



The Relationship Between Professional Learning Community And Teacher Job Satisfaction: Empirical Evidence From China

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study examines the relationship between professional learning communities (PLCs) and teacher job satisfaction, focusing on primary school teachers in Guiyang, China. **Methodology:** This study involved a quantitative analysis of 390 teachers measured the level of PLCs and teacher job satisfaction in practice and using structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the relationship between PLCs and teacher job satisfaction. Furthermore, multiple linear regression analysis was used to examine which of the four dimensions of PLCs significantly influenced teacher job satisfaction. **Conclusions:** The results of mean analysis showed that PLCs and teachers' job satisfaction were at a medium-high level in practice. Structural equation modelling (SEM) results revealed a significant positive effect of PLCs on teacher job

satisfaction ($\beta = 0.32, p < 0.001$). Further multiple linear regression analysis indicated that only "shared responsibility" significantly influenced teacher job satisfaction ($B=0.196, p < 0.001$). In contrast, "de-privatized practice" ($B=0.029, p=0.597$), "organizational learning" ($B=0.051, p=0.358$), and "reflective dialogue" ($B=0.042, p=0.476$) showed no significant impact. **Implications:** The study suggests that cultural and organisational challenges may have prevented the full implementation of PLCs in western China under a Western framework. This research introduces PLCs as a new factor affecting teacher job satisfaction, offering a fresh perspective on organisational culture, and contributes to understanding their effectiveness in diverse cultural settings. It also provides practical insights for educators in western China to enhance teacher job satisfaction.

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Introduction

PLCs aim to alleviate teachers' feelings of isolation, promote collaborative learning and professional growth, enhance teamwork, and ultimately contribute to improved student academic achievement (Myint Lay, 2024). Studies have confirmed that actively fostering the development of PLCs can effectively encourage teacher collaboration (Hargreaves, 2019), enhance teacher professional development (Schaap et al., 2018; Wang & An, 2023), and improve teaching practices (Hord & Sommers, 2008; Luyten & Bazo, 2019), ultimately leading to better student achievement (Mutsher, 2018; Park et al., 2018). In Irene Garcia's review, previous research on professional learning communities was summarised across several key aspects: the concept and definition of PLCs (DuFour & Reeves, 2016), common characteristics of successfully implemented PLCs (DuFour & Reeves, 2016), strategies for implementing PLCs (DuFour & Reeves, 2016), and the role of PLCs (Andrews & Lewis, 2004; Huffman & Jacobson, 2003). Although PLCs have been extensively studied in various contexts, gaps remain in the fundamental research on their application.

Firstly, while prior research has established that PLCs can effectively foster teacher collaboration, enhance both individual and organisational capacity, and contribute to improved student outcomes, there remains a notable lack of substantial empirical evidence to robustly substantiate these claims. Secondly, a significant proportion of existing studies on PLCs predominantly reflect Western perspectives, frequently neglecting the nuances of hierarchical cultural contexts, such as those found in Asian societies, including China. Although the concept of PLCs was originally developed within Western frameworks, and many scholars assert its potential adaptability across diverse environments, the implementation and efficacy of PLCs are profoundly shaped by specific cultural dynamics. Consequently, there is a pressing need to investigate the functioning and impact of PLCs within varying cultural settings (Kang et al., 2023). Thirdly, research exploring the relationship between PLCs and teachers has largely focused on the positive influence of these communities on aspects such as teacher professional development (Schaap et al., 2018; Wang & An, 2023), teaching practices (Hord & Sommers, 2008; Luyten & Bazo, 2019), and teacher commitment (Zhang & Sun, 2019). However, there is a paucity of empirical studies examining the impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction.

Teacher job satisfaction plays a critical role in influencing levels of engagement, intrinsic motivation (Sargent & Hannum, 2005), and overall enthusiasm for their professional responsibilities (Chen et al., 2007). Furthermore, it has been linked to teacher retention rates (DeStefano, 2002) and student academic achievement (Ilyas & Abdullah, 2016). Teachers who report higher levels of job satisfaction are often more inclined to dedicate additional effort towards improving student learning outcomes (Msuya, 2016), which in turn correlates with enhanced student performance in key academic areas such as reading and mathematics (Thompson et al., 2004).

The formation of teacher job satisfaction entails a highly intricate psychological process, necessitating more comprehensive research to identify the specific factors that influence it. For example, both individual characteristics (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Koustelios, 2001; Sargent & Hannum, 2005) and school environmental factors (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Sargent & Hannum, 2005; Toropova et al., 2020) have been found to exert inconsistent effects on job satisfaction. This inconsistency underscores the importance of considering the role of

specific cultural contexts when examining teacher job satisfaction. Additionally, prior research has highlighted a range of factors that contribute to teacher job satisfaction, including teacher self-efficacy (Jung & Woo, 2022; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014), leadership styles (García Torres, 2017; Ling et al., 2011), teacher autonomy (Liu et al., 2021), organisational climate (Okoli, 2018; Otrębski, 2022), interpersonal relationships among teachers (Olsen & Huang, 2019), student performance (Aldridge & Fraser, 2015), workplace conditions (Ilyas & Abdullah, 2016), participatory decision-making processes (Maforah, 2015), and school culture (Jošanov-Vrgović & Pavlović, 2014). Although DuFour et al. (2005) developed a theoretical framework that underscores the relationship between PLCs, teacher collaboration, and job satisfaction, empirical studies exploring teacher job satisfaction within this framework remain scarce.

Consequently, this study seeks to analyse teacher job satisfaction through the lens of PLCs, with the aim of uncovering the current state of teacher job satisfaction within China's educational context and exploring potential avenues for its enhancement. By doing so, it aims to contribute richer empirical evidence to support the establishment and promotion of PLCs across diverse educational environments.

Literature Review

The Consequences of PLC and its Research in the Chinese Context

The concept of a "practice community" was initially introduced by Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) in their examination of PLC models. Bryk et al. (1999) define a PLC as a collective of individuals united by a shared purpose. Such a group persistently focuses on one or multiple objectives, systematically evaluates their effectiveness, and continuously refines their practices to develop more efficient means of achieving these aims. Similarly, Prenger et al. (2021) characterise a PLC as a professional network committed to ongoing learning, with the overarching goal of improving educational outcomes. In the context of school-based professional development, PLCs are widely regarded as an effective strategy for mitigating teacher isolation, fostering collaborative decision-making, establishing a shared institutional vision, and ultimately enhancing both teacher satisfaction and student achievement (Myint Lay, 2024).

Louis, Kruse, and Marks (1996) delineate five core components of professional learning communities. The first is the establishment of shared norms and values, which are essential for the successful implementation of PLCs (Lindahl, 2011). Secondly, a distinct characteristic of PLCs is their emphasis on student learning. Thirdly, reflective dialogue is integral, as it enables teachers to engage in ongoing discussions regarding curriculum, instructional strategies, and student progress (Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1991), fostering both individual and institutional growth. The fourth component, de-privatisation of practice, addresses the complexity of teaching by encouraging educators to share their experiences and insights through collaborative reflection, thereby facilitating the adoption of more effective teaching methods. Lastly, collaboration is a crucial element, as it follows from reflective dialogue and de-privatisation, allowing teachers to collectively refine curriculum design, content delivery, and pedagogical approaches.

Although a unified definition of PLCs has yet to be established, teacher collaboration has long been embedded within the Chinese education system. The Teaching Research Group (TRG), for instance, serves as a platform for educators to collectively develop lesson plans and explore effective instructional strategies. While TRGs share similarities with PLCs, they also possess distinct characteristics shaped by cultural differences. Notably, TRGs are institutionally mandated through a top-down approach rather than emerging from voluntary collaboration among teachers (Ju & Liu, 2020). Consequently, TRGs function as artificial communities (Wong, 2010) that also assume managerial responsibilities. Moreover, they prioritise teaching over learning (Hargreaves, 2019). Research by Zhang and Sun (2019) highlights five key areas of PLC inquiry in Chinese schools: shared learning, professional competence, leadership as a driver of school performance, traditional cultural constraints, and the absence of structural support. These factors are intrinsically linked to China's cultural heritage, distinctive education system, and the societal recognition of teachers.

Qiao et al. (2017) review identifies five key themes in recent research on PLCs in Mainland China: (1) the characteristics of PLCs, (2) regional variations in PLC practices, (3) structured teacher collaboration within an implementation-driven educational system, (4) the role of university researchers in PLC development, and (5) the impact of educational leadership in PLC contexts. Additionally, Qiao et al. (2017) highlight that an average of only 4.4 empirical studies are published annually, indicating a limited volume of research on this topic. This suggests that PLC research in Mainland China remains insufficient, particularly regarding empirical investigations into its underlying causes and effects (Zhang et al., 2022). Consequently, there is an urgent need for further empirical studies within the Chinese educational context.

The Antecedents of Teacher Job Satisfaction and its Research in China

Locke (1969) defined job satisfaction as an emotional state, either positive or negative, arising from an individual's evaluation of their work. It reflects the extent to which a job fulfils one's professional values, leading to happiness, or conversely, obstructs their fulfilment, resulting in frustration. Job satisfaction or dissatisfaction emerges from the disparity between an individual's job expectations and the actual working conditions, with the degree of alignment between these factors determining overall satisfaction levels. Ilyas and Abdullah (2016) emphasise that teacher job satisfaction has a significant impact on students' classroom performance and overall school success (Tabancali, 2016). Furthermore, dissatisfaction in the workplace can contribute to teacher burnout, which, in turn, may serve as a driving force behind teacher attrition. Research on Kenyan teachers has demonstrated that burnout has a detrimental effect on job satisfaction (Kanja et al., 2022).

Research investigating the factors influencing teacher job satisfaction has identified several key elements that contribute to heightened levels of satisfaction. These include a positive organisational environment, a collaborative atmosphere, effective communication, harmonious relationships among teachers, positive teacher-student interactions, competitive remuneration, and job security (Maforah, 2015). Additionally, studies conducted within the Chinese context have revealed that leadership style (Shi et al., 2024), incentive mechanisms and welfare systems (Syahmalini et al., 2022), work environment

and resource availability (Toropova et al., 2021), opportunities for professional development and training, career advancement prospects, relationships with leaders, colleagues, and parents (Smet, 2021), as well as work autonomy and participation in decision-making processes (Skapinaki & Salamoura, 2020), all significantly impact teacher satisfaction. Furthermore, some scholars argue that excessive workload is a primary source of occupational stress for teachers (Sultana & Aurangzeb, 2022), and that an overwhelming workload can lead to job dissatisfaction. Despite these findings, the majority of existing research in this domain tends to focus on a variety of other perspectives, with relatively limited attention given to examining teacher job satisfaction through the framework of PLCs (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

According to the 2015 International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) data, among 36 economically developed countries and regions globally, China ranks second to last in terms of job satisfaction, trailing behind many developed nations in Europe and the Americas. However, a study focusing on Chinese university teachers challenges this finding, revealing that their job satisfaction level was $M=4.22$, indicating a relatively high level of satisfaction (Xu et al., 2023). Interestingly, a nationwide survey in China found no significant correlation between job satisfaction and turnover rates, a phenomenon attributed to the influence of China's unique Confucian cultural context (Nie & Sousa-Poza, 2017). This suggests that job satisfaction is profoundly shaped by specific environmental and cultural factors, making the Confucian context in China a particularly compelling case for exploring this construct. Additionally, Chinese scholars have predominantly employed qualitative methods to investigate PLCs (Wang, 2014), highlighting a critical gap in empirical research.

The Relationship between PLC and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Research indicates that schools which successfully implement PLCs tend to exhibit higher levels of teacher satisfaction, more positive morale, and reduced absenteeism among staff (Andrews & Lewis, 2004; Huffman & Jacobson, 2003). Importantly, evidence suggests that participation in PLCs enables teachers to continuously refine their classroom practices, which not only enhances teaching quality but also contributes to improved student outcomes. In contrast, teachers who work in isolation within schools often face significant challenges in accessing new information or knowledge. They are frequently required to address problems independently, which can lead to increased pressure and, ultimately, lower job satisfaction (Cansoy & Parlar, 2017). Such collaborative practices within the workplace have been shown to enhance job satisfaction (Cansoy & Parlar, 2017).

Research in China highlights the positive impact of PLCs on teacher job satisfaction. Studies show that PLC participation boosts satisfaction levels (Wong, 2010), with all five PLC dimensions linked to higher satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2022). However, findings vary; some studies suggest collaboration negatively affects satisfaction, while collective focus on student learning has no significant impact (Garnjost & Lawter, 2019). Despite global recognition of PLC benefits, limited research explores their direct relationship with teacher satisfaction, emphasising the need for further studies across diverse contexts. Therefore, the research hypothesis is proposed: (H) There is a significant relationship between PLCs and teachers' job satisfaction.

Methodology

Participant

This study surveyed 390 secondary school teachers in Guiyang, Guizhou Province, China, with a response rate of 97.26% from 401 distributed questionnaires. Among respondents, 69.23% were female (270) and 30.77% male (120). Age distribution was as follows: 18–30 (35.89%), 31–40 (38.97%), 41–50 (15.89%), and 51–60 (9.23%). Educational qualifications included bachelor's (67.95%), associate degree (19.23%), master's (10.77%), and doctorate (2.05%). Teaching experience varied, with 30.65% having under three years, 24.19% with 4–6 years, 21.03% with 7–15 years, 7.79% with 16–23 years, and 17.18% with 24 years or more.

Instrument

In this study, a questionnaire incorporating two well-established scales (utilising a 5-point Likert scale) was employed. Both scales have been extensively used in prior research and are recognised for their robust reliability and validity. The first scale, developed by [Ho et al. \(2016\)](#), is a 16-item instrument designed to assess PLCs ([Ho et al., 2016](#)). This scale encompasses four critical dimensions of PLCs: shared responsibility (SR), organisational learning (OL), reflective dialogue (RD), and de-privatised practices (DP). The scale has shown strong reliability in Chinese research, with a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha=0.97$ ([Liu & Yin, 2020](#)). The Teacher Job Satisfaction (TJS) scale, a 5-item tool from TIMSS and PIRLS ([Mullis et al., 2004](#)), has also demonstrated excellent reliability in Chinese contexts, with $\alpha=0.90$ ([Lei et al., 2024](#)). Together, these scales offer a reliable framework for studying the link between PLCs and teacher job satisfaction in China.

Analysis

In this study, SPSS 25.0 and AMOS 28.0 were used for data analysis. Reliability and validity of the measurement model were assessed through Cronbach's alpha (α) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), evaluating convergent validity (AVE), composite reliability (CR), and discriminant validity. Descriptive statistics and correlation analyses established the foundational framework of variables. Structural equation modelling (SEM) explored relationships between PLCs and teacher job satisfaction, while multiple linear regression identified which PLC dimensions—SR, OL, RD, and DP—significantly influenced satisfaction. Model fit was assessed using indices ($RMSEA \leq 0.06$, $CFI \geq 0.95$, $GFI \geq 0.95$, $TLI \geq 0.95$), ensuring robustness and reliability.

Results

Scale Reliability and Validity

[Table 1](#) shows that the PLC and TJS scales are reliable and valid. DP, RD, SR, and OL have Cronbach's alpha values of 0.91, 0.91, 0.92, and 0.89 on the PLC scale. AVE values for these dimensions are 0.67, 0.71, 0.74, and 0.66, and CR scores are 0.89, 0.91, 0.92, and 0.88. The square roots of the AVE (0.82, 0.84, 0.86, and 0.81) exceed latent concept inter-variable correlations, supporting discriminant validity. An excellent match is confirmed by model

fit indices: $\chi^2/df = 1.47$, $p < 0.001$, GFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.98, CFI = 0.98, and RMSEA = 0.026. The TJS scale has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94, indicating excellent internal consistency. Its AVE (0.75) and CR (0.94) exceed 0.70, proving reliability. Model fit indices show an excellent match: $\chi^2/df = 2.73$, $p < 0.001$, GFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.97, CFI = 0.98, and RMSEA = 0.05.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics, Correlation Matrix, Cronbach's α , AVE, CR, and Square Root of AVE

	TJS	DP	RD	SR	OL
1.TJS	1				
2.DP	.27**	1			
3.RD	.28**	.58**	1		
4.SR	.28**	.56**	.58**	1	
5.OL	.28**	.56**	.58**	.57**	1
M	3.70	3.72	3.52	3.60	3.68
SD	.94	0.86	0.89	1.01	0.93
α	.93	.91	.91	.92	.89
AVE	.75	.67	.71	.74	.66
CR	.94	.89	.91	.92	.88
SQUARE ROOT OF AVE		.82	.84	.86	.81

Note: *** $p < 0.001$; Std= Standardized regression weight estimates; TJS=Teacher job satisfaction; DP= De-privatized Practices; RD= Reflective Dialogue; SR= Shared Responsibility; OL= Organizational Learning.

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

As shown in Table 1, the mean values of the four PLC dimensions, ranked from highest to lowest, are DP (M = 3.72, SD = 0.86), OL (M = 3.68, SD = 0.93), SR (M = 3.60, SD = 1.01), and RD (M = 3.52, SD = 0.89). The overall mean for teachers' job satisfaction is 3.70 (SD = 0.94). Additionally, all five variables exhibit significant correlations.

SEM Results

We used a structural equation model (Figure 1) to examine PLC components and teacher job satisfaction. The model fit was excellent, as shown by the SEM analysis ($\chi^2/df = 1.62$, $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.98, NFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.99, and RMSEA = 0.038). The study found that PLC components positively impacted teacher job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.32$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis.

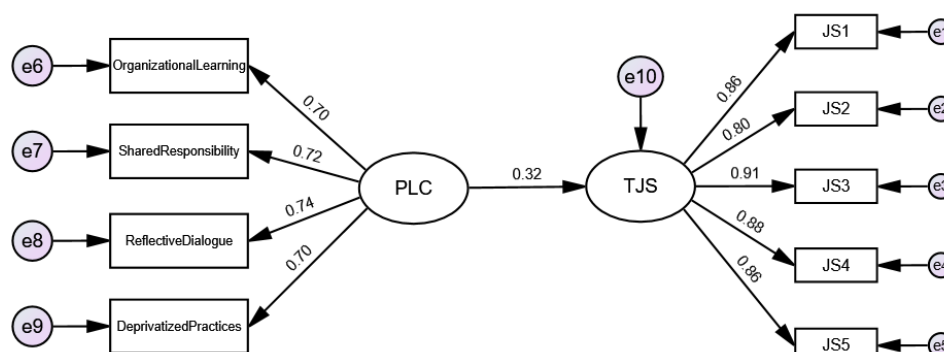


Figure 1: Relationship between PLC and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

A multiple linear regression analysis was performed to ascertain which characteristics of PLC substantially affect teacher job satisfaction. The findings revealed that PLC characteristics contributed merely 9.4% to the variation in teacher job satisfaction in Guiyang ($R^2 = 0.094$). Of the four aspects, only shared responsibility exhibited a statistically significant beneficial effect ($B = 0.196$, $p < 0.001$), whereas de-privatised practices ($p = 0.597$), organisational learning ($p = 0.358$), and reflective conversation ($p = 0.476$) were not statistically significant. The resultant regression equation is:

$$\text{Teacher Job Satisfaction} = 2.558 + 0.196 \times \text{Shared Responsibility}$$

Discussion

The Application Degree of PLC and Teachers' Job Satisfaction in China

This study found that the overall level of PLC practice in primary schools in Guiyang was medium to high, with an average score of 3.62, indicating that PLC components are implemented to some extent in Chinese schools, consistent with previous research. For instance, a survey of several developed cities in China revealed high teacher performance in PLC practice, with an average score of 4.29 (Zhang et al., 2022), and a study of capital cities in western China reported an average score of 4.02 (Zheng et al., 2023). This suggests that schools with ample resources are more likely to develop robust PLCs (Kilbane, 2009). A study in Northern Illinois found PLC implementation at a medium-to-high level ($M = 3.48$) (Schlichter, 2015), while research in the Philippines reported a very high level of PLC practice ($M = 4.34$) (Guhao Jr & Sioting Jr, 2023). However, some scholars argue that the hierarchical structure in Chinese schools limits teacher autonomy, resulting in PLCs being more formal than functional (Yi, 2024). This perspective contradicts the findings of this study. A potential explanation for this discrepancy is that teachers may be confusing PLCs with TRGs, leading to misunderstandings about the nature of PLCs (Haiyan & Allan, 2020). Unlike the more formalised PLCs in Western education, Chinese schools are still developing the organisational framework, cultural norms, and interpersonal dynamics needed to support effective PLCs.

The research indicated that primary school teachers in Guiyang have an average job satisfaction score of 3.70, which is lower than the average in other regions of western China. A study covering in-service vocational education teachers across 12 provinces in western China reported an average job satisfaction score of 4.15 (Fang & Qi, 2023), which is also lower than the satisfaction levels of Chinese university teachers ($M = 4.22$) (Xu et al., 2023). This suggests that Chinese teachers may face greater pressures. In contrast, a study in the economically developed Jiangsu Province found relatively high job satisfaction among primary school teachers, with leadership and management satisfaction ($M = 4.25$), development environment satisfaction ($M = 4.20$), reasonable return satisfaction ($M = 3.44$), education work self-realisation satisfaction ($M = 4.05$), and work relationship satisfaction ($M = 4.36$) (Gu & Zhou, 2020).

Similarly, research on junior high school teachers reported a mean satisfaction score of $M = 2.67$ for salary, $M = 3.55$ for satisfaction with school administration and facilities, and $M = 2.98$ for satisfaction with student competitiveness (Zang et al., 2022). These studies highlight that primary school teachers in western China, where the economy is less developed, resources are scarce, and cultural norms are more conservative, tend to report lower job satisfaction. Conversely, teachers in eastern China, where the economy is more developed, resources are abundant, and culture is more open, generally have higher job satisfaction. Factors such as principal leadership, interpersonal relationships, teaching resources, income, and student performance all influence teachers' job satisfaction.

Effects of PLC Components on Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The SEM results confirm that PLCs have a positive impact on teacher job satisfaction, a finding consistent with previous studies (Björnsdóttir et al., 2021; Cansoy & Parlar, 2017; Yoo & Jang, 2022). While this overall positive relationship aligns with research conducted in China, there are notable differences in the influence of individual PLC components. For instance, a study involving teachers in Shanghai found that shared purpose and responsibility significantly enhance job satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2022), whereas research from Vietnam highlights the favourable effects of collective learning and shared values and vision (Ly & Hong, 2025). Through multiple linear regression analysis, this study found that shared responsibility significantly affects teacher job satisfaction, while the effects of reflective dialogue, de-privatised practices, and organisational learning on job satisfaction did not reach statistically significant levels. This suggests that teachers in Guiyang operate within a TRG-based environment, where schools implement strategies resembling PLC characteristics. For example, by emphasising collective cooperation and shared responsibilities among teachers, this collaborative model not only fosters team spirit but also enhances teachers' sense of belonging and accountability, thereby significantly improving job satisfaction (Yi, 2024).

For instance, within a Confucian cultural context, admitting personal mistakes or critiquing others' practices can be challenging, leading to limited reflective dialogue and a lack of effective feedback mechanisms among teachers. Additionally, intense competition among teachers may discourage the sharing of experiences and resources, or an overreliance on individual teaching methods may hinder the implementation of de-privatised practices. Finally, in some schools, organisational learning may be overly formalised or lack practical application, making it difficult for teachers to derive

meaningful value or professional growth from it (Xin Zheng, 2022). These challenges highlight the need for more nuanced and context-sensitive approaches to implementing PLCs in diverse educational settings.

Conclusion and Implications

Research findings suggest that teachers' job satisfaction significantly increases when participating in PLCs, with shared responsibility being the only PLC component that significantly affects job satisfaction. In contrast, reflective dialogue and the absence of privatization practices show no significant impact on teacher satisfaction. This study contributes to the existing literature by expanding theoretical research and providing empirical evidence that can guide China's education reform and practice, as well as inform school management and policymaking. Specifically, PLCs and TRGs share many practical similarities, which means China has the conditions to develop PLCs. However, due to institutional, cultural, and historical factors, there are notable regional differences in the construction and application of PLCs. This study revealed that while some schools have established teacher cooperation organisations, the core concepts of PLCs within the Western framework have not been widely disseminated or deeply integrated into the educational community. It is crucial to note that, constrained by Confucian culture, intense competition among teachers, and insufficient organisational support, reflective dialogue and de-privatisation practices have not been fully implemented, with limited focus on group learning.

Improving teacher job satisfaction through enhanced PLC effects is an effective strategy, but the first step is ensuring that school district leaders, principals, and teachers fully understand its core concepts. In many Chinese schools, the distinction between PLCs and TRGs is often unclear, which limits the understanding and value placed on PLCs. Further research indicates that traditional Chinese cultural characteristics, such as hierarchical structures, respect for authority, fear of conflict, suppression of personal expression, and limited cooperation, hinder PLC development. These cultural factors affect collaboration and limit professional growth. Consequently, in China's education reform, efforts must focus on overcoming these cultural constraints to foster more open and meaningful collaboration. Additionally, school district administrators and principals should actively support the development of PLCs by implementing policies and adjusting organisational structures. It is equally important to ensure the effective execution of these support measures. The findings from this study provide crucial empirical support for other regions in building and optimising school PLCs. These results offer valuable guidance for policymakers and educational practitioners and serve as a useful reference for different regions in developing PLC models suited to their own educational contexts.

Existing studies confirm that PLC components can improve teachers' job satisfaction. Schools should encourage teachers to share responsibility, enhance the collaborative culture, exchange teaching experiences and materials, and regularly engage in reflective dialogue, particularly to build a collective learning culture. However, this study indicates that the effectiveness of PLCs is hindered by environmental and cultural factors. Additionally, research highlights the crucial role of interpersonal relationships in establishing PLCs in higher education. Yet, excessive trust between teachers and principals may reduce opportunities for peer collaboration. A further issue is that principals often

overlook teacher satisfaction, as teachers, constrained by their status and the power of principals, are unlikely to leave their positions. The Confucian emphasis on dedication has alleviated some dissatisfaction, reducing the motivation for principals to address obstacles, encourage collaboration, and support teachers' professional development, ultimately affecting job satisfaction.

Limitations

The convenience sampling method restricts the sample's representativeness; thus, future study could enhance generalisability by employing stratified random sampling. This research exclusively utilised quantitative tools to examine educators' viewpoints. Future study ought to adopt a mixed-methods approach to attain a more thorough comprehension of the elements affecting instructors' perspectives. Ultimately, the respondents' perhaps limited comprehension of PLCs may add bias into the findings.

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