

Mediation and Moderation Effects Model of Teachers' Job Satisfaction on the Relationship between Careers Planning and Teachers' Leadership in Rural Primary Schools in Baise

Huang RiJian,
Sukhum Moonmuang and Sataporn Pruettikul
Bangkokthonburi University, Thailand
Corresponding Author, E-mail: 6163110026@bkkthon.ac.th

Abstract

Research objectives were: (1) To develop the relationship model between career planning and primary school teacher leadership which moderated and mediated by teacher's job satisfaction. (2) To find the relationship between career planning and job satisfaction of primary school teachers. (3) To find the relationship between primary school teacher's job satisfaction and teacher leadership. (4) To find the relationship between primary school teacher's career planning and teacher leadership. (5) To find the effect of primary school teacher's job satisfaction on the relationship between career planning and teacher leadership.

The research was a quantitative research method. Population was teacher, who was teaching in primary school in Baise City, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Samples was selected from teacher who was teaching in academic year 2023 in Baise City. The number of sample size was calculated by G*power software, and the minimum sample size was 294 teachers.

The research findings revealed that: (1) Career planning had a positive effect on the job satisfaction of primary school teachers. (2) Job satisfaction had no effect on teacher leadership of primary school teachers. (3) Career planning had a positive effect on teacher leadership of primary school teachers. (4) Career planning had no effect on teacher leadership via job satisfaction. (5) Job satisfaction had a moderating effect on the relationship between career planning and teacher leadership.

Keywords: Teacher Job Satisfaction; Career Planning; Teacher Leadership; Rural Primary Schools

Introduction

Under the social background of China's rapid transformation from an educational power to an educational power, it has become an urgent task to establish a team of high-quality teachers and more professional teachers. In 2012, China's Ministry of Education published the Professional Standards for Primary School Teachers, which was the first national standard on the professional development of primary school teachers. In 2018, The State Council of China issued the Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening the Reform of the Construction of Teachers in the New Era, proposing to strengthen the training of high-quality teachers, bringing the professional development of teachers to a new height. In 2021, the working conference held by the Ministry of Education of China pointed out that "strengthening the construction of teachers and consolidating the support of high-quality development talents". With the development of The Times, the professional quality of teachers

should also be improved, so that teachers can become the leaders in the professional field, which is already the requirement and trend of teacher professional development in the new era. Only by making teachers become professional leaders can we give full play to the role of teachers in school development and the role model of students. Therefore, enhancing teachers' leadership is an important part of promoting teachers' professional development and adapting to the requirements of high-quality teachers.

It has been proved that teacher leadership can improve students' academic performance and democratic consciousness, promote teachers' professional development in the group, and improve school culture construction. (Du, 2010) At present, the research on teacher leadership in China is mainly at the theoretical level, and there are few empirical studies. (Wang & Zhu, 2020) The current empirical studies mainly focus on junior high school, senior high school and university, and there are few studies on the leadership of primary school teachers. (Hu & Gu, 2012) The purpose of this paper is to study the influence of teacher career planning and job satisfaction on teacher leadership in the primary school education stage, so as to put forward suggestions for the improvement of primary school teacher leadership. The ultimate goal is to cultivate the leadership ability of primary school teachers and give play to the leadership effectiveness of teachers, so as to promote the development of schools and students.

Research Objectives

1. To develop the relationship model between career planning and primary school teacher leadership which moderated and mediated by teacher's job satisfaction.
2. To find the relationship between career planning and job satisfaction of primary school teachers.
3. To find the relationship between primary school teacher's job satisfaction and teacher leadership.
4. To find the relationship between primary school teacher's career planning and teacher leadership.
5. To find the effect of primary school teacher's job satisfaction on the relationship between career planning and teacher leadership.

Literature Review

Zhu Jirong and Yang Jiping developed a questionnaire on the job satisfaction of primary school teachers, which divided the job satisfaction into: satisfaction with the job itself, management satisfaction, remuneration satisfaction, further education to improve satisfaction, and satisfaction with the working environment. (Zhu & Yang, 2004) Miao Jianming and Huo Guoqing's research believed that leaders must possess five key leadership abilities, including forward-looking power, appeal influence, decisiveness, and control, which constituted the "Five forces model of leadership". (Miao & Huo, 2006) Sun Lin developed a questionnaire on career planning for primary school teachers and believed that career planning for primary school teachers included self-cognition, organizational cognition, goal planning, self-improvement, interpersonal relations and so on. (Sun, 2020)

Scholars have conducted regression analysis using teacher career planning as the independent variable and teacher job satisfaction as the dependent variable, and found that teacher career planning has a significant positive impact on teacher job satisfaction. (He, 2014; Meng, 2020; Liang, 2018) Some researchers believed that teacher job satisfaction had a direct positive impact on teacher leadership. (Liu, 2022; Cheng, 2020) However, other researches believed that the influence of teacher job satisfaction on teacher leadership or other psychological behaviors was not direct, but rather mediated by other factors such as work motivation, work emotions, and organizational atmosphere. (Chen, 2010) Some scholars believed that teacher career planning had a positive impact on the generation of teaching leadership in teachers. (Wu, 2019)

In specific organizational and cultural contexts, job satisfaction may also play a mediating role, for example, in the relationship between labor relationship atmosphere and organizational citizenship behavior, job satisfaction is a key mediating variable. (Wang L. , 2013) Zhou Siyu found that job satisfaction had a positive and independent mediating effect on the relationship between the educational background of new kindergarten teachers and their intention to resign. (Zhou, Wang, & Li, 2021) Some recent researches suggested that teacher job satisfaction played a moderating role between teacher career planning and teacher leadership. Because job satisfaction often had a direct or indirect impact on people's psychology and behavior. Some recent researches by relevant scholars. (Pang t. J., 2016) (Zhao, 2019)

Research Methodology

1. Population and sample

The population of this study was primary school teachers in Baise city of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. According to data released by the Bureau of Statistics of Baise, Guangxi, there will be about 9,545 primary school teachers in the city in 2023.

Samples was selected from teacher who was teaching in academic year 2023 in Baise City. The multi-stage technique was used to select sample. The number of sample size was calculated by G*power software, and the minimum sample size was 294 teachers.

2. Research instrument

The survey questionnaire in this study was divided into two parts. The first part checked the general information of primary school teacher, and the second part consisted of three measurement questionnaires, namely the Teacher Leadership Questionnaire, Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire, and Teacher Career Planning Questionnaire.

Teacher job satisfaction included 5 observed variables, namely (1) satisfaction with the job itself (2) management satisfaction (3) remuneration satisfaction (4) further education to improve satisfaction (5) satisfaction with the working environment. Teacher career planning included 6 observed variables, namely (1) self-awareness (2) organizational cognition (3) goal planning (4) self-improvement (5) interpersonal relationships (6) satisfaction level. Teacher leadership included 5 observed variables, namely (1) Forward-looking power (2) Appeal (3) Influence (4) Decisiveness (5) Control. These questionnaires all used Likert's rating scale with a degree selection of 1-5.

The questionnaire was sent to five experts via WECHAT to evaluate its content validity. In the rating measurement table, each item had three options "Inconsistent (-1)", "Not Sure (0)", and "Consistent (+1)". The expert chose "-1" to indicate their disagreement, "0" to

indicate their uncertainty, and "+1" to indicate their agreement. Items with IOC value less than 0.5 were eliminated and only those with IOC value of more than 0.5 were retained according to the evaluation of five experts.

In this study, the reliability analysis results showed that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.990, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of each dimension was above 0.87.

3. Data collection

Step 1: Request permission to collect data for research to the BTU Educational Faculty.

Step 2: Request a letter of recommendation for the researcher from the BTU Educational Faculty.

Step 3: Selection the coordinating teachers to help assist in coordinating data collection in each primary school. Those will be oriented to understand the details of the questionnaire administration and data collection.

Step 4: Carry out data collection with the selected samples by sending questionnaires to the coordinator teacher who will help for collect data with the selected samples in each primary school.

4. Data analysis

The SPSS software was used to analyze categorical variables. The researchers divided the population samples into six types: gender, age, academic qualifications, job title, position and school, and calculated the number and proportion of each type of population sample.

The Jamovi software was used to perform multivariate normality test and correlation matrix analysis. In the normality test of the observed variables, the researchers found that their values were consistent with the indicators of normal distribution and had statistical significance. It was also shown in the correlation matrix measurements that the observed variables and P-values were confirmed to be of good quality. The analysis results show that all variables can be used to measure factors or potential variables.

The AMOS software was used for structural equation model analysis. The measurement model was established, the model fit degree was evaluated, and the reliability, convergence validity and discrimination validity of the model were analyzed. Then the hypothesis test was carried out, the unstandardized estimate with its T-value was calculated, so as to verify the 5 research hypotheses in this study.

Research Conceptual Framework

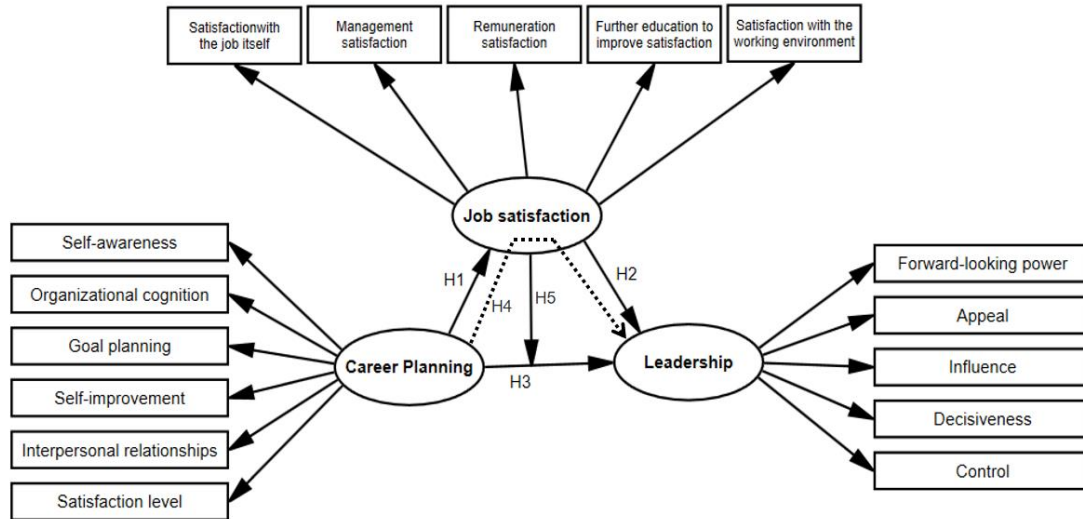


Figure 1 Research conceptual framework in this study

Research Results

According to the questionnaire survey data, the measurement model of the study was constructed.

1. Measurement model

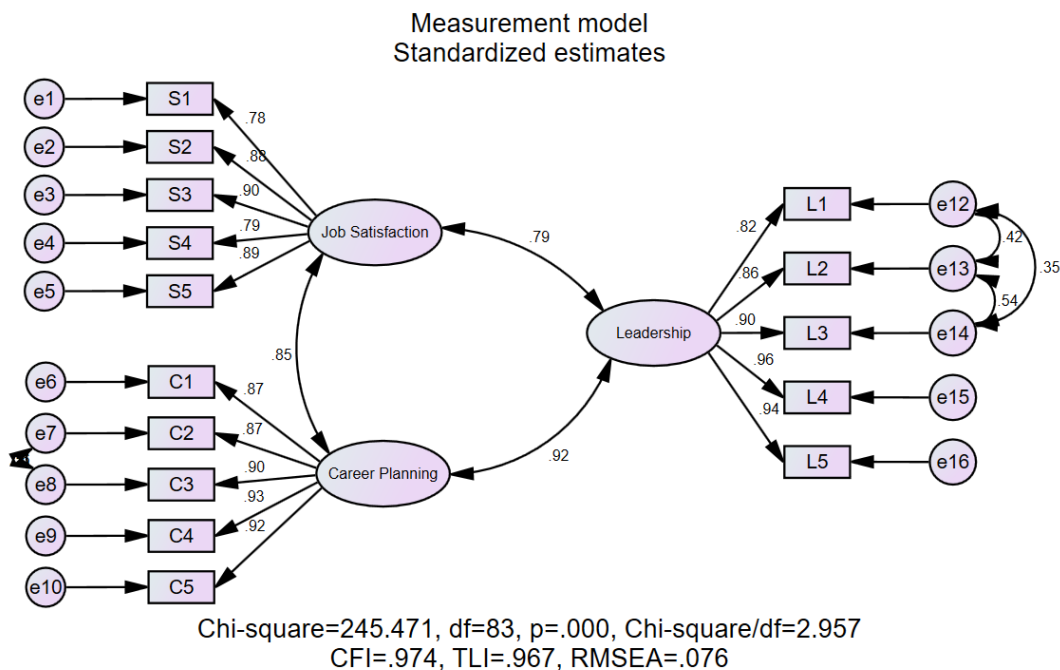


Figure 1 The Measurement Model of three Latent Variables and Their intercorrelation in Standardized Format, and The Model Fit Indexes

2. Model fit evaluation

Table 1 CFA Model fit evaluation

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
χ^2	245.471	--	--
DF	83	--	--
χ^2/DF	2.957	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.974	>0.95	Excellent
RMSEA	0.076	<0.08	Acceptable

From the data analysis in Table 1, the chi-square (χ^2) was 245.471 with degrees of freedom (DF) of 83, the χ^2/DF value was 2.957, which was between 1 and 3, and the CFI value was 0.974, which was greater than 0.95, and the RMSEA value was 0.76, which was less than 0.08.

It could be considered that the model interpretation was excellent and the fit of the structural model was acceptable. Hence the measurement model could be used in this measure.

Quality of the measurement model

Table 2 The Composite Reliability (CR), The Average Variance Extracted (AVE), The Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), The Maximum Reliability (MaxR(H)), and The Square Root of AVE (*in bold*) And Correlations Between Constructs

Latens	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	F1	F2	F3
F1	0.928	0.723	0.724	0.937	0.850		
F2	0.954	0.806	0.853	0.957	0.851***	0.898	
F3	0.953	0.803	0.853	0.966	0.795***	0.923***	0.896

Note: in order to identify the latent variable reliability, the $CR \geq .70$, MSV less than AVE and the $MaxR(H) > CR$, and to identify the convergent validity of the $AVE \geq .50$, to identify the discriminant validity by the method of Fornell & Larcker (1981, pp. 39-50), the square root of AVE of latent variables must be more than its shared variance to other latent variables.

Reliability

In this model, composite reliability (CR) was used to evaluate the reliability of the measurement model, and the cut-off criterion was .70 (Hair, et. Al, 2017). The data analysis in Table 2 showed that the CR values were 0.928, 0.954 and 0.953 respectively, indicating that the reliability of the measurement model was high. MaxR(H) values of variables F1, F2 and F3 were 0.937, 0.957 and 0.966 respectively, all higher than their corresponding CR values.

Convergent validity

Table 2 showed that the AVE values of variables F1, F2, and F3 were 0.723, 0.806 and 0.803, respectively, and were all greater than 0.5.(Collier, 2020, pp. 83). This indicated that the scale had high convergence validity.

Discriminant validity

(1) MSV

The data analysis results in Table 2 showed that the MSV of F1, F2 and F3 were 0.724, 0.853 and 0.853, respectively, which were all greater than the corresponding AVE values.

(2) Fornell and Larker criteria

In table 2 the bold font was the square root of AVE. It can be seen that the AVE square root of F1 and F3 were greater than the correlation coefficient of F1 and F3. The AVE square root of F1 was slightly larger than the correlation coefficient between F1 and F2, and the difference of 0.001 can be ignored. The AVE square root of F2 was larger than the correlation coefficient of F1 and F2. The AVE square root of F2 and F3 were less than the correlation coefficient of F2 and F3.

(3) HTMT

Table 3 Discriminant validity using Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT)

Latents	F1	F2	F3
F1			
F2	0.847		
F3	0.909	0.781	

The usage of the Heterogeneous Trait Single Trait (HTMT) technique (Henseler, J. et al., 2015, pp. 115-135) is the third method of assessing discriminant validity. The ratio values in Table 3 between F1 and F2, F1 and F3, and F2 and F3 were 0.847, 0.909 and 0.781, respectively. Although the ratio of F1 to F3 was 0.909, slightly greater than 0.9, the difference was too small to be ignored. In summary, the discriminant validity of the measurement model is acceptable and supports the discriminant validity between structures.

4. Hypothesis testing

Table 4 Moderation Effects of Job Satisfaction on the Relationship between Career and Leadership

Hypothesized Relationship	Unstandardized Estimate	T-test	Hypothesis Supported
H1: Career → Job Satisfaction	0.973	15.251***	supported
H2: Job Satisfaction → Leadership	0.060	1.179	not supported
H3: Career → Leadership	0.927	13.033***	supported
H4: Mediation Test Career → Job Satisfaction → Leadership	0.058	0.463	No Sig.
Moderation Test Job Satisfaction → Leadership			
H5: Career * Job Satisfaction → Leadership	-0.016	-2.862**	supported
Probing the Interaction of Job Satisfaction Low Level Career → Leadership	0.064	6.834***	Significant
Medium Level			

Hypothesized Relationship	Unstandardized Estimate	T-test	Hypothesis Supported
Carrer → Leadership High Level	0.408	10.706***	Significant
Carrer → Leadership	-0.016	-2.862**	Significant

Hypothesis H1: As can be seen from Table 4 above, the unstandardized estimate of career planning on job satisfaction was 0.973, and the T-value was 15.251, which was significant. The hypothesis H1 was supported. Career planning had a positive impact on job satisfaction, and career planning could improve job satisfaction.

Hypothesis H2: As can be seen from Table 4 above, the unstandardized estimate of job satisfaction on teacher leadership was 0.060, the T-value was 1.179, which was not significant. Therefore, hypothesis H2 was not supported. Job satisfaction had no direct effect on teacher leadership.

Hypothesis H3: As can be seen from Table 4 above, the unstandardized estimate of career planning on teacher leadership was 0.927, and the T-value is 13.033, which was significant. The hypothesis H3 was supported. Career planning had a positive effect on teacher leadership, and career planning could improve teacher leadership.

Hypothesis H4 (Mediation Test): As can be seen from Table 4 above, the unstandardized estimate of job satisfaction between career planning and teacher leadership was 0.058, and the T-value was 0.463, and the test result was not significant. The hypothesis H4 was not supported. Job satisfaction had no mediating effect between career planning and teacher leadership.

Hypothesis H5 (Moderation Test): The analysis results in Table 4 showed that career planning and job satisfaction had interactive effects on teacher leadership. The unstandardized estimate was -0.016, and its T-value was -2.862, which was significant. So, hypothesis H5 was supported.

According to the average score of job satisfaction, the samples were divided into high group, low group and medium group by “*Mean±ISD*”. A simple slope chart was drawn, as shown in Figure 4.3, to test the moderating effect of job satisfaction on career planning and teacher leadership.

The unstandardized estimate of the low-level job satisfaction group was 0.064, and its T-value was 6.834 and significant. The unstandardized estimate of the middle-level job satisfaction group was 0.408, which had a significant T-value of 10.706. The unstandardized estimate of the high-level job satisfaction group was -0.016, and its T-value was -2.862 and significant.



Figure 2 Moderation Effects of Job Satisfaction on the Relationship between Career and Leadership

From figure 2, it can be intuitively observed that for teachers with moderate job satisfaction, career planning has a very significant predictive effect on teacher leadership, which means that for these teachers, career planning will have a positive impact on teacher leadership.

Discussion

The research result show that job satisfaction has no mediating effect between career planning and teacher leadership. The mediating effect did not exist, and the possible reasons were: (1) Teacher job satisfaction may not have a direct impact on teacher leadership, or the impact might not be significant, which was consistent with the results verified by hypothesis H2. Some studies suggest that the impact of teacher job satisfaction on teacher leadership or other psychological behaviors is not direct, but rather mediated by other factors such as work motivation, work emotions, and organizational atmosphere. (Chen, 2010) When teachers were satisfied with their work, they often showed higher motivation, input and motivation, which helped improve their leadership. Teachers with high levels of satisfaction were more likely to establish positive working relationships with colleagues and students, arouse students' learning heat, and be able to cope with challenges and difficulties better. In addition, teachers with high satisfaction were often more likely to participate in professional development activities, improved their own ability and knowledge level, and further enhance their leadership. However, when teachers were dissatisfied with their work, there might be some negative impacts. They might lack motivation and engagement, held a negative attitude towards work, and be unable to effectively influence and motivate other teachers and students. In addition, teachers with high levels of dissatisfaction might have more complaints and conflicts, which could have a negative impact on the working atmosphere and teamwork of the entire school. (WuZhi, 2016) (2) The measurement of mediating variables might not be accurate enough. This will result in insignificant results of the mediation effect test. This study obtained data through online surveys, and it was worth considering whether the

respondents truthfully filled in their own opinions. More accurate measurement methods can be used, such as face-to-face interviews or pen and paper tests. (3) The selection of mediating variables might not be appropriate enough. There might be other mediating variables between the independent and dependent variables. (4) Insufficient sample size. Mediation effects usually require large sample data to support, and if the sample size was insufficient, the results of the mediation effect test may be unreliable. The reliability of the study can be increased by increasing the number of samples or using multiple sampling.

Teacher job satisfaction can play a moderating role between teacher career planning and teacher leadership. Because job satisfaction often has a direct or indirect impact on people's psychology and behavior. Pang Jiantao et al. found that subjective variables are important factors affecting individual innovation behavior, proactive personality has a positive impact on employee innovation behavior, and job satisfaction has a non-linear moderating effect on their relationship. (Pang & Shi, 2016) Some researchers conducted a study on the relationship between job satisfaction, turnover intention, job performance, and work family conflict among 570 primary and secondary school teachers. The results showed that job satisfaction had a significant negative predictive effect on turnover intention, and teacher job satisfaction had both moderating and mediating effects on the relationship between work family conflict and turnover intention. (Wang & Zeng, The impact of job satisfaction on the intention of primary and secondary school teachers to resign: a moderated model with mediation, 2019) Luo Haoshuang et al. conducted a study on the relationship between ethical leadership, performance evaluation satisfaction, and job withdrawal behavior. The results showed that there is an interaction between ethical leadership and performance evaluation satisfaction, which has an impact on employee withdrawal behavior. (Luo, He, & Wang, 2016)

Teacher career planning has a positive impact on teacher leadership and teacher job satisfaction. This is consistent with the conclusions of other scholars. The career planning and development had a significant positive effect on teachers' job satisfaction (regression coefficient 0.557, $P=0.000$). The better the school's career planning and development management, the higher the teacher's job satisfaction. (He, 2014) Career planning intention and job satisfaction factors, including salary return, promotion opportunity, leadership care, welfare benefits, job perception and organizational affiliation, were significantly or positively correlated ($p<0.01$ or $p<0.05$). (Meng, 2020) Factors such as interpersonal relationships and career goal planning have a positive impact on the generation of teaching leadership in teachers. (Wu, 2019) Therefore, we should attach great importance to the management of teachers' career planning and guide teachers to make personal career planning in order to promote teachers' professional development.

Conclusion

From the perspective of the corresponding contents of the research objectives, the specific research conclusions of this study were as follows:

1. Career planning of primary school teachers had a positive effect on the job satisfaction of primary school teachers.
2. Job satisfaction of primary school teachers had no effect on primary school teacher leadership.

3. Career planning for primary school teachers had a positive effect on leadership of primary school teachers.

4. Job satisfaction had no mediating effect between career planning and teacher leadership.

5. Job satisfaction of primary school teachers had a moderating effect on the relationship between career planning and leadership of primary school teachers.

Recommendations

1. Recommendation for Policies Formulation

Developing policies for cultivating leadership among primary school teachers. At present, there is no clear policy to cultivate teacher leadership in China. Therefore, education departments need to propose a plan to cultivate teacher leadership from the strategic perspective of the entire national education development, clarify the connotation and importance of teacher leadership, and provide financial support to attract widespread social attention. Local education departments should actively respond to the national call, formulate models and implementation rules for cultivating teacher leadership in various regions, attract excellent experts and scholars to provide suggestions, and meet the needs of teacher team construction and sustainable development. As an executing agency, the school carefully listens to the suggestions of its teachers, understands the needs of teachers to enhance leadership, and forms an effective training plan based on the actual development situation of each school.

Establish a sound school management system. The role and influence of teachers require schools to establish corresponding management mechanisms as an important guarantee. Provide effective practical paths for teachers to play a leading role and influence. Establishing a sound and equal democratic management system requires both administrative management democracy and teaching and research democracy. Rural schools should fully trust and respect teachers, encourage them to express their ideas and suggestions, and encourage them to innovate research and teaching. Under limited rural education resources, provide as many development platforms as possible for the teacher community, and pay attention to the living conditions and psychological demands of teachers.

2. Recommendation for Practical Application

Guide teachers to effectively carry out personal career planning. Through career planning, teachers can better understand their own strengths, interests and values, and on this basis define their own career development direction and goals. Career planning can also provide a clear path and direction for teacher development. Teachers can set career stage goals, such as promotion to teaching and research group leader, school-level backbone teacher, teaching and research achievement award winner, so as to promote their position and status in the development of goals.

Pay attention to improving teachers job satisfaction. Teachers with high levels of satisfaction are more likely to develop positive working relationships with colleagues and students, inspire students' enthusiasm for learning, and are better able to cope with challenges and difficulties. Teachers with high levels of satisfaction are usually more willing to participate in professional development activities to improve their abilities and knowledge, thus further strengthening their leadership. However, when teachers are not satisfied with their work, they may lack motivation and commitment, have a negative attitude towards their work, and there will be more complaints and conflicts, which will have a negative impact on

the working atmosphere and teamwork of the whole school.

3. Recommendation for Further Research

The factors that affect the formation of leadership among primary school teachers are multifaceted, and the establishment of research models needs to consider more factors. Researchers should incorporate more research variables to construct a more scientific and reasonable model, in order to effectively reveal the direct or indirect relationships between various factors.

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