

## *Original Paper*

# An Empirical Study on the Influencing Factors of Chinese Language Teaching Efficacy Among Primary School Teachers

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### **Abstract**

*Based on survey data from 160 primary school Chinese language teachers in Yunnan Province, this study investigated the factors influencing their teaching efficacy. The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) and a self-designed questionnaire were used for data collection, followed by statistical analyses including one-way ANOVA, independent-samples t-tests, and exploratory factor analysis. The results showed significant variation in teachers' efficacy scores. Demographic factors such as age and years of teaching experience had a significant impact on teaching efficacy, whereas gender and professional title did not. Among personal factors, the ability to analyze teaching materials, professional identity, and teacher-student communication skills were significantly associated with teaching efficacy. Regarding external factors, teachers' recognition of the fairness and scientificity of the evaluation system positively influenced their teaching efficacy. Accordingly, the study recommends enhancing teaching efficacy through coordinated efforts at the individual teacher, school management, and policy-making levels.*

### **Keywords**

*primary school Chinese language teachers, teaching efficacy, influencing factors, teacher evaluation*

## **1. Introduction**

Chinese language is a core subject in basic education. It is a comprehensive and practical course that focuses on learning and using the national common language and script (Ministry of Education, 2022). The Chinese curriculum bears the important responsibility of cultivating students' core competencies, which directly affects the quality of the country's future talents, thereby placing higher demands on Chinese language teachers. Teachers are recognized as "an important cornerstone for national prosperity, revitalization, and the well-being of the people" (CPC Central Committee & State Council,

2018). Teacher efficacy constitutes a key construct in psychological research on teachers and in the field of teacher professional development, reflecting teachers' internal beliefs about teaching and learning (Huo, 2023). It not only influences teachers' instructional behavior and effectiveness but also affects students' learning attitudes and outcomes. Research has shown that teachers with a high sense of efficacy demonstrate greater enthusiasm and resilience in teaching, thereby promoting students' motivation and academic progress. Primary school Chinese language teachers, however, face heavy teaching workloads, large individual differences among students, and high societal expectations, making them more susceptible to occupational stress, which in turn undermines their sense of efficacy. Manifestations of low efficacy—such as lack of confidence in teaching effectiveness, tendency to retreat in the face of difficulties, and insufficient motivation for instructional innovation—not only hinder teachers' professional well-being and development but also constrain the quality of Chinese language instruction and student educational outcomes. Therefore, investigating the teacher efficacy of primary school Chinese language teachers can provide valuable references for both primary school Chinese teaching and teacher development.

Teaching efficacy is derived from the theory of self-efficacy, which was first explicitly put forward by Bandura in 1977, and which suggests that an individual's expectation of his or her ability to perform a certain behaviour in a given context includes both efficacy and outcome expectations. Since the 1970s, scholars have applied self-efficacy theory to the field of teaching, examining teachers' subjective judgments of their own teaching value and the influence of teachers' self-perceptions on students. Based on this line of inquiry, the concept of teaching efficacy was introduced. Research on teacher efficacy in China began in the 1990s. Yu Guoliang divided teachers' sense of efficacy into individual teaching efficacy and general teaching efficacy, further subdividing it into teachers' judgments of teaching level, the relationship between teaching and learning, the ability to manage classrooms and students, and the role teachers play in student growth (Yu, Xin, & Shen, 1995). Xin Tao (1996) defined teaching efficacy as a teacher's subjective assessment of their own role in students' learning behaviors and outcomes. According to Qu Weiguo (1999), teaching efficacy is a teacher's subjective judgment of whether their teaching behaviors can accomplish the teaching task. Zhao and Huang (2002) and Wan et al. (2014) viewed teaching efficacy as a belief. In summary, there is general agreement among scholars that teaching efficacy comprises two dimensions: personal teaching efficacy, which refers to a teacher's confidence in their ability to successfully influence and guide students in completing learning tasks; and general teaching efficacy, which refers to subjective judgments about macro-level teaching-learning relationships and the role of education in student development (Jia, 2021).

Teaching efficacy is an important factor affecting teachers' teaching quality, professional development, and students' learning outcomes. Existing studies have mainly analyzed the influencing factors of teachers' teaching efficacy from two aspects. On the one hand, personal factors, such as gender and academic qualifications, may influence teaching efficacy. Wang and Xu (2008) found that female university physical education teachers reported higher teaching efficacy than their male counterparts. Li

and Zhang (2022) obtained similar results in a study of pre-service teachers. However, Yu, Xin, and Shen (1995) found that gender and education had almost no effect on secondary school teachers' teaching efficacy, while years of teaching experience showed a positive correlation. Lai (2011) supported this view, whereas Huang (2005) concluded that teaching experience had little impact. Regarding academic qualifications, Xin (1996) found a significant effect, and Luo and Meng (2015) reported that teachers with higher degrees tended to have higher overall teaching efficacy. These inconsistent findings suggest that the influence of personal factors may vary depending on the target population, warranting further investigation. On the other hand, external factors also play a role. Xin, Shen, and colleagues (1995) found that job development conditions, school support, and a well-established system were positively correlated with teaching efficacy. Pan et al. (2023) reported that a sense of organizational support positively influenced teacher efficacy. Xu, An, and Niu (2004) concluded that campus climate and social perceptions of teachers' professionalism had a strong impact, a finding echoed by Huang and Li (2024). Wang et al. (2001) found that support from family and friends was positively related to teaching efficacy. Similarly, Zhao (2007) observed that emotional support, companionship, and respect in social support positively affected early childhood teachers' efficacy. Xia and Fan (2024) also confirmed that a better organizational climate was associated with higher teacher efficacy.

It is evident that teachers' teaching efficacy is influenced not only by personal factors but also by factors related to their teaching work, including their positions, the subjects they teach, and the teaching environment. Although researchers have examined various subjects and educational stages, little attention has been paid to primary school teachers of the Chinese language. Primary school marks the starting point of lifelong development and plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's values, worldview, and outlook on life. As a mother-tongue-based subject, Chinese language instruction lays the foundation for all other disciplines. Therefore, this study aims to explore the factors affecting the teaching efficacy of primary school Chinese language teachers from their own perspective.

This study focuses on primary school Chinese language teachers. It analyzes the main factors influencing their teaching efficacy and examines the current state and existing problems in this regard. Theoretically, the study fills a gap in related research and deepens understanding of the role of teaching efficacy in basic subject instruction. Practically, it informs teaching management and supports primary school teachers' self-development. By identifying the various factors that affect teaching efficacy, the study enables teachers to enhance their teaching confidence and promote professional growth through self-adjustment and external support. Ultimately, this contributes to improving the quality of primary school Chinese language instruction and equips teachers to better develop students' core competencies, including language literacy, thinking quality, and cultural confidence.

## 2. Participants and Methods

### 2.1 Participants

This study adopted a random sampling method. Five counties (cities) were randomly selected from 16 prefecture-level administrative regions in Yunnan Province, and primary school Chinese language teachers from each county (city) were randomly selected as research participants. A total of 195 questionnaires were distributed. After excluding 38 invalid responses, 160 valid questionnaires were received, yielding an effective rate of 82%. The sample composition is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Sample Characteristics**

Characteristics	Category	Number of persons (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	20	12.5%
	Female	140	87.5%
Age (years)	20-29	61	38.1%
	30-39	79	49.4%
	40-49	17	10.6%
	50-60	3	1.9%
Teaching experience (years)	<3	21	13.1%
	4-6	48	30.0%
	7-10	54	33.8%
	11-20	29	18.1%
	>20	8	5.0%
Academic title	Senior Teacher	5	3.1%
	Teachers of the first grade	80	50.0%
	Teachers of the second level	63	39.4%
	Junior teachers	12	7.5%

### 2.2 Instruments

#### 2.2.1 Teacher Efficacy Scale

The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), developed by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, consists of 24 items covering three dimensions: student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. The scale uses a 9-point Likert response format, with higher scores indicating a stronger sense of teaching efficacy (Dixon et al., 2014). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this scale was 0.97.

#### 2.2.2 Questionnaire on Factors Influencing Teaching Efficacy

Based on potential influencing factors, a self-administered questionnaire was developed for primary school Chinese language teachers. The questionnaire collected demographic information (gender, age,

teaching level, etc.) and addressed two categories of factors: personal factors (professional knowledge, professional beliefs, and professional competence) and external factors (teaching workload, school resource allocation, and teacher evaluation system). The aim was to identify the main factors affecting teaching efficacy and examine differences among them. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of this questionnaire was 0.73.

### 2.3 Statistical Analysis

The collected data were statistically analyzed using SPSS software (version 24.0). The main statistical methods employed included independent-samples t-test, one-way ANOVA, and exploratory factor analysis. A two-tailed P-value  $< 0.05$  was considered statistically significant.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Efficacy

To understand the overall level of teaching efficacy among primary school Chinese language teachers, descriptive statistical analysis was conducted on the teacher efficacy scores. As shown in Table 2, the mean total score on the Teacher Efficacy Scale was 160.09, with a minimum of 72 and a maximum of 208. This indicates considerable variation in teacher efficacy scores, suggesting that teachers' sense of efficacy is uneven across the sample.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Efficacy Scale Scores**

describing statistics					
	Number of cases	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Teaching Efficacy Scale Total Score	160	72	208	160.09	23.27

### 3.2 Descriptive Statistics of Influencing Factors

To understand the distribution of different influencing factors, descriptive statistical analysis was conducted on the data, and the results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Influencing Factors**

Category	Item	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Personal factors	Ability to analyse and process teaching materials scientifically	Completely able	28	17.5%
		Basically able	128	80.0%
		Somewhat able	4	2.5%
		Not able	0	0%
	Ability to communicate effectively with students	Completely able	73	45.6%
		Basically able	84	52.5%
		Somewhat able	2	1.3%

	Not able	1	0.6%
	Yes	148	92.5%
Regular reflection and evaluation	Rarely	12	7.5%
	No	0	0%
	Completely able	57	35.6%
Ability to apply knowledge flexibly in teaching and learning	Basically able	96	60.0%
	Somewhat able	6	3.8%
	Not able	1	0.6%
	Closely follow	76	47.5%
Awareness of disciplinary frontier developments	Occasionally follow	76	47.5%
	Rarely follow	7	4.4%
	Almost unaware	1	0.6%
	Very much like	36	22.5%
Liking of current job	Like	110	68.8%
	Dislike	11	6.9%
	Hate	3	1.9%
Would choose teaching profession again	Yes	102	63.8%
	No	58	36.2%
	Highly recognize	30	18.8%
Recognition of fairness of teacher evaluation	Recognize	93	58.1%
	Neutral	33	20.6%
	Not recognize	4	2.5%
	Very scientific	34	21.3%
Perception of scientificity of evaluation system	Moderately scientific	95	59.4%
	Not very scientific	26	16.3%
	Unscientific	5	3.1%
External factors	Reasonable	27	16.9%
	Fairly reasonable	74	46.3%
Perception of teaching workload	Stressful	49	30.6%
	Overwhelmed	10	6.3%
	Exact match	20	12.5%
Task complexity within ability	Basic Match	101	63.1%
	Partially exceed	33	20.6%
	Clearly exceed	6	3.8%
School policy on teacher	No policy	9	5.6%

visits/further training	Policy but poorly implemented	41	25.6%
	Policy and well implemented	98	61.3%
	Not aware	12	7.5%

### 3.3 Effects of Different Factors on Teacher Efficacy

To examine the effects of different factors on the teaching efficacy of primary school Chinese language teachers, this study categorized the influencing factors into three dimensions: demographic factors, personal factors (excluding demographic factors), and external factors. Independent-samples t-tests, one-way ANOVA, and correlation analyses were conducted to compare differences in Teacher Efficacy Scale scores and to assess correlations between the scale scores and the influencing factors.

#### 3.3.1 Demographic Factors

##### 3.3.1.1 Gender

To examine the effect of gender on teacher efficacy, an independent-samples t-test was performed on the data. The results, presented in Table 4, showed no significant effect of gender on teacher efficacy ( $F = 1.050, P > 0.05$ ).

**Table 4. Effect of Gender on Teacher Efficacy**

The content of the survey	Teaching Efficacy Scale Score ( $M$ )	Levene's ( $F$ )	$t$	$p$
Gender	Male 159.40	1.050	-0.133	0.895
	Female 160.19			

##### 3.3.1.2 Age

To examine the effect of age on teacher efficacy, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results, presented in Table 5, showed a significant effect of age on teacher efficacy ( $F = 4.539, P < 0.05$ ). Further post hoc tests revealed that teachers in the 20–29 age group ( $M = 154.75$ ) had significantly lower teacher efficacy scores than those in the 30–39 age group ( $M = 162.90$ ) and the 50–60 age group ( $M = 199.00$ ). Teachers in the 30–39 age group and those in the 40–49 age group ( $M = 159.29$ ) both scored significantly lower than the 50–60 age group. No significant difference was found between the 30–39 and 40–49 age groups.

**Table 5. Analysing the Effect of Age on Teachers' Teaching Efficacy**

The content of the survey	Teaching Efficacy Scale Score ( $M$ )	$F$	$P$	Post hoc comparisons
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	1.20-29	154.75	4.539**	0.004**	1<2*	2<4**	3<4**
Age	2.30-39	162.90			1<4**		
	3.40-49	159.29					
	4.50-60	199.00					

Note. \* indicates  $P < 0.05$ , \*\*P indicates  $< 0.01$  (below).

### 3.3.1.3 Teaching Experience

To examine the effect of teaching experience on teacher efficacy, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results, presented in Table 6, showed a significant effect of teaching experience on teacher efficacy ( $F = 2.934$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Further post hoc tests revealed that teachers with less than 3 years of experience ( $M = 153.90$ ) and those with 4–6 years of experience ( $M = 156.52$ ) had significantly lower teacher efficacy scores than teachers with 11–20 years of experience ( $M = 167.72$ ) and those with more than 20 years of experience ( $M = 179.00$ ). Teachers with 7–10 years of experience ( $M = 158.76$ ) also scored significantly lower than those with more than 20 years of experience. However, no significant differences were found between the 11–20 years group and the 20+ years group, nor between the lower experience groups.

**Table 6. Effect of Teaching Experience on Teacher Efficacy**

The content of the survey		Teaching Efficacy Scale Score ( $M$ )	$F$	$P$	Post hoc comparisons		
Teaching experience (years)	1.3 years or less	153,90	2.934*	0.023	1<	2<	3<
	2.4-6 years	156.52		*	4*	4*	5*
	3.7-10 years	158.76			1<	2<	
	4.11-20 years	167.72			5**	5*	
	5.20 years or more	179.00					

### 3.3.1.4 Academic Title

To examine the effect of academic title on teacher efficacy, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results, presented in Table 7, showed no significant effect of title on teacher efficacy ( $F = 2.302$ ,  $P > 0.05$ ).

**Table 7. Effect of Academic Title on Teacher Efficacy**

The content of the survey		Teaching Efficacy Scale Score ( $M$ )	$F$	$P$
Title	1. Senior Teacher	175.60	2.302	0.079
	2. Teachers of the first grade	162.53		

3. Teachers of the second level	158.03
4. Junior teachers	148.17

### 3.3.2 Personal Factors (Excluding Demographic Factors)

#### 3.3.2.1 Correlation Between Personal Factors and Teacher Efficacy

To examine the correlation between personal factors (excluding demographic factors) and teacher efficacy, correlation analyses were conducted. The results are presented in Table 8.

Regarding teachers' professional knowledge, the ability to analyze and process teaching materials scientifically ( $r = -0.347^{**}$ ), the ability to apply knowledge flexibly in teaching ( $r = -0.325^{**}$ ), and the degree of understanding of developments at the frontier of the discipline ( $r = -0.245^{**}$ ) were all significantly correlated with teacher efficacy. Although the correlation coefficients were negative due to the scoring direction of the scale, this actually indicates that better performance in these knowledge dimensions is associated with higher teacher efficacy.

Regarding teachers' professional beliefs, liking one's current job ( $r = -0.291^{**}$ ) and willingness to choose the teaching profession again ( $r = -0.192^{**}$ ) also showed significant negative correlations (i.e., positive associations in substance), suggesting that stronger professional beliefs are associated with higher teacher efficacy.

Regarding teachers' professional competence, the ability to communicate effectively with students was significantly correlated with teacher efficacy ( $r = -0.165^*$ ), again indicating a substantive positive association. However, regular reflection and evaluation showed no significant correlation with teacher efficacy ( $r = -0.098$ ,  $P = 0.218$ ).

**Table 8. Correlations Between Personal Factors and Teacher Efficacy**

Teaching Efficacy Scale scores			
Teacher expertise	Ability to analyse and process teaching materials scientifically	<i>r</i>	- 0.347 <sup>**</sup>
		<i>P</i>	0.000 <sup>**</sup>
	Ability to apply knowledge flexibly in teaching and learning	<i>r</i>	- 0.325 <sup>**</sup>
		<i>P</i>	0.000 <sup>**</sup>
	Awareness of disciplinary frontier developments	<i>r</i>	- 0.245 <sup>**</sup>
		<i>P</i>	0.002 <sup>**</sup>
teachers' professional beliefs	Liking of current job	<i>r</i>	- 0.291 <sup>**</sup>
		<i>P</i>	0.000 <sup>**</sup>
	Would choose teaching profession again	<i>r</i>	- 0.192 <sup>*</sup>
		<i>P</i>	0.015 <sup>*</sup>
Teachers' professional	Ability to communicate effectively with students	<i>r</i>	- 0.165 <sup>*</sup>
		<i>P</i>	0.038 <sup>*</sup>

competence	Regular reflection and evaluation	<i>r</i>	- 0.098
		<i>P</i>	0.218

### 3.3.3 External Factors

#### (1) Correlation Between External Factors and Teacher Efficacy

To examine the correlation between external factors and teacher efficacy, correlation analyses were conducted. The results are presented in Table 9.

Teaching workload. The perceived teaching workload showed no significant correlation with teacher efficacy ( $r = -0.134$ ,  $P = 0.091$ ). Similarly, the perception of whether the complexity of teaching tasks exceeded one's ability was not significantly correlated with teacher efficacy ( $r = -0.036$ ,  $P = 0.652$ ).

School resource allocation. The availability and implementation of school policies regarding teacher visits or further training showed no significant correlation with teacher efficacy ( $r = 0.019$ ,  $P = 0.808$ ).

Teacher evaluation system. Teachers' recognition of the fairness of the evaluation process was significantly correlated with teacher efficacy ( $r = -0.215^{**}$ ), as was their perception of the scientific nature of the school's evaluation system ( $r = -0.240^{**}$ ). Although the correlation coefficients were negative due to the scoring direction of the scale, this actually indicates that greater recognition of fairness and scientific validity is associated with higher teacher efficacy.

**Table 9. Correlations Between External Factors and Teacher Efficacy**

Teaching Efficacy Scale scores			
Teaching workload	Perception of teaching workload	<i>r</i>	- 0.134
		<i>P</i>	0.091
	Task complexity within ability	<i>r</i>	- 0.036
		<i>P</i>	0,652
school resourcing	School policy on teacher visits/further training	<i>r</i>	0.019
		<i>P</i>	0.808
Teacher evaluation system	Recognition of fairness of teacher evaluation	<i>r</i>	- 0.215 <sup>**</sup>
		<i>P</i>	0.006 <sup>**</sup>
	Perception of scientificity of evaluation system	<i>r</i>	- 0.240 <sup>**</sup>
		<i>P</i>	0.002 <sup>**</sup>

### 3.4 Exploratory Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on the questionnaire items related to personal factors (excluding demographic factors) and external factors.

**Table 10. KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity**

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy	0.803
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. Chi-square=497.662 df=66 p=0.000**

As shown in Table 11, the factor analysis extracted three factors. The variance contribution rates of the three factors were 26.595%, 19.535%, and 9.924%, respectively, with a cumulative contribution rate of 56.054%, indicating that the three factors explained approximately 56% of the total variance in the original data.

**Table 11. Total Variance Explained by Extracted Factors**

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
	Total	Percent of variance	Cumulative percent	Total	Percent of variance	Cumulative percent	Total	Percent of variance	Cumulative percent
1	3.631	30.257	30.257	3.631	30.257	30.257	3.191	26.595	26.595
2	2.047	17.055	47.312	2.047	17.055	47.312	2.344	19.535	46.130
3	1.049	8.742	56.054	1.049	8.742	56.054	1.191	9.924	56.054
4	0.836	6.966	63.021						
5	0.800	6.664	69.685						
6	0.735	6.125	75.809						
7	0.646	5.383	81.192						
8	0.557	4.641	85.833						
9	0.539	4.490	90.323						
10	0.485	4.044	94.368						
11	0.403	3.356	97.724						
12	0.273	2.276	100.00						

*Note:* Extraction method: principal component analysis. Rotation method: Kaiser normalization.

After determining the number of extracted factors, Kaiser normalization was applied to obtain the rotated factor loading matrix. The results are presented in Table 12. As shown in Table 12, except for item A1, the factor loadings of all other items exceeded 0.5, indicating that the scale had good construct validity.

**Table 12. Rotated Component Matrix**

Item	Content	Ingredients		
		1	2	3
A1	Regular reflection and evaluation	0.466		
A2	Liking of current job	0.684		
A3	Would choose teaching profession again	0.551		
A4	Recognition of fairness of teacher evaluation	0.746		
A5	Perception of scientificity of evaluation system	0.762		
A6	Perception of teaching workload	0.669		
A7	Task complexity within ability	0.586		
A8	Ability to analyse and process teaching materials scientifically		0.652	
A9	Ability to communicate effectively with students		0.646	
A10	Ability to apply knowledge flexibly in teaching and learning		0.628	
A11	Awareness of disciplinary frontier developments		0.514	
A12	School policy on teacher visits/further training			0.878

The three factors were named based on the rotated factor loading matrix.

Factor 1 loaded heavily on seven indicators (A1–A7), which were primarily derived from the dimensions of teachers' professional beliefs, teaching tasks, and the evaluation system. This factor reflects the state of teachers' professional development, encompassing internal professional cognition, external teaching practice, and feedback on external value. Therefore, it was named the teacher professional development factor.

Factor 2 loaded heavily on four indicators (A8–A11), which were mainly from the dimensions of teachers' professional knowledge and professional competence. This factor reflects the core components of teachers' professional literacy, including the knowledge base and practical skills required for teaching. Hence, it was named the teacher professional literacy factor.

Factor 3 loaded heavily on indicator A12, which was derived from the dimension of school resource allocation. This factor reflects the resources provided by schools to support teacher development and was therefore named the school resource support factor.

The teacher professional development factor had the largest weight (26.595%), followed by the teacher professional literacy factor (19.535%) and the school resource support factor (9.924%). All three factors contribute to the development of teachers' teaching efficacy.

#### 4. Analysis and Discussion

##### 4.1 Overall Status of Primary School Chinese Language Teachers' Teacher Efficacy

The study revealed considerable variation in teacher efficacy scores among primary school Chinese

language teachers, reflecting significant differences in their teaching confidence, enthusiasm, and competence. Primary school Chinese language teachers often face challenges such as heavy teaching loads, complex content, and large individual differences among students, while also bearing high social expectations. These factors contribute to the instability of teacher efficacy. Furthermore, internal factors—such as teachers’ professionalism, teaching experience, and professional beliefs—as well as external factors—including school environment and evaluation system—also influence teacher efficacy.

#### *4.2 Impact of Demographic Factors on Teacher Efficacy*

The study found that gender had no significant effect on the teacher efficacy of primary school Chinese language teachers, which is consistent with the findings of Yu, Xin, and Shen (1995). Similarly, academic title showed no significant effect on teacher efficacy, a result contrary to Yu et al. (1995). This discrepancy may be because title criteria are often determined by research output and qualifications, which do not necessarily reflect teaching ability directly. Some teachers may accumulate rich experience through long-term practice and develop a clear understanding of teaching, suggesting that teacher efficacy relies more on actual teaching feedback than on formal titles.

Age and years of teaching experience had a significant effect on teacher efficacy. Teachers in the 20–29 age group showed significantly lower efficacy than those in the 30–39 and 50–60 age groups. Young teachers may lack confidence when facing complex teaching tasks and student management challenges due to insufficient practical experience. As experience accumulates, teaching skills mature, enabling teachers to cope better with various challenges, and teacher efficacy increases accordingly. Teaching experience had a positive and significant effect on teacher efficacy, consistent with Yu et al. (1995) and Lai (2011), but contrary to Huang (2005). With more years of teaching, teachers develop a better grasp of the subject matter, more flexible teaching methods, and more appropriate ways of communicating with students, all of which contribute to a greater sense of efficacy.

#### *4.3 Impact of Personal Factors on Teacher Efficacy*

Teachers’ professional knowledge—specifically, the ability to analyze and process teaching materials scientifically, apply knowledge flexibly in teaching, and understand developments at the frontier of the discipline—had a significant positive effect on teacher efficacy. Better performance in professional knowledge was associated with higher teacher efficacy. Scientific analysis and processing of teaching materials promote well-designed teaching plans; flexible application of knowledge makes teaching content richer and more vivid, thereby enhancing students’ interest and learning outcomes; understanding of frontier developments helps teachers integrate new concepts into practice, improving teaching quality.

Regarding professional beliefs, factors such as liking one’s job and willingness to choose the teaching profession again significantly affected teacher efficacy. Teachers who enjoy their work and would choose the profession again tend to be more enthusiastic and responsible, actively engage in teaching,

and face challenges positively, resulting in a higher sense of efficacy.

In the dimension of professional competence, the ability to communicate effectively with students had a significant positive effect on teacher efficacy. Effective communication helps teachers better understand students' needs and ideas, establish good teacher-student relationships, and improve teaching effectiveness and efficacy. However, regular reflection and evaluation showed no significant effect on teacher efficacy. Although regular reflection and evaluation is an important means of professional development, its lack of significant effect in this study may be due to the methods or outcomes of teachers' reflection and evaluation being insufficiently effective.

#### *4.4 Impact of External Factors on Teacher Efficacy*

Teachers' perception of their current workload had little effect on teacher efficacy. Teaching efficacy essentially reflects teachers' subjective beliefs about their own teaching abilities and their impact on students' learning, whereas workload perception is a perception of task quantity. Moreover, individual differences among teachers may buffer the potential effect of workload on efficacy. Whether the complexity of teaching tasks exceeds teachers' ability also showed no significant effect, possibly because most teachers can cope with task complexity through their own efforts and learning, or because schools adjust task assignments based on teachers' abilities.

In the dimension of school resource allocation, the availability and implementation of school policies regarding teacher visits or further training had no significant effect on teacher efficacy. This finding differs from Pan et al. (2023). One possible explanation is that the implementation of such policies is unsatisfactory, or that teachers have limited opportunities to participate, which may prevent a real impact on their sense of efficacy.

Regarding the teacher evaluation system, teachers' recognition of the fairness of the evaluation process and their perception of the scientific nature of the evaluation system had a significant positive effect on teacher efficacy. The more teachers recognize the fairness and scientificity of the evaluation system, the higher their teacher efficacy. This result is consistent with Xin and Shen et al. (1995). A fair and scientific evaluation system can objectively assess teachers' work, provide positive feedback and incentives, enhance professional identity and motivation, and thereby improve teacher efficacy.

## **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

This study investigated 160 primary school Chinese language teachers in Yunnan Province and explored the factors influencing their teacher efficacy as well as potential pathways for improvement. The results showed that the overall level of teacher efficacy was moderate to high, yet individual differences were significant. Among demographic factors, age and years of teaching experience had significant effects, whereas gender and academic title did not. Regarding personal factors, professional knowledge and professional beliefs were significantly related to teacher efficacy. Among external factors, recognition of the fairness and scientificity of the teacher evaluation system had a significant influence, while teaching workload and the implementation of school further training policies did not.

Enhancement of teacher efficacy can be pursued from three aspects.

At the individual teacher level, teachers need to strengthen their professionalism and professional identity. Specifically, they should improve their ability to analyze teaching materials and transfer knowledge, stay informed about developments in the Chinese language discipline, and integrate new ideas into daily instruction. At the same time, participating in teaching research activities and documenting their teaching growth can enhance professional beliefs and internal motivation, thereby promoting teacher efficacy through professional development.

At the school management level, a diversified teacher evaluation system should be established, emphasizing process feedback and developmental guidance, with sound mechanisms to ensure fairness and scientific validity. In addition, teaching tasks should be reasonably allocated, young teachers should be paired with experienced mentors, and the role of core teachers in teaching research should be fully utilized. Improving policies for teacher further training is also necessary to provide external support for teaching improvement.

At the education policy level, attention should be paid to teacher development pathways and the establishment of a comprehensive support system. Education authorities can implement tiered training based on different stages of teachers' professional development: young teachers focusing on basic teaching skills, middle-aged teachers on teaching research, and senior teachers on experience transmission. Furthermore, exchanges and cooperation between urban and rural teachers and across schools should be actively promoted, and platforms for experience sharing should be established to narrow gaps. Teachers' mental health should also be incorporated into policy frameworks, with regular occupational stress assessments and psychological counseling to provide an external environment conducive to enhancing teacher efficacy.

Teacher efficacy of primary school Chinese language teachers directly affects teaching quality and student growth. Its enhancement requires the synergy of teachers' own professional growth, optimized school management, and systematic support from education policies. Future research may expand the sample scope and adopt longitudinal tracking methods to explore the dynamic mechanisms of teacher efficacy change, thereby providing more solid theoretical support and practical reference for the construction of the primary school Chinese language teacher workforce.

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