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The Impact of Preservice Teachers in Early Childhood Education major of Person–Organization Fit on Teachers Job Satisfaction: The Mediator Role of Parent-Teacher Relationships

Lu Xing[1,2], Qin Yang[2*], Xia Yang[1]
1.Changsha Normal University, Changsha, China
2.Taylor's University, Subang Jaya, Malaysia
***Corresponding author, E-mail: 446836658@qq.com**

Abstract:
Existing research has explored the impact of factors related to Person–Organization (PO) on Chinese Teachers Job Satisfaction (TJS), most studies focus on in-service teachers, lacking attention to pre-service teachers, and paying little attention to Parent-Teacher Relationships (PTR). This study was conducted among 497 university students majoring in preschool education from Hunan Province, China. We investigated the relationship between preschool education pre-service teachers' PO and Teachers Job (internship) Satisfaction, and Parent-Teacher whether relationships will act as intermediaries for this relationship. The data were analyzed using structural equation modeling. The results showed that there was a positive correlation between the PO of preschool pre-service teachers and Teachers Job (internship) Satisfaction during their internship, and this relationship was mediated through PTR. This finding enhances the understanding of the match between pre-service teacher majors and internship units and supports the importance of focusing on dealing with PTR in the higher education stage of pre-school education majors.

Keywords:
Pre-service Teachers; Person–Organization; Teachers Job Satisfaction; Parent-teacher relationships

Article Highlights:

1. This study is the first to reveal the direct and indirect links between PO, PTR and TJS among pre-service teachers in Chinese preschool education in the context of internship.

2. This study supports the importance of focusing on dealing with PTR in the higher education stage of pre-school education majors.

3. Improving the matching degree of intern preschool education teachers is expected to become the next breakthrough to continue to improve the construction of the preschool education profession.

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1 Introduction

Lewin(1952) first noted that field theory could be used to elucidate the connection between an individual's behavior and environment. In addition, a formula for the interaction between the environment and the person was proposed, which demonstrated that the emergence and change of individual attitudes and behaviors are influenced by the interaction between individual traits or the environment.

Spector(1997) defined Job satisfaction or employee satisfaction as a measure of workers' contentment with their work, whether or not they like the job or individual facet of jobs, such as nature of work or supervision." Yue Dan(2011) confirmed that personal-organization-fit has a positive impact on employees' job satisfaction, and their relationship is positive.

Hypothesis 1：Person-organization-fit affects pre-service teacher job satisfaction.

According to Zhang Huimin(2015), the parent-teacher relationship is an interpersonal relationship between parents and teachers that is established through social interaction with the child as the link. Furthermore, Hao Ruoping(郝 , 2007) pointed that parent-teacher interaction is a behavioral process that occurs between parents and teachers through some two-way communication.

Several studies have proven that parent and teachers have good relationship are satisfied with their job(R. D. Crosby, Kolotkin, & Williams, 2003; 张 , 2015). According to Crosby(L. A. Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990), "relationship" is about trust and satisfaction with the relationship. In the process of interaction, when teachers experience respect, pleasure and mutual growth, teachers are willing to invest time and energy in the management of the kindergarten-home relationship (张 , 2015) .

Hypothesis 2：parent-teacher relationship affects teacher job satisfaction.

There are several related research has been justified that Person–Organization Fit and parent-teacher relationship. Zhang jin(张 , 2021) Stated that organizational climate is an important factor in the quality of the parent-teacher relationship. What’s more, organisational climate could influence behaviour through person organisation fit(董 , 2023). Preservice teachers need a long period of time to build up their work before they have competent in parent interaction, and the process of co-operation with parents faces numerous uncertainties and challenges. The study found that preservice teachers perceived getting along with children’s parents is the greatest difficulty they faced(Evans & Tribble, 1986).

Hypothesis 3：Person–Organization Fit affects parent-teacher relationship.

PTR are important for students’ growth(Rogers, Theule, Ryan, Adams, & Keating, 2009). Susan M. Sheridan(2019) report the mediation effect of the PTR, direct effects of the conjoint behavioral consultation intervention on teacher-reported adaptive skills, social skills, and perceptions of the PTR were established, permitting an evaluation of the role of teacher perceptions of the PTR as a mediator of conjoint behavioral consultation’s effect on teacher-reported child out- comes.

Hypothesis 4：The Mediating Role of parent–teacher relationship between person–organization fit and job satisfaction.

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2 Method

2.1 Participants

The recruitment of the participants used random sampling among students of preschool education at Changsha Normal University. The survey was collected through online questionnaires from February 2024 to April 2024.The researchers presented them with the following instructions, " We are conducting a study on pre-service teachers' attitudes and present situation towards internship in preschool education. There is no right or wrong answer, and the questionnaire is anonymous, and the data collected will be used for statistical purposes in a comprehensive form. Please answer sincerely, thank you!" Subsequently, the respondents were asked to take the scale test. Participants agreed to participate in the study before starting and could interrupt at any time. The Ethics Committee of Changsha Normal University reviewed and approved the survey.

2.2 Procedure

The respondents were 524 college preschool education students at normal universities, aged under 23 years old. 21 people (4.01%) did not complete the questionnaire and were therefore excluded. Eliminate 6 questionnaires with all the same answer options. Finally, 497 valid questionnaires were obtained, of which 55 were answered by men and 442 were answered by women.

2.3 Measures

The scales used in this study are all Chinese versions of the scales that have been validated by other studies in China.

2.4 Control variables

This study uses Cable's(Cable & DeRue, 2002) Person-Organization-Fit Scale, which has been used by many Chinese scholars to measure person organization fit of different research subjects and has a high degree of reliability and applicability. In this study, some words in the scale were modified, for example, "My personal values are very similar to the organizational values." Adjusted to "My personal values are very similar to the values of my nursery school." All questions were positively scored on a 7-point Likert scale.

The study used the teacher version of the Kindergarten Teachers' Parent-Teacher Relationships questionnaire by Zhang Huimin(张 , 2015). The scale is divided into three dimensions: teacher cognition, teacher emotion, and teacher behaviour, and is scored on a Likter 7-point scale, which has been validated by Zhang Huimin and other researchers.

This study mainly refers to Lu Dandan's(陆 , 2024) "Early Childhood Teachers' Job Satisfaction Scale" and at the same time, taking into full consideration of the characteristics of preschool pre-service teachers' practice and learning as well as the needs of this study, the researcher selected the "Preschool Pre-service Teachers' Practice and Learning Satisfaction Scale" with three dimensions of work pressure, work environment, and spiritual rewards, with a total of 15 question items. The scale was based on a seven-point Likert scale, with higher scores representing higher job satisfaction among preschool teachers.

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2.5 Data Analysis

Structural equation modeling (SEM) with AMOS 26.0 was used to test the hypothesized model. In our analysis, the researcher adopted Reuben M.Baron and David A.Kenny's(Baron & Kenny, 1986) three-step strategy to test the hypothesized model. First, the measurement model was confirmed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and then the researcher performed SEM analysis to measure the fit and path coefficients, finally, the mediation model was analyzed to verify the hypotheses.

The significance of the indirect effects was calculated using the AMOS 26 macro, through the bootstrapping method with 5000 repetitions and a confidence interval (CI) of 95%(Hayes, 2009).

3.Results

3.1 Test of Convergent Validity

This research conducted CFA analysis on all constructs. The three constructs of the model are PO, PTR, and TJS. Factor loadings of all constructs are between 0.6~0.9, and are significant, Component reliability (CR) is above 0.9 respectively, and the Average Variation Extraction (AVE) Amount is between 0.554~0.635 (as shown in Table 1), which is consistent with the standards of Hair(Hair, 2009) and Fornell and Larcker (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 1 Reliability and Validity of Constructs.

Constructs	Variable	Unstd.	S.E.	T-Value	P	Std.	SMC	CR	AVE	Cronbach's alpha
PO	PO1	1.000				.720	.518	.918	.554	.916
	PO2	.987	.058	17.063	***	.788	.621			
	PO3	1.044	.061	17.223	***	.795	.632			
	PO4	.990	.059	16.832	***	.778	.605			
	PO5	1.071	.060	17.898	***	.826	.682			
	PO6	.937	.062	15.129	***	.700	.490			
	PO7	.962	.060	16.018	***	.741	.549			
	PO8	.978	.062	15.772	***	.729	.531			
	PO9	.824	.064	12.972	***	.602	.362			
PTR	PTR1	1.000				.791	.626	.960	.635	.960
	PTR2	1.068	.049	21.678	***	.842	.709			
	PTR3	1.036	.048	21.688	***	.842	.709			
	PTR4	1.027	.049	20.819	***	.818	.669			
	PTR5	.928	.047	19.911	***	.791	.626			
	PTR6	.959	.051	18.936	***	.761	.579			
	PTR7	1.073	.051	21.155	***	.827	.684			
	PTR8	1.049	.048	21.933	***	.849	.721			
	PTR9	.952	.050	19.229	***	.770	.593			
	PTR10	.917	.047	19.641	***	.783	.613			
	PTR11	.899	.049	18.338	***	.742	.551			
	PTR12	.993	.052	19.243	***	.771	.594			
	PTR13	.980	.050	19.464	***	.777	.604			
	PTR14	.989	.051	19.517	***	.779	.607			
TJS	TJS1	1.000				.745	.555	.952	.569	.952
	TJS2	.868	.055	15.917	***	.698	.487			

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Constructs	Variable	Unstd.	S.E.	T-Value	P	Std.	SMC	CR	AVE	Cronbach's alpha
	TJS3	.975	.055	17.693	***	.767	.588			
	TJS4	.851	.056	15.151	***	.667	.445			
	TJS5	.928	.057	16.236	***	.710	.504			
	TJS6	.987	.056	17.560	***	.762	.581			
	TJS7	1.036	.058	17.934	***	.777	.604			
	TJS8	.840	.052	16.174	***	.708	.501			
	TJS9	1.020	.058	17.712	***	.768	.590			
	TJS10	1.015	.056	18.005	***	.779	.607			
	TJS11	.936	.054	17.312	***	.753	.567			
	TJS12	1.012	.053	18.941	***	.815	.664			
	TJS13	1.045	.055	18.834	***	.811	.658			
	TJS14	1.011	.056	18.176	***	.786	.618			
	TJS15	.987	.057	17.212	***	.749	.561			

Note:(1) **p < .01; ***p < .001; N=548.

3.2 Test of Discriminant Validity

To verified whether there is a statistical difference in the correlation between two different constructs usually use discriminant validity analysis. The square root value of AVE is greater than or close to the value of other related structures (Table 2), therefore, it indicates that there is discriminant validity between all constructs.

Table 2 Pearson Correlation and AVE square root value.

	AVE	PTR	TJS	PO
PTR	.635	**.797**		
TJS	.569	.764	**.754**	
PO	.554	.711	.672	**.744**

Note:(1) Square root of AVE in bold on diagonals. (2) Off diagonals are Pearson correlation of constructs

3.3 Test of Model Fit

Figure 1 is Fit index comparison of Structural statistical model of PO, PTR and TJS, all Fit indices meet the standards of general SEM research. Bagozzi & Yi's(Bagozzi & Yi, 1988) research results show that GFI >0.8 is acceptable, GFI >0.9 is excellent fit, Scott's(Scott, 1995) research results show that AGFII >0.8 is acceptable, AGFI >0.9 is excellent fit, as a result, this model has a good fit.

In Path coefficient of Structural statistical model of PO, PTR and TJS, the standardized path coefficient of PO to PTR is 0.711 (p<0. 001), and the standardized path coefficient of P0 to TJS is 0.262 (p<0. 001), the standardized path coefficient of PTR to TJS is 0.578 (p<0. 001), there is a significant difference between the constructs data.

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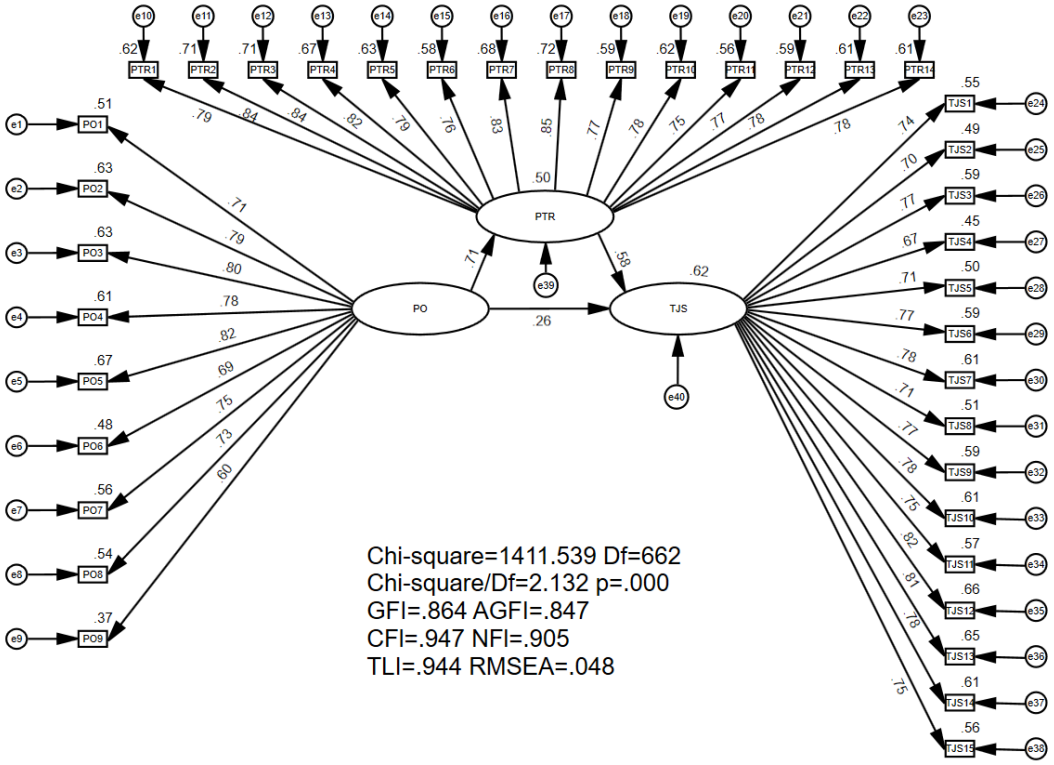


Figure 1 Structural statistical model of Person-organization-Fit, Parent-teacher relationships and teachers Job Satisfaction

3.4 Test of Mediation

The indirect effect coefficient of PO-PTR-TJS is 0.350. The direct effect coefficient of PO-TJS is 0.223. The total effect coefficient of PO-TJS is 0.573. The confidence interval of the indirect effect, direct effect and total effect do not include 0 and Z>1.96. It can be indicated that PTR plays a partial mediating role between PO and TJS, therefore, the results supported Hypothesis 4.

Table 4 Path Coefficient

Construct		Unstandardized path coefficient	S.E.	C.R.	P	Standardized path coefficient
PO	PTR	.618	.046	13.332	***	.711
PO	TJS	.223	.042	5.296	***	.262
PTR	TJS	.566	.053	10.622	***	.578

Note: ***p < .001

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Table 5 Standardized indirect effects of the hypothesized model.

SIE	Point Estimate	Product of Coefficients		Bootstrapping=5000			
				Bias-Corrected 95%CI		Percentile 95%CI	
		SE	Z	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Indirect Effects							
PO-PTR-TJS	.350	.045	7.778	.271	.447	.267	.442
Direct Effect							
PO-TJS	.223	.042	5.310	.145	.309	.145	.310
Total Effect							
PO-TJS	.573	.054	10.611	.478	.695	.474	.689

Note: (1) Standardized estimating of 5,000 bootstrap sample. (2) ***p < .001

4.Discussion

The research results show that PO has a significant positive impact on TJS during the internship period of preschool education pre-service teachers, and PTR plays a positive mediating role. This result is consistent with previous mainstream research(R. D. Crosby et al., 2003; Sheridan et al., 2019; 岳 , 2011; 张 , 2021; 张 , 2015). The closer the match between pre-service teachers and the internship unit indicates that it is easier for pre-service teachers to obtain satisfaction. The harmonious relationship between parents and pre-service teachers also greatly promotes the satisfaction of pre-service teachers. In order to promote the satisfaction of pre-service teachers, the importance of matching students with positions can be further emphasized when assigning internships. When cultivating talents in universities, PTR case analysis and teaching can be added to improve students' abilities in this area and improve career satisfaction.

4.1 Theoretical contributions

The findings of this study provide empirical support for the relationship between PO and TJS during the internship process of Chinese preschool education pre-service teachers and the mediating role therein. PO has a positive impact on TJS. This result is consistent with Rehfuss(2012) and Dan Yue's(2011) previous work, they believe that in enterprises or hospitals, individual-organization fit is an important factor affecting job satisfaction.

Minna Uitto(2021) discusses parent–teacher relationships in school micropo- litics based on beginning teachers' stories. In addition, Susan M. Sheridan(2019) report the mediation effect of the parent–teacher relationship, direct effects of the conjoint behavioral consultation intervention on teacher-reported adaptive skills, social skills, and perceptions of the parent–teacher relationship were established. The results of this study also support the above research.

4.2 Practical implications

Education authorities at all levels in China's Hunan Province generally have mismatches when assigning internship units to intern students. The main factor they consider is the shortage of intern teachers in local

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schools at different levels. With the emergence of China's declining birthrate, improving educational effectiveness and enhancing parent satisfaction have become new challenges. This study fully highlights the importance of the matching degree of intern teachers. Improving the matching degree of intern preschool education teachers is expected to become the next breakthrough to continue to improve the construction of the preschool education profession.

Specifically, students majoring in preschool education have received targeted training in kindergarten-related values and work abilities when they receive higher education. During the professional study process, students learn about the relationship positioning with children's parents, communication methods, and problem-solving solutions. Students already have certain expectations for work before the internship. The mismatch between the internship unit and the major studied an important factor causing fluctuations in satisfaction. At the same time, due to the decrease in PTR, parents may be dissatisfied with the school and bring further challenges to the internship schools. Therefore, this study calls for improving the internship matching degree of preschool education college students to achieve a win-win-win situation in terms of high-quality training of college students, high parent satisfaction of the internship unit, and high student satisfaction. This appeal may also have a positive impact on the satisfaction of the units receiving internship students and the training of students in the internship units.

In terms of PTR, this study provides a mediating influence to explain the relationship between PO and TJS, which shows that in the training process of preschool education college students, strengthening training in PTR can help improve students' satisfaction during the internship stage. This may further affect professional identity.

5.Limitations and Directions for future research

This study evaluated the mediating effects of PO and TJS between PTR. Future research can adopt a longitudinal approach at multiple time points to better understand the causal relationship between PO and TJS between PTR. Although this study has these limitations, it does not prevent the results from providing some important references for further research on this topic.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization: L.X.; Methodology: L.X.; Software: X.Y.; Validation: Q.Y.; Formal analysis: X.Y.; Investigation: X.Y.; Resources: X.Y.; Data Curation: Q.Y.; Writing -original draft preparation: L.X.; Writing -review and editing: X.Y.; Visualization: L.X.; Supervision: Q.Y.; Project administration: Q.Y.; Funding acquisition: Q.Y.

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[Data availability statement – Data will be made available on request.]

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