H., & Zhang, R.-B. (2017). 初中班主任工作满意度影响因素的多层分析——基于中国教育追踪数据(2013-2014)的应用 [A multilevel analysis of factors influencing job satisfaction of junior high school class teachers: Application based on China Education Panel Survey data (2013-2014)]. *Education Academic Monthly*, (05), 67-74. <https://bit.ly/42adnmg>
- Perrachione, B. A., Petersen, G. J., & Rosser, V. J. (2008). Why do they stay? Elementary teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and retention. *The Professional Educator*, 32(2), Article 1. <https://bit.ly/3E7yjsC>
- Pietarinen, J., Pyhältö, K., Soini, T., & Salmela-Aro, K. (2013). Reducing teacher burnout: A socio-contextual approach. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 35, 62-72. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2013.05.003>
- Qi, X.-H., & Huang, L. (2019). 建构与重构:专业化视域下的班主任制度建设 [The historical changes of class teachers in our country: Based on the professionalism of class teacher]. *Educational Science Research*, (12), 73-79. <https://bit.ly/4clkjlq>
- Qin, X.-X., Wu, J., & Zhang, M.-M. (2021). 中小学班主任留岗意愿影响因素研究——基于 5065 位班主任的实证调查 [A study on factors influencing the retention intentions of primary and secondary school class teachers: An empirical investigation based on 5065 class teachers]. *Educational Science Research*, (11), 54-60. <https://bit.ly/442Xel6>
- Rajendran, N., Watt, H. M. G., & Richardson, P. W. (2020). Teacher burnout and turnover intent. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 47, 477-500. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-019-00371-x>
- Ronfeldt, M., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2013). How teacher turnover harms student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50(1), 4-36. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831212463813>
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Salanova, M. (2007). Efficacy or inefficacy, that's the question: Burnout and work engagement, and their relationships with efficacy beliefs. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping*, 20(2), 177-196. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615800701217878>
- Shang, C.-J. (2003). 班级授课制的历史、现状与对策 [The history, current situation, and countermeasures of the class-based teaching system]. *Journal of Fujian Institute of Education*, (07), 110-112. <https://bit.ly/3E8ehHW>
- She, L.-M. (2021). 走向教师领导: 学校日常生活中的班主任角色构建 [Towards teacher leadership: The role-construction of *banzhuren* in daily school life]. *Educational Science Edition/Journal of Soochow University*, (01), 63-70. <https://bit.ly/4caKrzf>
- Shen, B., McCaughtry, N., Martin, J., Garn, A., Kulik, N., & Fahlman, M. (2015). The relationship between teacher burnout and student motivation. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 85(4), 519-532. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12089>
- Shoji, K., Cieslak, R., Smoktunowicz, E., Rogala, A., Benight, C. C., & Luszczynska, A. (2016). Associations between job burnout and self-efficacy: A meta-analysis. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping*, 29(4), 367-386. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2015.1058369>
- Simms, L. J., Zelazny, K., Williams, T. F., & Bernstein, L. (2019). Does the number of response options matter? Psychometric perspectives using personality questionnaire data. *Psychological Assessment*, 31(4), 557-566. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pas0000648>

- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2009). Does school context matter? Relations with teacher burnout and job satisfaction. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(3), 518-524. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2008.12.006>
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2010). Teacher self-efficacy and teacher burnout: A study of relations. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26*(4), 1059-1069. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.11.001>
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2011). Teacher job satisfaction and motivation to leave the teaching profession: Relations with school context, feeling of belonging, and emotional exhaustion. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 27*(6), 1029-1038. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2011.04.001>
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2017). Motivated for teaching? Associations with school goal structure, teacher self-efficacy, job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 67*, 152-160. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.06.006>
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2020). Teacher burnout: Relations between dimensions of burnout, perceived school context, job satisfaction and motivation for teaching. A longitudinal study. *Teachers and Teaching, 26*(7-8), 602-616. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2021.1913404>
- Smetackova, I. (2017). Self-efficacy and burnout syndrome among teachers. *The European Journal of Social and Behavioural Sciences, 20*(3), 228-241. <https://doi.org/10.15405/ejbsbs.219>
- Toropova, A., Myrberg, E., & Johansson, S. (2021). Teacher job satisfaction: The importance of school working conditions and teacher characteristics. *Educational Review, 73*(1), 71-97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1705247>
- Troesch, L. M., & Bauer, C. E. (2017). Second career teachers: Job satisfaction, job stress, and the role of self-efficacy. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 67*, 389-398. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.07.006>
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2007). The differential antecedents of self-efficacy beliefs of novice and experienced teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 23*(6), 944-956. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2006.05.003>
- Tschannen-Moran, M., Hoy, A. W., & Hoy, W. K. (1998). Teacher efficacy: Its meaning and measure. *Review of Educational Research, 68*(2), 202-248. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543068002202>
- Wang, H., Cousineau, C., Wang, B., Zeng, L., Sun, A., Kohrman, E., Li, N., Tok, E., Boswell, M., & Rozelle, S. (2022). Exploring teacher job satisfaction in rural China: Prevalence and correlates. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19*(6), Article 3537. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19063537>
- Wang, H., Hall, N. C., & Rahimi, S. (2015). Self-efficacy and causal attributions in teachers: Effects on burnout, job satisfaction, illness, and quitting intentions. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 47*, 120-130. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2014.12.005>
- Wang, Y., Wen, Z., Li, W., & Fang, J. (2022). 新世纪 20 年国内结构方程模型方法研究与模型发展 [Methodological research and model development on structural equation models in China's mainland from 2001 to 2020]. *Advances in Psychological Science, 30*(8), 1715-1733. <https://bit.ly/41Pc8dp>
- Yang, H. (2016). 中小学班主任工作倦怠与工作满意度的关系研究——以北京市朝阳区为例 [Study on the relationship between job burnout and job satisfaction of primary and secondary school class teachers: With Chaoyang District in Beijing as an example]. *Journal of Beijing Institute of Education (Natural Science Edition), 11*(01), 20-26. <https://bit.ly/3F0dNY3>
- Yorulmaz, Y. I., Colak, I., & Altinkurt, Y. (2017). A meta-analysis of the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and burnout. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, 17*(71), 175-192. <https://bit.ly/3GoJt6R>
- Yu, R.-P. (2023). 从西语到西学：清末京师同文馆创办始末 [From Western languages to Western studies: The founding and development of the Beijing Tongwen Institute in the late Qing dynasty]. *Beijing Archives, (02)*, 55-57. <https://bit.ly/4iXtB9B>
- Yuan, J. (2019). 小学班主任工作满意度现状及其影响因素实证研究——以郑州市 268 所小学为例 [An empirical study of job satisfaction of primary school head teachers: Taking 268 primary schools in Zhengzhou as an example]. *Contemporary Education Forum, (01)*, 83-96. <https://bit.ly/4i4h5nG>
- Zhang, C. (2022). 中小学班主任工作负担:现实表征、深层困局与防范机制 [The workload of head teachers in primary and secondary schools: Representation of reality, deep dilemma and preventive mechanism]. *Modern Education Management, (09)*, 46-53. <https://bit.ly/3FtGaa0>
- Zhang, X., Wong, J. L. N., & Wang, X. (2022). How do the leadership strategies of middle leaders affect teachers' learning in schools? A case study from China. *Professional Development in Education, 48*(3), 444-461. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2021.1895284>

- Zhao, F.-J., & Liu, J.-C. (2018). 我国中小学班主任工作现状问卷调查与分析 [The questionnaire survey and analysis on the work status of primary and secondary school headteachers in China]. *Educational Science Research*, (11), 38-43. <https://bit.ly/4hUVldQ>
- Zhao, X., & Jeon, L. (2024). Examining the associations between teacher job satisfaction, workplace climate, and well-being resources within Head Start Programs. *Early Education and Development*, 35(5), 933-949. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2023.2221765>
- Zheng, P.-J. (2019). 乡村小学班主任工作满意度提升机制研究 [A study on the improvement mechanism of class teacher's job satisfaction in rural primary schools] [Master thesis, Northeast Normal University]. CNKI. <https://bit.ly/3FOFgZE>
- Zhou, C.-S., Sha, J.-Y., Xu, Y.-Y., & Li, C.-M. (2024). 社会支持在班主任工作压力与职业倦怠间的中介作用 [The mediating role of social support between class teachers' work stress and occupational burnout]. *Occupation and Health*, 40(10), 1318-1323. <https://bit.ly/3FMmkLc>
- Zhu, Y. (1986). 中国近代学制史料 [Historical materials on modern Chinese education system]. East China Normal University Press.

Appendix C – Mplus Syntaxes

Example Mplus Syntaxes for Multi-group Confirmatory Factor Analysis

```
TITLE: configural model TSE
DATA: file is data6main.csv;
variable: names are j1 j3 j4 j5
           t1 t18 t20 t25
           t27 t28 t37 t38
           t42 t46 t53 t55
           b1 b3 b5 b6 b8 b9
           b19 b20 b22
           js tse tse1 tse2 tse3
           bnt bnt1 bnt2
           yrs_bzr2;

USEVAR ARE t1 t18 t20 t25
           t27 t28 t37 t38
           t42 t46 t53 t55;

GROUPING IS yrs_bzr2 (1=young 2=medium 3=old);

MODEL: !测量模型 没有组别说明
       tse1 BY t1 t18 t20 t25;
       tse2 BY t27 t28 t37 t38;
       tse3 BY t42 t46 t53 t55;

       [tse1@0 tse2@0 tse3@0]; !设定因素的平均值为0

MODEL medium: !设定第二组
       tse1 BY t1@1 t18 t20 t25; !允许因素负荷量跨群组不同
       tse2 BY t27@1 t28 t37 t38;
       tse3 BY t42@1 t46 t53 t55;

       [t1 t18 t20 t25
        t27 t28 t37 t38
        t42 t46 t53 t55]; !允许截距跨群组不同

MODEL old: !设定第三组
       tse1 BY t1@1 t18 t20 t25; !允许因素负荷量跨群组不同
       tse2 BY t27@1 t28 t37 t38;
       tse3 BY t42@1 t46 t53 t55;

       [t1 t18 t20 t25
        t27 t28 t37 t38
        t42 t46 t53 t55]; !允许截距跨群组不同

output: SAMPSTAT STDYX;
```

```

TITLE:factorloading model TSE
DATA: file is data6main.csv;
variable: names are j1 j3 j4 j5
                t1 t18 t20 t25
                t27 t28 t37 t38
                t42 t46 t53 t55
                b1 b3 b5 b6 b8 b9
                b19 b20 b22
                js tse tse1 tse2 tse3
                bnt bnt1 bnt2
                yrs_bzr2;

USEVAR ARE t1 t18 t20 t25
           t27 t28 t37 t38
           t42 t46 t53 t55;

GROUPING IS yrs_bzr2 (1=young 2=medium 3=old);

MODEL: !测量模型 没有组别说明
tse1 BY t1 t18 t20 t25;
tse2 BY t27 t28 t37 t38;
tse3 BY t42 t46 t53 t55;

[tse1@0 tse2@0 tse3@0]; !设定因素的平均值为0

MODEL medium: !设定第二组
!tse BY t1@1 t18 t20 t25; !允许因素负荷量跨群组不同
!tse2 BY t27@1 t28 t37 t38;
!tse3 BY t42@1 t46 t53 t55;

[t1 t18 t20 t25
t27 t28 t37 t38
t42 t46 t53 t55]; !允许截距跨群组不同

MODEL old: !设定第三组
!tse BY t1@1 t18 t20 t25; !允许因素负荷量跨群组不同
!tse2 BY t27@1 t28 t37 t38;
!tse3 BY t42@1 t46 t53 t55;

[t1 t18 t20 t25
t27 t28 t37 t38
t42 t46 t53 t55]; !允许截距跨群组不同

output: SAMPSTAT STDYX;

```

```

TITLE:intercept model TSE
DATA: file is data6main.csv;
variable: names are j1 j3 j4 j5
                t1 t18 t20 t25
                t27 t28 t37 t38
                t42 t46 t53 t55
                b1 b3 b5 b6 b8 b9
                b19 b20 b22
                js tse tse1 tse2 tse3
                bnt bnt1 bnt2
                yrs_bzr2;

USEVAR ARE t1 t18 t20 t25
           t27 t28 t37 t38
           t42 t46 t53 t55;

GROUPING IS yrs_bzr2 (1=young 2=medium 3=old);

MODEL: !测量模型 没有组别说明
tse1 BY t1 t18 t20 t25;
tse2 BY t27 t28 t37 t38;
tse3 BY t42 t46 t53 t55;

[tse1@0 tse2@0 tse3@0]; !设定因素的平均值为0

MODEL medium: !设定第二组
!tse BY t1@1 t18 t20 t25 !允许因素负荷量跨群组不同
!tse2 BY t27@1 t28 t37 t38;
!tse3 BY t42@1 t46 t53 t55;

![t1 t18 t20 t25
!t27 t28 t37 t38
!t42 t46 t53 t55]; !允许截距跨群组不同

MODEL old: !设定第三组
!tse BY t1@1 t18 t20 t25 !允许因素负荷量跨群组不同
!tse2 BY t27@1 t28 t37 t38;
!tse3 BY t42@1 t46 t53 t55;

![t1 t18 t20 t25
!t27 t28 t37 t38
!t42 t46 t53 t55]; !允许截距跨群组不同

output: SAMPSTAT STDYX;

```

```

TITLE:Variance and covariance model TSE
DATA: file is data6main.csv;
variable: names are j1 j3 j4 j5
           t1 t18 t20 t25
           t27 t28 t37 t38
           t42 t46 t53 t55
           b1 b3 b5 b6 b8 b9
           b19 b20 b22
           js tse tse1 tse2 tse3
           bnt bnt1 bnt2
           yrs_bzr2;

USEVAR ARE t1 t18 t20 t25
           t27 t28 t37 t38
           t42 t46 t53 t55;

GROUPING IS yrs_bzr2 (1=young 2=medium 3=old);

MODEL: !测量模型 没有组别说明
tse1 BY t1 t18 t20 t25;
tse2 BY t27 t28 t37 t38;
tse3 BY t42 t46 t53 t55;

[tse1@0 tse2@0 tse3@0]; !设定因素的平均值为0

!设定方差全等
tse1(1); tse2(2); tse3(3);

!设定协方差全等
tse1 WITH tse2(4);
tse1 WITH tse3(5);
tse2 WITH tse3(6);

MODEL medium: !设定第二组
!tse BY t1@1 t18 t20 t25 !允许因素负荷量跨群组不同
!tse2 BY t27@1 t28 t37 t38;
!tse3 BY t42@1 t46 t53 t55;

![t1 t18 t20 t25
!t27 t28 t37 t38
!t42 t46 t53 t55]; !允许截距跨群组不同

MODEL old: !设定第三组
!tse BY t1@1 t18 t20 t25 !允许因素负荷量跨群组不同
!tse2 BY t27@1 t28 t37 t38;
!tse3 BY t42@1 t46 t53 t55;

![t1 t18 t20 t25
!t27 t28 t37 t38
!t42 t46 t53 t55]; !允许截距跨群组不同

output: SAMPSTAT STDYX;

```

```

TITLE:residual model TSE
DATA: file is data6main.csv;
variable: names are j1 j3 j4 j5
                t1 t18 t20 t25
                t27 t28 t37 t38
                t42 t46 t53 t55
                b1 b3 b5 b6 b8 b9
                b19 b20 b22
                js tse tse1 tse2 tse3
                bnt bnt1 bnt2
                yrs_bzr2;

USEVAR ARE t1 t18 t20 t25
            t27 t28 t37 t38
            t42 t46 t53 t55;

GROUPING IS yrs_bzr2 (1=young 2=medium 3=old);
MODEL: !测量模型 没有组别说明
tse1 BY t1 t18 t20 t25;
tse2 BY t27 t28 t37 t38;
tse3 BY t42 t46 t53 t55;

[tse1@0 tse2@0 tse3@0]; !设定因素的平均值为0

!设定方差全等
tse1(1); tse2(2); tse3(3);

!设定协方差全等
tse1 WITH tse2(4);
tse1 WITH tse3(5);
tse2 WITH tse3(6);

!设定残差相等
t1(11); t18(12); t20(13); t25(14);
t27(15); t28(16); t37(17); t38(18);
t42(19); t46(20); t53(21); t55(22);

MODEL medium: !设定第二组
!tse BY t1@1 t18 t20 t25 !允许因素负荷量跨群组不同
!tse2 BY t27@1 t28 t37 t38;
!tse3 BY t42@1 t46 t53 t55;

![t1 t18 t20 t25
!t27 t28 t37 t38
!t42 t46 t53 t55]; !允许截距跨群组不同

MODEL old: !设定第三组
!tse BY t1@1 t18 t20 t25 !允许因素负荷量跨群组不同
!tse2 BY t27@1 t28 t37 t38;
!tse3 BY t42@1 t46 t53 t55;

![t1 t18 t20 t25
!t27 t28 t37 t38
!t42 t46 t53 t55]; !允许截距跨群组不同

output: SAMPSTAT STDYX;

```

Example Mplus Syntaxes for CFA

```
title: allCFA4;
data: file is data2.csv;
variable: names are gender age yrs_bzr j1 j2 j3 j4 j5 t1 t2 t3 t4 t5 t6 t7 t8 t9 t10
t11 t12 t13 t14 t15 t16 t17 t18 t19 t20 t21 t22 t23 t24 t25 t26 t27 t28 t29 t30 t31 t32
t33 t34 t35 t36 t37 t38 t39 t40 t41 t42 t43 t44 t45 t46 t47 t48 t49 t50 t51 t52 t53 t54
t55 t56 b1 b2 b3 b4 b5 b6 b7 b8 b9 b10 b11 b12 b13 b14 b15 b16 b17 b18 b19 b20 b21 b22;

usevariables =j1 j3 j4 j5
t1 t18 t20 t25
t27 t28 t37 t38
t42 t46 t53 t55
b1 b3 b5 b6 b8 b9
b19 b20;

analysis:
estimator is ML

model:
js BY j1 j3 j4 j5;

tse BY t1 t18 t20 t25
t27 t28 t37 t38
t42 t46 t53 t55;

bnt BY b1 b3 b5 b6 b8 b9
b19 b20;

output:stand MODINDICES;
```

Example Mplus Syntaxes for Structural Model

```
title: sem2_with_yrs;
DATA: file is data5main.csv;
variable: names are j1 j3 j4 j5
           t1 t18 t20 t25
           t27 t28 t37 t38
           t42 t46 t53 t55
           b1 b3 b5 b6 b8 b9
           b19 b20 b22
           js tse tse1 tse2 tse3
           bnt bnt1 bnt2
           yrs_bzr2;

usevariables =j1 j3 j4 j5
             t1 t18 t20 t25
             t27 t28 t37 t38
             t42 t46 t53 t55
             b1 b3 b5 b6 b8 b9
             b19 b20 yrs_bzr2;

ANALYSIS:
  ESTIMATOR IS ML;

model:
  js BY j1 j3 j4 j5;

  tse BY t1 t18 t20 t25
       t27 t28 t37 t38
       t42 t46 t53 t55;

  bnt BY b1 b3 b5 b6 b8 b9
       b19 b20;

  js on tse bnt yrs_bzr2;

  tse on bnt yrs_bzr2;

  bnt on yrs_bzr2;

output: SAMPSTAT; STDYX;
```

Example Mplus Syntaxes for Mediation Effect

```
TITLE:mediator4final
DATA: file is data7main.csv;
variable: names are j1 j3 j4 j5
           t1 t18 t20 t25
           t27 t28 t37 t38
           t42 t46 t53 t55
           b1 b3 b5 b6 b8 b9
           b19 b20 b22
           js tse tse1 tse2 tse3
           bnt bnt1 bnt2
           yrs_bzr2;

usevariables =js tse bnt yrs_bzr2;

ANALYSIS:
ESTIMATOR=ML;
boot=5000;

MODEL:

tse on bnt(a);
tse on yrs_bzr2;

js on tse(b)
    bnt(c);

js on yrs_bzr2;
bnt on yrs_bzr2;

model constraint:
NEW(ind total r);
ind=a*b;
total=ind+c;
r=ind/total;

OUTPUT:STDYX CINT(BCBOOT);
```