

The Relationship Between Perceived Organization Support and Teacher Well-Being Among Middle School Music Teacher in Shandong, China

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Abstract

Grounded in Organizational Support Theory and Social Exchange Theory, this study examines the relationship between perceived organizational support and well-being among middle school music teachers in Shandong Province, China, while also considering the role of demographic characteristics and teaching experience. Perceived organizational support is conceptualized as teachers' belief that their contributions are valued and their socio-emotional needs are recognized by the institution, which in turn is theorized to foster reciprocal positive attitudes and higher well-being. Data were collected through standardized questionnaires, and correlation analysis, independent-sample t-tests, and one-way ANOVA were conducted to identify relational dynamics and group-level differences. Findings revealed that perceived organizational support was positively and significantly associated with teacher well-being, supporting the theoretical proposition that supportive organizational climates enhance individual flourishing. Moreover, differences emerged across demographic variables such as gender and educational attainment, while variations by teaching experience suggested that early-career teachers reported comparatively higher levels of well-being. The study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that teacher well-being is shaped not only by individual factors but also by the perceived quality of organizational relationships and institutional structures. It is recommended that policymakers and school leaders strengthen organizational support systems, establish transparent recognition mechanisms, and promote professional development pathways to reinforce teacher well-being and ensure sustainable educational outcomes.

1. Introduction

Teacher well-being has increasingly been conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing emotional, cognitive, and professional fulfillment that sustains instructional quality and long-term career engagement (Hascher & Waber, 2021). While individual psychological resources contribute to well-being, recent scholarship highlights that organizational contexts and social exchange mechanisms are equally central (Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012). Perceived Organizational Support Theory (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986) provides a compelling framework for understanding these dynamics, positing that when employees perceive their institution as valuing their contributions and caring for their socio-emotional needs, they reciprocate with stronger affective commitment, enhanced motivation, and greater well-being.

This reciprocity reflects core principles of Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which underscores the mutually reinforcing relationship between institutional support and individual outcomes.

Within secondary education, music teachers represent a particularly meaningful case: their roles extend beyond technical instruction to include nurturing creativity, fostering cultural identity, and supporting students' emotional development, all of which heighten their reliance on supportive organizational structures. However, research on the well-being of music teachers in China remains limited, especially regarding how perceived organizational support shapes their professional experiences. Building on Organizational Support Theory and Social Exchange Theory, the present study investigates the relationship between perceived organizational support and teacher well-being among secondary school music teachers in Shandong Province. By situating teacher well-being within a theoretically grounded framework, this study seeks to advance understanding of the mechanisms through which institutional contexts influence teacher flourishing, while offering practical implications for educational management and policy.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Teacher Well-Being and Perceived Organizational Support

Teacher well-being has become a focal concern in educational psychology due to its direct implications for teacher retention, instructional quality, and student achievement. Drawing on Seligman's (2011) well-being theory, teacher well-being can be understood as a multidimensional construct comprising Positive Emotions, Engagement, Positive Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment (PERMA). This framework provides a comprehensive account of flourishing that extends beyond the absence of stress or burnout, emphasizing the cultivation of positive affect, sustained involvement in professional tasks, supportive interpersonal relationships, a sense of purpose, and recognition of achievements. Within educational settings, these dimensions collectively reflect teachers' capacity to thrive personally and professionally, aligning individual fulfillment with broader institutional goals (Hascher & Waber, 2021).

A substantial body of evidence indicates that organizational factors are critical in shaping teachers' experiences across the PERMA dimensions. Perceived Organizational Support, grounded in Organizational Support Theory (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986), refers to employees' perceptions that their institution values their contributions and attends to their socio-emotional needs. POS has been shown to foster Positive Emotions by reducing occupational stress, strengthen Engagement by enhancing motivation, and support Positive Relationships through collegial trust and recognition (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Moreover, when teachers perceive higher levels of support, they report stronger feelings of Meaning in their professional role and a greater sense of Accomplishment, which in turn reinforces job satisfaction and long-term career commitment (Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012; Li, Sun, & Yang, 2023). These findings resonate with Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which posits that individuals reciprocate organizational care with enhanced commitment and performance, thereby establishing a reciprocal pathway from Perceived Organizational Support to teacher flourishing.

Despite these insights, research specifically examining the relationship between perceived organizational support and the multidimensional well-being of teachers remains limited, particularly within subject-specific domains. Music teachers occupy a distinctive pedagogical role in secondary schools: beyond delivering technical instruction, they contribute to students' cultural development and socio-emotional growth, while also engaging in performance-related responsibilities that often extend beyond classroom teaching. These dual demands render music

teachers' well-being highly contingent on organizational support, making them a critical yet underexplored group in the literature. Addressing this gap, the present study focuses on middle school music teachers in Shandong Province, employing the PERMA framework to investigate how perceived organizational support influences different facets of their well-being, and offering context-sensitive implications for educational leadership and policy.

2.2 Cross-Cultural Insights and Research Gaps

Despite broad agreement on the significance of perceived organizational support, cross-cultural research reveals contextual differences in how organizational support influences teacher well-being. In Western educational systems, the emphasis is often placed on individual recognition, professional autonomy, and career advancement as key drivers of Engagement and Accomplishment (Klusmann et al., 2016). By contrast, studies in China indicate that teachers' sense of Meaning and Positive Relationships is more strongly shaped by collective values, institutional support, and cultural expectations of teaching as a socially esteemed profession (Yin, 2018).

Although existing studies have established the beneficial role of perceived organizational support in promoting teacher well-being across diverse educational systems, several gaps remain salient. First, much of the extant research has been conducted in Western contexts, where institutional cultures prioritize individual autonomy and professional recognition (Klusmann et al., 2016). In contrast, in East Asian settings such as China, where collectivist values and hierarchical structures shape workplace interactions, the mechanisms through which organizational support influences teachers' well-being may differ significantly (Yin, 2018). Second, most empirical work has examined teacher well-being in general terms, without systematically applying multidimensional frameworks such as Seligman's PERMA model. This limits understanding of how organizational support translates into specific domains of well-being, including the cultivation of positive emotions, sustained engagement, meaningful professional purpose, and recognition of accomplishment. Third, subject-specific investigations remain scarce. Music teachers, for example, face unique professional demands involving artistic instruction, performance obligations, and extracurricular responsibilities that intensify their reliance on supportive organizational environments. Yet, their well-being has received comparatively little empirical attention. Addressing these gaps, the present study employs the PERMA framework to explore how perceived organizational support shapes the multidimensional well-being of secondary school music teachers in Shandong Province, thereby extending international scholarship with context-sensitive evidence and advancing theoretical insights into teacher flourishing.

3. Methodology and Procedures

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationship between perceived organizational support and the well-being of secondary school music teachers in Linyi, China. A two-stage sampling procedure was implemented to enhance representativeness. First, nine secondary schools were randomly selected from the total of 153 schools in the city. Within each school, participants were further stratified by demographic variables such as gender, age, and years of teaching experience, followed by simple random sampling to determine the final sample.

Data collection was carried out through a structured questionnaire composed of two major scales. Teacher well-being was assessed using the PERMA-Profiler (Butler & Kern, 2016), which captures five dimensions of well-being: Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning,

and Accomplishment. Perceived organizational support was measured using the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986), adapted to the Chinese educational context following back-translation procedures to ensure cross-linguistic equivalence. Both instruments employed a five-point Likert scale.

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 27. Descriptive statistics were first computed to profile the sample. Inferential analyses included independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA to identify differences across demographic groups, as well as Pearson's correlation coefficient and multiple regression analyses to test the predictive role of perceived organizational support on teachers' multidimensional well-being.

The study was conducted in accordance with ethical research standards. Participants provided informed consent, anonymity was guaranteed, and approval was obtained from the research ethics committee of the host institution.

3.2 Questionnaire Design

3.2.1 PERMA-Profiler

The PERMA-Profiler, developed by Butler and Kern (2016), is a widely validated instrument designed to operationalize Seligman's multidimensional model of well-being. Rooted in the positive psychology framework, the scale measures five key dimensions of flourishing: Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. The standard instrument consists of 23 items, including 15 core items (three per dimension), as well as supplementary items assessing negative emotion, physical health, and loneliness. Originally, responses are collected on an 11-point Likert-type scale (0 = "never" to 10 = "always"); however, in the present study, a five-point Likert scale (1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree") was adopted to ensure consistency with the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support and to enhance comparability across constructs.

Previous studies have demonstrated that the PERMA-Profiler exhibits robust psychometric properties, including internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha > .70$ for all dimensions), factorial validity, and criterion-related validity with established measures of subjective well-being and life satisfaction (Butler & Kern, 2016; Umucu et al., 2020). The multidimensional nature of the scale provides a comprehensive framework for investigating teacher well-being in educational contexts, where both psychological resources and organizational support factors converge to shape professional flourishing.

3.2.2 Perceived Organizational Support Questionnaire

Perceived organizational support refers to employees' general beliefs about the extent to which their employing organization values their contributions and demonstrates concern for their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). The Survey of Perceived Organizational Support is the most widely applied instrument for measuring this construct and has been extensively validated in both organizational and educational contexts. The original instrument included 36 items; however, shorter versions have been developed and psychometrically validated to reduce participant burden while preserving reliability and validity. Among these, the 8-item short form has been widely recognized as a reliable and efficient measure (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

In the present study, the 8-item short form of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support was employed to assess the degree to which secondary school music teachers in Linyi perceived their schools as supportive of their professional and personal needs. To ensure comparability with the PERMA-Profiler and to facilitate consistency across measurement instruments, the response format was standardized to a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5

(“strongly agree”). Previous research has demonstrated that the short form of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support shows high internal consistency, strong convergent validity with job satisfaction and affective commitment, and predictive validity for a variety of outcomes including employee well-being and performance (Kurtessis, Eisenberger, Ford, Buffardi, Stewart, & Adis, 2017).

3.3 Questionnaire Sampling Methods

To ensure methodological rigor and enhance the validity of the study, a multi-stage sampling design was adopted, integrating simple random sampling with stratified random sampling. In the first stage, a comprehensive sampling frame was constructed, encompassing all secondary school music teachers employed in Linyi City. This complete roster minimized risks of omission and systematic bias, thereby guaranteeing the accuracy and inclusiveness of the target population. From the total of 153 secondary schools in the city, nine schools were selected using simple random sampling. Each school was assigned a numerical identification code, and a computer-generated random sequence determined the final selection, which ensured fairness and statistical randomness.

In the second stage, stratified random sampling was applied to capture demographic diversity across the sample. Within the nine selected schools, detailed teacher lists were obtained, and participants were stratified by gender and age groups to ensure proportional representation. Random draws were then performed independently within each stratum to enhance demographic balance and reduce potential sampling error.

Through this multi-stage approach, a total of 390 valid responses were collected. The integration of simple and stratified random sampling ensured that the final sample adequately reflected the heterogeneity of secondary school music teachers in Linyi, thereby improving the reliability, representativeness, and generalizability of the research findings on teacher well-being and perceived organizational support.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Reliability and Validity Analysis

Table 1.1: Cronbach Reliability Analysis

Dimensions	Number of terms	Cronbach α coefficient
Perceived Organizational Support	8	0.795

Table 1.2: Cronbach Reliability Analysis

Dimensions	Number of terms	Cronbach α coefficient
PERMA-Profiler Well-being Scale	15	0.861
Positive Emotion	3	0.846

Engagement	3	0.83
Relationships	3	0.82
Meaning	3	0.835
Accomplishment	3	0.811

As presented in the table, the measurement instruments adopted in this study comprised the Perceived Organizational Support scale and the PERMA-Profiler Well-being Scale, covering key dimensions including Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. The results of the reliability analysis indicated that all dimensions demonstrated Cronbach's α coefficients above 0.80, with the lowest value recorded as 0.811, thus reflecting strong internal consistency across the subscales. Furthermore, the overall Cronbach's α coefficients of the two instruments were 0.795 and 0.861, respectively, both exceeding the widely accepted threshold of 0.70 in psychological and educational research. These findings confirm that the scales utilized in this study possess robust reliability and internal coherence, thereby ensuring a solid methodological basis for subsequent empirical investigations.

Table 1.3: KMO and Bartlett Tests

Dimensionality	KMO value	Bartlett sphericity test		
		Approximate chi-square	df	p value
Perceived Organizational Support	0.879	532.129	28	0.000

Table 1.4: KMO and Bartlett Tests

Dimensionality	KMO value	Bartlett sphericity test		
		Approximate chi-square	df	p value
PERMA-Profiler Well-being Scale	0.869	1765.432	105	0.000
Positive Emotion	0.866	198.457	3	0.000
Engagement	0.865	172.309	3	0.000
Relationships	0.867	186.223	3	0.000
Meaning	0.866	160.112	3	0.000
Accomplishment	0.863	151.001	3	0.000

Table 1.3 and 1.4 presents the results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity for the Perceived Organizational Support Scale and the PERMA-Profiler Well-being Scale, including its five dimensions. The KMO values of both scales were above the recommended threshold of 0.80, indicating sampling adequacy for factor analysis (Kaiser, 1974). Specifically, the KMO value for the Perceived Organizational Support Scale was 0.879, and the KMO value for the PERMA-Profiler Well-being Scale was 0.869. For the five subdimensions of

the PERMA model, the KMO values ranged from 0.863 to 0.867, further confirming the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis.

The results of Bartlett's test of sphericity were all statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that the correlation matrices were not identity matrices and thus suitable for factor analysis (Bartlett, 1954). The approximate chi-square values were within a reasonable range relative to the corresponding degrees of freedom, reflecting strong inter-item correlations. For instance, the PERMA-Profiler Well-being Scale demonstrated a chi-square value of 1765.432 with 105 degrees of freedom, while its subdimensions, including Positive Emotion ($\chi^2 = 198.457$, $df = 3$), Engagement ($\chi^2 = 172.309$, $df = 3$), Relationships ($\chi^2 = 186.223$, $df = 3$), Meaning ($\chi^2 = 160.112$, $df = 3$), and Accomplishment ($\chi^2 = 151.001$, $df = 3$), all yielded significant results.

Taken together, these findings provide strong evidence that the scales employed in this study possess adequate construct validity and are statistically suitable for subsequent exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses.

4.2 Demographic Profile

Table 1.5: Demographic Profile

Demographic Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age Group		
20-30	53	13.58%
31-40	46	11.79%
41-50	251	64.35%
51-60	31	7.94%
61 and above	9	2.30%
Gender		
Male	178	45.64%
Female	212	54.35%
Educational Qualification		
High School	89	22.82%
Bachelor's	172	44.10%
Master's	121	31.03%
Doctorate	8	2.05%
Years of work Experience		
0-5 years	89	22.82%
6-10 years	25	6.41%
Above 10 years	276	70.76%

The demographic analysis of middle school music teachers in Linyi City underscores both the

heterogeneity and complexity of this professional group. With respect to age distribution, the majority of participants fell within the 41–50 age bracket, accounting for 64.35% of the total sample. This demographic represents experienced educators who are typically at the midpoint of their careers, combining accumulated pedagogical expertise with a sustained commitment to professional practice. Their presence is crucial for ensuring instructional continuity, maintaining educational standards, and promoting curricular development. By contrast, younger teachers between 20 and 30 years old constituted 13.25% of respondents. This segment reflects a new generation of practitioners entering the profession, who tend to bring innovative ideas, strong digital literacy, and contemporary pedagogical approaches to music instruction. At the other end of the spectrum, teachers aged 61 years and above represented only 2.30%. Despite their limited proportion, these senior educators contribute significant historical knowledge and play an important role in sustaining cultural traditions and educational heritage within schools.

Gender distribution revealed a notable structural transformation. Male teachers represented 45.64% (n = 178), whereas female teachers accounted for 54.35% (n = 212). This finding illustrates, for the first time, a numerical predominance of female educators over their male colleagues in this region. Such a trend reflects broader international patterns associated with the feminization of the teaching profession, often shaped by policy support, organizational reforms, and shifting social perceptions of gender roles in education.

The analysis of educational qualifications indicated a polarized profile. On one end, 22.82% of teachers reported holding only a high school diploma, a figure that reflects the continued role of vocational training and alternative certification pathways in the local educational system. On the other end, only 2.05% of teachers possessed doctoral degrees, underscoring a scarcity of advanced academic qualifications and revealing a mismatch between labor market demands and the supply of highly trained specialists. The largest group was bachelor’s degree holders, comprising 44.10% of the sample, which emphasizes the bachelor’s degree as the dominant qualification standard in the field of music education.

Teaching experience exhibited a bimodal distribution that highlights generational imbalances. Educators with less than five years of experience constituted 22.82%, signifying a substantial inflow of novice teachers who are still in the process of professional socialization. In contrast, 70.76% of respondents reported more than ten years of teaching service, representing a core of senior educators with well-established classroom practices. Interestingly, the cohort of teachers with six to fifteen years of experience was markedly underrepresented, pointing to a discontinuity in career trajectories. This imbalance may be attributed to multiple factors, including the rapid expansion of younger entrants, extended employment of older teachers due to delayed retirement, and attrition among mid-career professionals. Such patterns raise important concerns about generational succession, knowledge transfer, and the sustainability of professional expertise within the music education workforce.

Table 1.6: Results of Independent Samples t-test on Well-being by Gender

Variable	Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			95% CI of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	p	Mean Difference	

Teacher well-being	1.992	.159	-0.296	388	.767	-0.012
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An independent samples t-test was conducted to explore potential gender differences in the well-being of middle school music teachers. Results from Levene's test confirmed the homogeneity of variances, $F(1, 388) = 1.992, p = .159$, thereby supporting the suitability of the data for parametric

testing. The subsequent analysis indicated that well-being scores did not differ significantly between male and female teachers, $t(388) = -0.296, p = .767$, with the 95% confidence interval ranging from -0.093 to 0.069. These findings clearly suggest that the well-being of secondary school music educators shows no significant variation across gender categories. This outcome highlights that other contextual or professional variables, rather than gender, may play a more critical role in shaping teachers' subjective well-being and thus deserve closer examination in future studies.

Table 1.7: Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Well-being Across Teaching Experience Groups

Teaching Experience	N	M	SD
≤ 5 years	89	2.92	0.28
6–10 years	25	2.88	0.31
> 10 years	276	2.85	0.29
Total	390	2.88	0.30

Table 1.8: One-way ANOVA Results for Teacher Well-being by Teaching Experience

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	0.75	2	0.375	4.23	.015
Within Groups	34.38	387	0.089		
Total	35.13	389			

The present study employed a one-way analysis of variance to explore potential differences in the well-being of secondary school music teachers across varying lengths of teaching experience. The statistical results demonstrated that teaching experience exerted a measurable influence on reported well-being levels, $F(2, 387) = 4.23, p = .015$. As detailed in Table X, the variance

attributable to differences between groups ($SS = 0.75$) represented only a small fraction of the total variability ($SS = 35.13$), whereas the bulk of variation was explained by individual differences within groups ($SS = 34.38$). The effect size was relatively modest, with $\eta^2 = 0.021$, indicating that approximately 2.1 percent of the total variance in teacher well-being was associated with differences in career stage.

While the statistical outcome confirmed that years of teaching experience are linked to well-being, the practical impact appears limited in scope. These results suggest that the lived experiences of middle school music teachers cannot be fully understood through teaching tenure alone. Instead, other determinants—such as institutional climate, leadership support, workload allocation, and access to professional development—are likely to play a decisive role in shaping teachers' psychological outcomes. Thus, although career length emerges as a significant factor, it functions as one element in a complex network of personal, organizational, and contextual variables influencing teacher well-being. This underscores the necessity of adopting a multidimensional perspective when evaluating how professional trajectories affect educators' psychological health and job satisfaction.

Table 1.9: Well-being Correlation Analysis

	PE	EN	RE	ME	AC	WB	POS
PE	1.0						
EN	0.652**	1.0					
RE	0.615**	0.436**	1.0				
ME	0.753**	0.532**	0.631**	1.0			
AC	0.513**	0.595**	0.623**	0.619**	1.0		
WB	0.539**	0.651**	0.538**	0.497**	0.569**	1.0	
POS	0.628**	0.765**	0.79**	0.516**	0.625**	0.693**	1.0

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

The correlation analysis was conducted to examine the associations among the five dimensions of well-being (positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment), overall well-being, and perceived organizational support among secondary school music teachers in Linyi. As shown in Table 1.9, all correlation coefficients were positive and statistically significant, suggesting strong interconnections across the constructs under investigation.

Specifically, positive emotion demonstrated significant associations with engagement ($r = 0.652$, $p < .01$), relationships ($r = 0.615$, $p < .01$), meaning ($r = 0.753$, $p < .01$), and accomplishment ($r = 0.513$, $p < .01$). Engagement was moderately related to relationships ($r = 0.436$, $p < .01$) and meaning ($r = 0.532$, $p < .01$), while its strongest correlation was observed with perceived organizational support ($r = 0.765$, $p < .01$). Similarly, relationships were highly correlated with perceived organizational support ($r = 0.790$, $p < .01$), indicating that teachers who experience supportive organizational environments tend to cultivate stronger interpersonal ties.

Meaning displayed robust connections with both positive emotion ($r = 0.753$, $p < .01$) and relationships ($r = 0.631$, $p < .01$), highlighting the importance of personal purpose and professional fulfillment in sustaining teacher well-being. Accomplishment was positively associated with all other well-being dimensions, ranging from $r = 0.513$ to $r = 0.623$ (all $p < .01$), suggesting that achievement is closely linked with both affective and relational factors.

In terms of overall well-being, significant correlations were observed with positive emotion ($r = 0.539$, $p < .01$), engagement ($r = 0.651$, $p < .01$), relationships ($r = 0.538$, $p < .01$), meaning ($r = 0.497$, $p < .01$), and accomplishment ($r = 0.569$, $p < .01$). Moreover, perceived organizational support exhibited a strong positive correlation with well-being ($r = 0.693$, $p < .01$), reinforcing the view that institutional resources and supportive school climates play a critical role in enhancing the psychological health of teachers.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

5.1 Independent Samples t-Test and Research Implications

In recent years, scholarly discussions surrounding teacher well-being and perceived organizational support have grown substantially, echoing international debates on the sustainability and quality of the teaching workforce. Using survey responses obtained from secondary school music educators in Linyi, this study employed independent-samples t-tests to explore whether gender differences exerted a significant influence on well-being outcomes. The statistical results indicated that variations across male and female teachers were not significant. This outcome aligns with prior empirical investigations, which have repeatedly demonstrated that gender is not a decisive predictor of educators' subjective sense of well-being (Zhang & Li, 2023).

Moving beyond demographic characteristics, the findings underscored the crucial role of perceived organizational support in shaping teachers' well-being. Organizational support—reflected in administrative recognition, equitable resource distribution, professional development opportunities, and a supportive school climate—functions as an external resource that allows teachers to cope more effectively with occupational demands. For the music teachers surveyed in Linyi, both male and female educators reported similar perceptions of supportive practices from their institutions, which helps to account for the lack of notable gender-related differences in overall well-being.

The theoretical implications of this evidence are particularly important. They suggest that organizational support mechanisms have a stronger and more consistent impact on improving teacher well-being than demographic traits such as gender. Whereas some studies on job satisfaction occasionally reveal slight gender disparities, the present analysis emphasizes that teachers' happiness and professional fulfillment are more closely associated with the degree of support they perceive from their institutions. Consequently, interventions that aim to strengthen school-level support—such as fostering open communication channels, recognizing teachers' contributions, encouraging collaborative professional cultures, and providing meaningful feedback—may be far more effective than initiatives focused exclusively on gender distinctions.

Looking forward, future research should examine whether this gender-neutral pattern of organizational support is observed across different educational stages—ranging from elementary to higher education—and within varying cultural or institutional environments. Additionally, further investigation is needed into the pathways through which organizational support contributes to teacher well-being, including its interaction with other psychological and environmental factors. Such insights would not only broaden our understanding of teacher

well-being in the context of music education but would also provide actionable evidence for the development of sustainable support systems in schools, thereby enhancing both teacher retention and instructional quality.

5.2 Stage-Specific Characteristics of Teacher Well-Being Across Career Tenure

The link between teaching tenure and teacher well-being has remained a focal point in educational research, particularly because the length of service often corresponds with distinct professional experiences, evolving career expectations, and developmental trajectories. For secondary school music teachers, these dynamics are even more salient, given the unique emotional and creative demands of their subject area. Evidence from the present study indicates that variations in years of teaching experience significantly affect well-being outcomes. More specifically, music teachers with over a decade of professional practice tended to report comparatively lower levels of well-being. At this stage, accumulated responsibilities such as heavier instructional loads, expanded family duties, and mounting expectations for professional advancement frequently contribute to psychological strain. Conversely, early-career teachers with fewer than five years of experience generally demonstrated higher levels of well-being, often due to their enthusiasm, openness to pedagogical challenges, and strong motivation, which act as buffers against occupational stressors.

Recent scholarship has reinforced the notion that teaching experience is closely intertwined with teachers' subjective well-being. Researchers have noted that mid- to late-career educators may become more skeptical of policy reforms or hold elevated expectations for workplace improvement, both of which can diminish their perceived levels of support and satisfaction (Collie et al., 2015; Viac & Fraser, 2020). This highlights the fact that teacher well-being is not solely determined by teaching experience; rather, it is shaped by a broader constellation of factors, including working conditions, institutional recognition, salary, welfare benefits, and, most importantly, perceived organizational support. For music teachers, organizational backing often includes access to adequate teaching facilities, recognition of artistic contributions, professional development opportunities, and supportive leadership—resources that play a pivotal role in sustaining both motivation and psychological health.

A particularly critical group consists of teachers between the ages of 30 and 40, who often find themselves at a professional crossroads. By this stage, most educators have developed considerable pedagogical expertise, cultivated strong classroom management skills, and acquired substantial artistic and instructional competencies. These qualifications often lead to increased responsibilities, ranging from mentoring novice teachers to taking on leadership roles within the school. Yet this period also coincides with significant personal and professional challenges. Many teachers simultaneously navigate financial commitments, children's education, and elder care responsibilities, all while balancing demanding teaching schedules and creative preparation for performances or assessments. These combined pressures result in a depletion of time, energy, and emotional resources, which can negatively impact their well-being if adequate organizational support is lacking.

From a career development standpoint, mid-career teachers are often uncertain about promotion pathways, role transitions, or long-term planning. This lack of clarity exacerbates stress and can contribute to professional stagnation. At the same time, these educators frequently pursue growth in teaching quality, artistic excellence, research productivity, and leadership skills. However, without sufficient institutional encouragement, such aspirations may remain unrealized, leading to fatigue, declining motivation, and in some cases, burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018).

Importantly, perceived organizational support—including administrative acknowledgment, transparent promotion systems, mental health services, and initiatives to promote work–family balance—can act as a protective factor that mitigates these challenges.

If organizations fail to provide adequate support during this transitional career phase, music teachers' well-being may decline substantially, with far-reaching consequences. Reduced levels of well-being not only undermine educators' mental and physical health but also affect teaching quality, classroom engagement, and ultimately, student learning outcomes. Therefore, both schools and educational authorities must prioritize targeted interventions aimed at strengthening organizational support for mid-career music teachers. Such strategies may include structured mentoring programs, recognition of artistic contributions, workload adjustments, and policies designed to improve family–work integration. By addressing the unique needs of this teacher cohort, schools can help maintain positive professional identities, encourage sustained growth, and secure the long-term sustainability of high-quality music education.

5.3 Perceived Organizational Support Pathways for Enhancing Teachers' Well-Being

The present investigation underscores that perceived organizational support—teachers' belief that their schools value their contributions and care about their well-being—plays a fundamental role in shaping the overall happiness and psychological health of secondary school music teachers in Linyi. When educators feel that their institutions recognize their efforts, provide adequate resources, and offer socio-emotional support, they are more likely to report greater positive emotions, higher job satisfaction, and sustained well-being. This finding affirms the critical importance of organizational support as a contextual resource that safeguards teachers' mental health and promotes professional longevity.

To begin with, perceived organizational support strengthens teachers' confidence in their professional environment. When instructors perceive fairness in workload allocation, access to resources, and opportunities for growth, they are more motivated to confront daily teaching challenges. This supportive climate directly enhances their psychological well-being by reducing stress and increasing satisfaction with their roles (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

Second, perceived support functions as a motivational driver by fostering stronger commitment to both the institution and the profession. Teachers who sense that their schools genuinely care about their personal and professional development are more willing to invest effort, set meaningful goals, and derive greater fulfillment from achieving them. This dynamic contributes significantly to their well-being and professional enthusiasm (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Moreover, perceived organizational support enables educators to maintain a constructive mindset in the face of adversity. Teachers who feel valued and supported by their institutions are less likely to experience burnout, and they remain more engaged in their teaching tasks. Such recognition fosters resilience, allowing them to interpret obstacles as temporary and manageable rather than overwhelming, which helps sustain their happiness and commitment (Cropanzano et al., 1997).

Finally, organizational support operates as a protective mechanism during stressful circumstances. Teachers who perceive strong backing from their schools recover more quickly from setbacks, adapt more effectively to shifting policies or curricular demands, and maintain emotional stability. This consistent support provides a sense of security that strengthens both their professional identity and their overall well-being (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

These outcomes are consistent with prior theoretical and empirical evidence, suggesting that POS offers a robust framework for understanding teacher well-being. By integrating both structural support (such as resources and opportunities) and socio-emotional support (such as recognition and care), schools can directly enhance teachers' psychological states and long-term

career satisfaction.

In summary, the findings highlight that organizational support is not merely an external condition but also a decisive factor influencing educators' happiness and professional fulfillment. While individual psychological resources remain important, the institutional environment—particularly teachers' perception of organizational support—plays an equally crucial role in sustaining their emotional health. Strengthening perceived organizational support empowers teachers to approach their work with greater positivity, thereby improving both their personal well-being and the quality of education provided to students.

To effectively promote the well-being of secondary school music teachers, several practical strategies are recommended. First, educational institutions and administrators should establish systematic mechanisms to enhance teachers' sense of organizational support. This includes implementing transparent reward systems, equitable workload distribution, and professional development opportunities tailored to teachers' needs. Second, schools should provide accessible support services, such as counseling centers, mentoring programs, and peer support groups, to help teachers cope with work-related stressors. Third, cultivating a positive and inclusive school climate that emphasizes teamwork, mutual respect, and open communication can reinforce teachers' sense of belonging and overall happiness. Finally, from a policy perspective, education authorities should invest in strengthening organizational structures, ensuring that teacher well-being is explicitly considered in evaluation, promotion, and professional development policies. Such initiatives will contribute not only to teachers' long-term satisfaction but also to the sustainable improvement of educational quality.

Practical recommendations derived from these findings include:

1. Integrating perceived organizational support into teacher development: Administrators should incorporate supportive practices into teacher training and evaluation frameworks.
2. Building institutional support systems: Counseling services, peer networks, and stress management programs should be provided to enhance teachers' resilience and optimism.
3. Fostering an inclusive school climate: Collaborative activities, recognition mechanisms, and transparent communication channels can nurture a stronger sense of belonging.
4. Policy-level engagement: Policymakers should institutionalize organizational support indicators in teacher evaluation and promotion to ensure sustainable professional well-being and development.

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