The influence of professional mission on the professional quality of college teachers: The intermediary role of job burnout and the regulating role of social support

Mo Zhen[1*], Qian Liu[2]

[1]*International College, Krirk University, Thailand.*
[2]*Krirk University, Thailand.*

*Corresponding author: Mo Zhen (Email: yveseven@163.com)

ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study seeks to explore the influence of a professional mission on university teachers specifically examining the mediating role of job burnout and the moderating impact of social support.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Data from university teachers were collected for this study using a questionnaire survey method and the results were carefully analysed using the relevant statistical techniques.

Findings: The study finds a positive relationship between a strong professional mission and high professional quality in university teachers. Job burnout and social support serve as intermediaries and regulators. Increased burnout weakens the mission's influence while reduced burnout correlates with enhanced professional quality. A strong social network enhances a professional mission's beneficial effects.

Conclusion: This study explores the relationship between a professional mission and university professors highlighting the mediating effects of social support and job burnout. The findings offer valuable insights for improving educational quality and supporting teachers' personal growth. This research significantly contributes to understanding key factors in the career development of college teachers, providing enlightening perspectives for educators and policymakers.

Limitations/Significance: This study ignores personal variables in favour of examining only the effects of professional missions on university teachers' professional development. Observations and interviews are two unique methodologies that are necessary for a thorough understanding relying solely on surveys may introduce subjectivity.

Practical Significance: Findings guide institutions and policymakers to boost education quality by supporting teachers' professional development through training and social support and addressing burnout.

Contributions to the Literature: The study fills gaps by confirming the beneficial influence of professional missions on the careers of teachers and guiding the improvement of education.

Keywords: *College teachers, Intermediary role of job burnout, Professional quality, Professional sense of professional mission, Social support.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the pivotal role of higher education in driving social development has gained increasing prominence (Basilotta-Gómez-Pablos, Matarranz, Casado-Aranda, & Otto, 2022; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2016). Higher education is fundamental to the development of talent and the advancement of knowledge and it has a significant impact on how society will develop in the future (Miller, 2023).The key to releasing education's potential lies with university teachers who act as the basis of the educational system within this vast field. Their calibre, aptitude, and innate sense of purpose serve as pillars that are closely related to raising educational standards, developing

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talent successfully and advancing society. However, university teachers navigate an intricate labyrinth of challenges in the constantly changing landscape of education and amid escalating social pressures. They face a variety of challenges such as the rigors of scientific research, the complexities of administrative duties or the demands of teaching. Thus, the pressing question becomes how they can sustain and elevate their professional competence in this dynamic environment, posing a formidable challenge to teachers in higher education.

The professional quality of university teachers represents a multifaceted and intricate concept encompassing subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, research acumen, innovative thinking and educational philosophy (Le et al., 2023). This amalgamation of competencies not only shapes the personal development of teachers but also directly influences the enhancement of educational quality and the effectiveness of talent cultivation. Nevertheless, college teachers frequently confront a spectrum of practical impediments and adversities. The increasing teaching responsibilities, the escalating pressures of scientific inquiry and the complexity of interpersonal relationships all conspire to potentially erode teachers' professional quality. The central question concerns how they may maintain their enthusiasm and dedication to the cause of education while adhering to their educational philosophy in the face of increasing pressure.

As a subjective, career-specific emotional experience, professional mission has garnered the attention of researchers and educational administrators in recent years (Elsey, Van der Heijden, Smith, & Moss, 2022; McQuinn, 2023). Teachers' internal recognition and appraisal of their teaching duties and contributions to society is the source of professional purpose within the distinctive vocational domain of college education. Individuals who have a strong sense of their professional mission frequently view teaching as a calling and spend more time and effort helping their students' growth and development. They extend their purview beyond mere academic proficiency to encompass the holistic development of students' character and ethical values. Research findings underscore the catalytic role of a robust sense of professional mission in motivating teachers to pursue excellence and continually enhance their professional quality (Hasan, 2023; Parker, Patton, Madden, & Sinclair, 2010).

However, it is essential to recognize that the professional mission of college teachers is not a static constant rather it is susceptible to external influences. When confronted with occupational pressures, work-related challenges and other stressors, teachers may experience emotional exhaustion and fatigue, manifesting as job burnout. Job burnout characterized as a negative emotional experience can progressively erode teachers' enthusiasm and sense of mission in education potentially impacting the development of their teaching methods and professional quality. Research illustrates that job burnout may diminish teachers' work efficiency, innovation aptitude and investment in education (Fu, Tang, Xue, Li, & Shan, 2021; Xu, 2019). Teachers may lose their dedication to the educational mission as a result of extended work-related stress and dissatisfaction which might hinder their professional growth.

The salience of social support in this dynamic cannot be understated despite the potential adverse impact of burnout on the sense of professional mission. Social support encompasses assistance provided by family members, colleagues, organizations and other sources offering respite from workplace stress and challenges. In the sphere of college teaching, securing social support can help alleviate the detrimental effects of burnout thereby preserving teachers' sense of professional mission and their level of professional competence. Collaborative support and communication among colleagues enable teachers to confront workplace challenges, thereby reinforcing their commitment to education. Moreover, understanding and support from family members can emerge as for crucial source enabling teachers to sustain their sense of professional mission. Research has revealed that teachers who receive support from their families are more likely to maintain a robust sense of professional mission and competence (Aliakbari & Sadeghi, 2022; Cheng & Zhao, 2023; Duan et al., 2023).

In a nutshell, a complex and symbiotic relationship exists between the professional mission and professional competence of university teachers. The sense of professional mission serves as both an internal motivator for teachers to invest in education and a variable susceptible to external conditions. Job burnout can mediate this relationship, diminishing teachers' sense of professional mission and affecting their professional quality. On the other hand, social support can exert a positive influence, aiding teachers in coping with occupational stress and sustaining their sense of professional mission and competence. This study seeks to explore the impact of the sense of professional mission on the professional quality of college teachers, employing quantitative research methods to examine the mediating role of job burnout and the moderating effect of social support to gain a deeper understanding of these relationships. We aspire to provide empirical evidence and valuable insights to inform the

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career development and educational management of college teachers by systematically scrutinizing the interplay of these variables.

1.1. Significance of Research

The significance of this research lies in its potential to shed light on the intricate dynamics between a teacher's sense of professional mission, job burnout and the vital role of social support. We may discover important lessons from examining these relationships that could be applied to educational policies and practices thereby enhancing the quality of higher education and advancing the careers of college teachers.

1.2. Research Questions

How does a college teacher's sense of professional mission impact their professional quality?
What is the mediating role of job burnout in the relationship between a teacher's sense of professional mission and their professional quality?
How does social support influence the relationship between job burnout and a teacher's sense of professional mission and professional quality?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

College teachers occupy a critical role as teachers, mentors and influencers of students' academic and personal growth in higher education. Their professional quality, commitment and motivation significantly shape the quality of education and the progress of society (Rapanta, Botturi, Goodyear, Guàrdia, & Koole, 2021; Seery, Andres, Moore-Cherry, & O'Sullivan, 2021). This literature review delves into the complex interplay between professional mission, job burnout, social support and their collective influence on the professional quality of college teachers highlighting both the importance and the research gaps within this crucial domain.

2.1. Professional Mission and Quality

A teacher's sense of professional mission defined as an inner recognition of educational responsibilities and societal contributions has been recognized as a significant driver of professional quality. Teachers who possess a strong professional mission often view education as their calling, dedicating time and energy to their students' holistic development. Research has consistently demonstrated the positive relationship between professional mission and professional quality (Brewer, Nguyen, Ziegler, Dodson, & Kurdian, 2023; Graham, 2007). However, the precise mechanisms through which professional mission influences professional quality especially within the context of college teachers remain understudied.

2.2. Job Burnout and Its Impact

Job burnout, a pervasive issue in the teaching profession is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. In the realm of college teaching, job burnout has been shown to have a detrimental impact on the emotional and physical well-being of teachers. Long-term experiences of burnout can lead to a gradual decline in enthusiasm and a weakened sense of mission in education (Chiu, Craig, & Rabago, 2021; Whitmore, 2023). The research underscores the negative relationship between job burnout and professional quality. Nevertheless, there is a notable gap in the literature regarding the mediating role of job burnout in the relationship between professional mission and professional quality.

2.3. Social Support as a Mitigating Factor

Social support encompassing assistance from family, colleagues and organizations plays a vital role in mitigating the adverse effects of job burnout. In the context of college teaching, social support can alleviate the negative consequences of burnout and strengthen teachers' sense of professional mission and competence. For example, collaborative support and communication among colleagues can assist teachers in coping with workplace challenges and renewing their commitment to education. Family understanding and support have also been linked to the maintenance of a strong sense of professional mission (Fosco, 2022). However, research on the nuanced dynamics of social support in moderating job burnout's impact on professional mission and quality is relatively scarce.

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2.4. The Multifaceted Relationship

The interaction between professional mission, job burnout and social support constitutes a multifaceted and intricate relationship that remains largely unexplored. Although some studies have looked at these characteristics separately, there is a notable gap in how they interact together to affect college teachers' outstanding performance. The complex interplay between professional mission, job burnout and social support and their combined effects on professional quality is a promising area for further research.

2.5. Research Gap

The research gap in this domain is twofold.

2.5.1. Mediating the Role of Job Burnout

The majority of studies in this area typically examine professional mission and professional quality as separate constructs with limited consideration given to the mediating mechanisms that connect them. An underdeveloped area of research pertains to understanding how job burnout serves as an intermediary factor in diminishing the relationship between professional mission and professional quality.

2.5.2. Regulating the Role of Social Support

Research on how social support can mitigate the negative effects of job burnout on professional mission and quality is lacking despite the well-established significance of social support for professional quality and well-being. There is an apparent lack of research suggesting that social support sources might support teachers in strengthening their sense of professional mission and dealing with burnout.

Hence, this study endeavors to bridge these gaps by conducting a systematic investigation into the intricate relationships between professional mission, job burnout and social support and their combined impact on the professional quality of college teachers. This research aims to contribute empirical evidence and insights that can inform educational policies and practices ultimately enhancing the professional development and quality of teachers in higher education.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

Robust and comprehensive research methods were used in this study's design to investigate the relationships between the variables of interest. This study adopts a quantitative research approach to collect numerical data and analyze it statistically. It is well-suited for investigating the relationships between variables and examining the mediating and moderating roles of job burnout and social support.

4. SUBJECT PHASE AND METHOD

4.1. Study Subjects

University teachers in the province of Hebei were selected as study participants using a random sampling technique. Out of a total of 910 questionnaires distributed, 895 were successfully collected resulting in 895 valid responses and an impressive effective recovery rate of 98.3%.

Demographically, the participants exhibited diversity.

The gender distribution comprised 403 males and 492 females.

Age categories ranged from those under 25 years (10 individuals) to those between 26 and 30 years (151 individuals), between 31 and 35 years (291 individuals), between 36 and 40 years (205 individuals), between 41 and 45 years (112 individuals), between 46 and 50 years (90 individuals) and those over 50 years (36 individuals).

The range of educational backgrounds included those with a junior college diploma or less (23 people), undergraduates (75 people), master's degree holders (695 people) and PhD holders (102 people). In terms of professional titles, the participants included teaching assistants or those with titles below that level (39 individuals), lecturers (171 individuals), associate professors (595 individuals) and professors (90 individuals).

Participants' teaching experience encompassed those with two years or less (36 individuals), 3-5 years (59 individuals), 6-10 years (353 individuals), 11-15 years (236 individuals), 16-20 years (156 individuals) and over 20 years (55 individuals).

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Table 1 provides an overview of the structured composition of the selected participants reflecting a diverse and representative sample of university teachers in Hebei Province for the study.

Table 1. Study subject table.

		Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Man	403	45.0%
	Woman	492	55.0%
Age	Age 25 and below	11	1.2%
	26-30 years old	151	16.9%
	31-35 years old	291	32.5%
	36-40 years old	205	22.9%
	41-45 years old	112	12.5%
	46-50 years old	90	10.1%
	Age 50 and over	35	3.9%
Record of formal schooling	Junior college and below	23	2.6%
	Undergraduate course	75	8.4%
	Master	695	77.7%
	Doctor	102	11.4%
Of school age	Two years and less	36	4.0%
	3-5 years	59	6.6%
	6-10 years	353	39.4%
	11-15 years	236	26.4%
	16-20 years	156	17.4%
	20 years and more	55	6.1%
Professional ranks and titles	Assistant and below	39	4.4%
	Lecturer	171	19.1%
	Adjunct professor	595	66.5%
	Professor	90	10.1%

4.2. Selection of the Scale

We conducted a factor analysis and reliability test using the questionnaire data based on previous studies to find a more mature scale that would better reflect the real-world situation. We performed factor analysis and a reliability test using the α coefficient based on the interview data.

The sense of career scale uses the scale. The scale consists of 12 question items as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Scale of professional mission Dobrow and Tosti - Kharas (2011).

Variable	Number	Career sense of mission
Career sense of mission	A1	I am passionate about my work.
	A2	I like my work more than other things.
	A3	The present job gives me great personal satisfaction.
	A4	I am willing to sacrifice for my present job.
	A5	The first thing that comes to mind when I explain myself to people is my role at work.
	A6	I will continue my current task even if it is seriously impeded.
	A7	I am aware that performing my current duties effectively will always be a part of my life.
	A8	I feel like I was destined to do the present job.
	A9	My work has always been in my mind in some form.
	A10	I frequently think about work even when I'm not at work.
	A11	My presence would not be so meaningful if I didn't do my current work.
	A12	I find collaborating on this project to be extremely satisfying and inspiring.

Note: Dobrow and Tosti - Kharas (2011).

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The professional literacy scale uses the scale of Xu (2021). The scale consists of 27 items in each of the 3 dimensions as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Professional literacy scale by Xu (2021).

Variable dimension	Question number	Scale item
Professional ethics	D1	Example of high moral standards (Teachers use their own high moral standards as a model for typical university students).
	D2	Professional guidance of partnership (Awareness of teacher to establish equal partnership guidance relationship with normal university students).
	D3	Subject of the development of respect and trust (Teachers respect and trust the consciousness of the independent development of normal university students).
	D4	Cooperative spirit of peer mutual assistance (Teachers can have the spirit of mutual cooperation with colleagues in colleges and universities).
	D5	The cooperative consciousness of cooperative education (Teachers of primary and secondary schools have the consciousness of collaborative cultivation of normal university students).
	D6	Open attitude of open school opening (Cooperative attitude between teacher and families, employers and other stakeholders).
	D7	Positive identification of identity role (Teachers actively identify with their professional identity and awareness of teacher role).
	D8	Broad social responsibility (Teachers understand the practice and responsibility of teacher education from the perspective of social development).
	D9	The pursuit of innovation through unremitting exploration (Teachers constantly explore the basic laws of teacher education activities in practice).
Professional knowledge	D10	Knowledge within the subject field (Teachers master their own basic knowledge and basic principles of the subject).
	D11	Knowledge of subject thought methods (Teachers master their own knowledge such as thought methods of discipline).
	D12	Knowledge of discipline integration (Teachers master the knowledge of integration between the subject and the major they are engaged in).
	D13	Knowledge of teacher education philosophy (Teachers master the knowledge of philosophy and other aspects).
	D14	Knowledge of teacher education practice (Teachers master the knowledge of policy practice and other aspects).
	D15	Knowledge of teacher education methods (Teachers master the knowledge of teaching methods).
	D16	Knowledge of basic education theory (Teachers trains people).
	D17	Knowledge of basic education reform (Teachers master knowledge of basic education reform such as professional quality and curriculum reform).
	D18	Knowledge of teacher professional development (Teachers master the knowledge of the characteristics and rules of teacher professional development etc.).
Professional ability	D19	Demonstration ability of classroom teaching (Teachers have the ability to demonstrate excellent classroom teaching activities to normal university students).
	D20	Guidance ability of practical teaching (Teachers have the ability to guide normal university students to practice teaching such as practice and

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Variable dimension	Question number	Scale item
		graduation theses).
	D21	Participation ability in the second class (Teachers have the ability to participate in and guide the second-class activities of normal university students.).
	D22	Guidance ability of academic learning (Teachers have the ability to guide course learning methods for normal university students).
	D23	Guidance ability of professional development (Teachers have the ability to guide normal university students in professional interests and methods).
	D24	Career guidance ability: teachers have the ability to provide career choice and career planning guidance for normal university students.
	D25	Teaching and academic development ability (Teachers can have the ability to study the rules of teacher education and teaching activities).
	D26	Innovation ability of scientific research (Teachers can have the ability to carry out innovative activities of scientific research).
	D27	The ability to integrate theory and practice (Teachers can have the ability to integrate educational theory and educational practice).

Note: Xu (2021).

The occupational burnout scale is the social support scale used by Maslach and Jackson (1981). The scale consists of 15 items as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Burnout scale Maslach and Jackson (1981).

Variable	Question number	Scale item
Job burnout	B1	Work makes me feel physically exhausted.
	B2	I feel exhausted after work.
	B3	I feel very tired when I get up in the morning and have to face the day's work.
	B4	Working all day is really stressful for me.
	B5	Work makes me feel on the verge of collapse.
	B6	Since I started this job, I have been less interested in it.
	B7	I am not as enthusiastic about my work as before.
	B8	I doubt the significance of the work I did.
	B9	I am less concerned about contributing to what I do.
	B10	I can effectively solve the problems arising in my work.
	B11	I think I am making a useful contribution to the company.
	B12	In my opinion, I am good at my own work.
	B13	I feel very happy to finish something in my work.
	B14	I have done a lot of valuable work.
	B15	I have confidence in my abilities to finish everything efficiently.

Note: Maslach and Jackson (1981)

The social support scale uses the scale of the social support scale used by Chen (2012). The scale consists of 24 items in each of 4 dimensions as shown in Table 5.

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Table 5. Social support scale Chen (2012).

Variable dimension	Question number	Scale item
Colleagues support	CT1	Colleagues can provide me with helpful information.
	CT2	My colleagues will show me their care.
	CT3	Colleagues will provide me with useful advice on solving the problem.
	CT4	I can share happiness and sadness with my colleagues.
	CT5	My colleagues can help me practically so that I can do my job well.
	CT6	Colleagues will praise me and appreciate me.
Superior support	CS7	My superior can provide me with helpful information.
	CS8	My superiors will show their concern for me.
	CS9	My superior will give me useful advice to solve the problem.
	CS10	My superior can comfort me and encourage me.
	CS11	My superiors can give me the practical support I need to execute a good job, such as contacts, money, conditions, equipment, etc.
	CS12	My superiors will praise me and appreciate me.
Family support	CJ13	My family can provide helpful information.
	CJ14	My family will care for me.
	CJ15	My family will give me useful advice on solving the problem.
	CJ16	I can share the happiness and sadness with my family.
	CJ17	My family can provide me with practical assistance in order to done my job done well.
	CJ18	My family will praise me and appreciate me.
Friends support	CP19	Friends can provide helpful information.
	CP20	Friends will care about me.
	CP21	My friend will give me useful advice on solving the problem.
	CP22	I can share happiness and sadness with my friends.
	CP23	My friend can provide my practical assistance in order to get my job done well.
	CP24	Friends will praise me and appreciate it for me.

Note: Chen (2012).

5. DATA PROCESSING

SPSS 24.0 and AMOS 24.0 were used to conduct factor analysis, scale α coefficient test, correlation analysis, regression analysis and data collection.

5.1. Reliability Analysis

Confidence analysis (reliability analysis) and the clone Bach (Cronbach's alpha) reliability coefficient was used to check the degree of consistency of the questionnaire study variables across the measurement items. A variable is considered to have strong reliability if its Cronbach's alpha coefficient is better than 0.7 as displayed in Table 6.

Table 6. Reliability analysis.

Variable	Question item	The corrected values were correlated to the total	Clone bach alpha after the deletion term	Clone of bach, alpha	Number of terms
Career mission	A1	0.835	0.956	0.960	12
	A2	0.825	0.956		
	A3	0.778	0.957		
	A4	0.874	0.954		
	A5	0.812	0.956		
	A6	0.758	0.958		
	A7	0.845	0.955		
	A8	0.790	0.957		
	A9	0.796	0.957		
	A10	0.779	0.957		

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Variable	Question item	The corrected values were correlated to the total	Clone bach alpha after the deletion term	Clone of bach, alpha	Number of terms
	A11	0.764	0.958		
	A12	0.761	0.958		
Job burnout	B1	0.803	0.967	0.969	15
	B2	0.774	0.967		
	B3	0.808	0.967		
	B4	0.822	0.967		
	B5	0.817	0.967		
	B6	0.781	0.967		
	B7	0.799	0.967		
	B8	0.856	0.966		
	B9	0.844	0.966		
	B10	0.804	0.967		
	B11	0.807	0.967		
	B12	0.812	0.967		
	B13	0.812	0.967		
	B14	0.767	0.967		
	B15	0.823	0.966		
Professional ethics	D1	0.806	0.947	0.952	9
	D2	0.817	0.946		
	D3	0.760	0.949		
	D4	0.824	0.946		
	D5	0.858	0.944		
	D6	0.816	0.946		
	D7	0.815	0.946		
	D8	0.791	0.947		
	D9	0.824	0.946		
Professional knowledge	D10	0.800	0.934	0.942	9
	D11	0.803	0.933		
	D12	0.732	0.937		
	D13	0.789	0.934		
	D14	0.691	0.939		
	D15	0.767	0.935		
	D16	0.755	0.936		
	D17	0.727	0.937		
	D18	0.916	0.927		
Professional ability	D19	0.811	0.949	0.955	9
	D20	0.818	0.949		
	D21	0.800	0.950		
	D22	0.834	0.948		
	D23	0.802	0.950		
	D24	0.845	0.948		
	D25	0.831	0.948		
	D26	0.799	0.950		
	D27	0.801	0.950		
Colleagues support	CT1	0.759	0.915	0.925	6
	CT2	0.852	0.902		
	CT3	0.771	0.913		
	CT4	0.760	0.914		
	CT5	0.780	0.912		
	CT6	0.782	0.912		
Superior support	CS1	0.729	0.859	0.885	6
	CS2	0.708	0.863		

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Variable	Question item	The corrected values were correlated to the total	Clone bach alpha after the deletion term	Clone of bach, alpha	Number of terms
	CS3	0.726	0.860		
	CS4	0.677	0.868		
	CS5	0.700	0.865		
	CS6	0.648	0.872		
Family support	CJ1	0.695	0.906	0.913	6
	CJ2	0.822	0.888		
	CJ3	0.684	0.907		
	CJ4	0.820	0.889		
	CJ5	0.825	0.889		
	CJ6	0.770	0.905		
Friends support	CP1	0.683	0.918	0.920	6
	CP2	0.689	0.917		
	CP3	0.779	0.905		
	CP4	0.786	0.904		
	CP5	0.843	0.896		
	CP6	0.862	0.893		

We can determine from the preceding table that each variable has a Cronbach's alpha coefficient better than the conventional value of 0.7 which suggests that the variables have good internal consistency and reliability. Critical Incident Technique (CIT) was greater than 0.5 indicating that the measurement items met the study requirements. The deletion of any question will not result in an increase in the Cronbach's alpha value of the item indicating that the variable has strong reliability as well.

5.2. Validity and Exploratory Factor Analysis

It is frequently assessed for questionnaires using both structural and content validity. The questionnaire used in this study is based on the literature review which illustrates the relationship between the variables or relationship construction. The results of the investigation are the item wording, expression of further correction and perfection so it can be assumed that the content of the scale has satisfactory validity. Among them, content validity refers to the item's suitability and logical consistency. The questionnaire used in this study is based on the literature review which shows the relationship between the variables or association construction. According to the investigation, the results of the item wording, expression of further correction and perfection and content of the scale have satisfactory validity. The focus of this study is to study construct validity which refers to the ability of the items to measure the measured variables demonstrating the structural validity of the scale through exploratory factor analysis.

KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and Bartlett's spherical tests were performed by exploratory factor analysis using SPSS 25.0 and the results are shown below.

Career mission validity is shown in Table 7.

Table 7. KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and Bartlett's spherical tests were performed by exploratory factor analysis using SPSS 25.0.

Number of KMO(Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) sampling suitability quantities.		0.967
The Bartlett sphericity test	Approximate chi square	4270.954
	Free degree	66
	Conspicuousness	0.000

From the table above, the KMO = 0.967, greater than 0.7 and the Bartlett's spherical test value is significant (sig.<0.001) indicating that the questionnaire data met the premise requirements of the factor analysis. Therefore, further analysis was carried out with a feature root greater than 1 as a factor and maximum orthogonal rotation was used for factor rotation. The analysis results are shown in Table 8.

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The table shows that a single factor, "career mission" was found by factor analysis. This factor's overall explanatory power was found to be greater than 50% reaching 69.949%. This suggests that the chosen factors appropriately represent the concept. The factor loading coefficients which are also presented in the table show that every measurement item has a positive relationship with the factor when the loading of 0.5 is exceeded. This outcome attests to the strong structural validity of the scale. The occupational burnout validity is shown in Table 9.

Table 8. Analysis was carried out with a feature root greater than 1 as a factor and maximum orthogonal rotation was used for factor rotation.

Component matrix	
	Ingredient
	1
A4	0.899
A7	0.875
A1	0.865
A2	0.857
A5	0.845
A9	0.833
A8	0.826
A3	0.815
A10	0.815
A11	0.803
A12	0.800
A6	0.798
Eigenvalue	8.394
Variance percentage	69.949
Accumulate%	69.949

Table 9. The occupational burnout validity.

KMO and Bartlett tests		
Number of KMO sampling suitability quantities.		0.936
The Bartlett sphericity test	Approximate chi square	5872.563
	Free degree	105
	Conspicuousness	0.000

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value is 0.936 which is higher than the suggested threshold of 0.7 based on a review of the above table. Moreover, Bartlett's spherical test is highly significant (Sig.<0.001) affirming that the questionnaire data meets the necessary prerequisites for conducting factor analysis. Subsequently, in-depth analysis followed employing features with roots greater than 1 as factors and using maximum orthogonal rotation for factor rotation. The detailed outcomes of this analysis are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Analysis was carried out with feature root greater than 1 as factor, and maximum orthogonal rotation was used for factor rotation.

Component matrix	
	Ingredient
	1
B8	0.877
B9	0.867
B4	0.848
B15	0.848
B5	0.843
B12	0.838
B13	0.838

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Component matrix	
	Ingredient
	1
B3	0.835
B11	0.834
B10	0.831
B1	0.831
B7	0.826
B6	0.811
B2	0.804
B14	0.796
Eigenvalue	10.471
Variance percentage	69.804
Accumulate%	69.804

The aforementioned table indicates that the factor analysis revealed a single factor "burnout" which has a total explanatory power of 69.804% above the 50% threshold. This underscores the robust representativeness of the chosen factors. The factor loading coefficients displayed in the same table reinforce this validity as each measurement item boasts a factor load exceeding 0.5 that seamlessly aligns with its designated factor. These findings affirm the scale's commendable structural validity. Furthermore, the validity of professional literacy is explained in Table 11.

Table 11. Professional literacy validity.

KMO and Bartlett tests		
Number of KMO sampling suitability quantities.		0.889
The Bartlett sphericity test	Approximate chi square	9948.766
	Free degree	351
	Conspicuousness	0.000

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value stands at 0.889, surpassing the recommended threshold of 0.7 as examined in the table above. Additionally, Bartlett's spherical test yields a highly significant result (sig.<0.001) affirming that the questionnaire data fulfills the necessary prerequisites for conducting a robust factor analysis. Consequently, a more in-depth analysis was undertaken designating features with roots greater than 1 as factors and employing maximum orthogonal rotation for further precision in factor alignment. The detailed outcomes of this analytical step are meticulously presented in Table 12.

Table 12. Analysis was carried out with feature roots greater than 1 as factors and maximum orthogonal rotation.

The component matrix after the rotation			
	Ingredient		
	1	2	3
D24	0.862		
D25	0.842		
D20	0.835		
D19	0.825		
D21	0.823		
D22	0.821		
D26	0.821		
D23	0.814		
D27	0.801		
D4		0.858	

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The component matrix after the rotation			
	Ingredient		
	1	2	3
D9		0.843	
D2		0.837	
D5		0.831	
D7		0.824	
D1		0.823	
D6		0.810	
D8		0.809	
D3		0.768	
D18			0.916
D11			0.830
D10			0.813
D13			0.795
D15			0.784
D16			0.765
D17			0.761
D12			0.761
D14			0.719
Eigenvalue	6.619	6.575	6.217
Variance percentage	24.516	24.352	23.027
Accumulate%	24.516	48.868	71.895

Professional ethics, professional knowledge and professional ability are the three main components that the factor analysis identified after looking over the preceding table.

The cumulative explanatory power reached an impressive 71.895% exceeding the 50% benchmark and affirming the robust representativeness of the selected factors. The factor loading coefficients as displayed in the table reinforce the scale's structural validity with each measurement item boasting a factor load greater than 0.5 and aligning seamlessly with its respective factor.

Furthermore, the validity of social support is explained in Table 13.

Table 13. Social support validity.

KMO and Bartlett tests		
Number of KMO sampling suitability quantities.		0.932
The Bartlett sphericity test	Approximate chi square	7045.042
	Free degree	276
	Conspicuousness	0.000

When the table is examined, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value is a strong 0.932 above the suggested threshold of 0.7. Additionally, Bartlett's spherical test produces a highly significant result (sig.<0.001) confirming that the questionnaire data fulfills the essential prerequisites for a comprehensive factor analysis.

Subsequently, an in-depth analysis was conducted, designating features with roots greater than 1 as factors and applying maximum orthogonal rotation for precise factor alignment. The outcomes of this analytical process are meticulously detailed in Table 14.

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Table 14. Analysis was carried out with feature root greater than 1 as factor, and maximum orthogonal rotation was used for factor rotation.

The component matrix after the rotation				
	Ingredient			
	1	2	3	4
CJ5	0.854			
CJ2	0.826			
CJ4	0.819			
CJ6	0.803			
CJ3	0.740			
CJ1	0.710			
CT2		0.816		
CT6		0.799		
CT1		0.777		
CT5		0.777		
CT3		0.772		
CT4		0.756		
CP6			0.810	
CP4			0.810	
CP3			0.803	
CP5			0.785	
CP1			0.712	
CP2			0.670	
CS3				0.782
CS5				0.779
CS6				0.763
CS2				0.752
CS1				0.744
CS4				0.719
Eigenvalue	4.403	4.382	4.171	3.948
Variance percentage	18.346	18.256	17.380	16.452
Accumulate%	18.346	36.602	53.982	70.434

The aforementioned table illustrates that there were four variables in total including colleagues, managers, family members and friends. The total explanatory power reached 70.434% or more than 50% indicating that the selected factors were well representative. The factor loading coefficient is shown in the above table. The factor load of each measurement item is greater than 0.5 and each item falls into the corresponding factor indicating that the scale has good structural validity.

Calculations performed using AMOS 24.0 yielded Figure 1 and Table 15.

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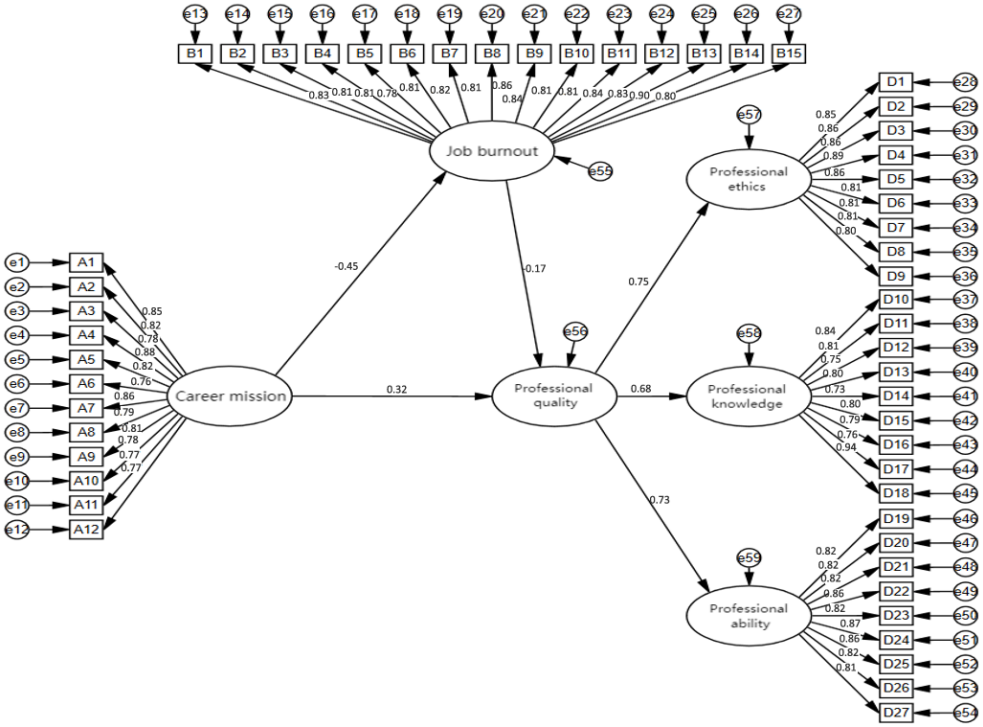

Figure 1. The factor load of each measurement item is greater than 0.5 and each item falls into the corresponding factor indicating that the scale has good structural validity.

Table 15. The factor load of each measurement item is greater than 0.5 and each item falls into the corresponding factor indicating that the scale has good structural validity.

Way	STD. estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Job burnout <--- Career mission	-0.450	0.041	-13.224	<0.001
Professional quality <--- Career mission	0.320	0.040	7.303	<0.001
Professional quality <--- job burnout	-0.173	0.031	-4.129	<0.001

It can be seen from the above table that CMIN(Chi-Square Minimum) / DF (Degrees of Freedom) MMIN is 1.906, less than 5, GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index), TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index) and CFI (Comparative Fit Index) all reach the criteria above 0.9, RMR (Root Mean Square Residual) is 0.042, less than 0.0.08 and RMSEA is 0.032 less than 0.08. Each fitting index meets the general research criteria so it can be considered that this model is good.
The results of the hypothesis testing are shown in Table 16.

Table 16. The results of the hypothesis testing.

Way	STD. estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Job burnout <--- Career mission	-0.450	0.041	-13.224	<0.001
Professional quality <--- Career mission	0.320	0.040	7.303	<0.001
Professional quality <--- Job burnout	-0.173	0.031	-4.129	<0.001

The results of the analysis demonstrated that occupational mission had three significant effects on professionalism: a substantial positive effect (β = 0.320, p <0.001), a significant negative effect (β = -0.173, p <0.001) and a significant negative effect on burnout (β = -0.450, p <0.001).
In this study, bootstrapping was used to verify the mediation effect. We demonstrate that the relevant direct, indirect or total effects exist if the bootstrap confidence interval does not contain 0. Run 5000 times using the Bootstrap method in AMOS 24.0 yielded the level values of Bias-Corrected at 95% confidence as shown in Table 17.
According to the analysis's findings, there was a strong indirect impact on professionalism through burnout, with a value of 0.078 for the indirect effect of occupational mission and a 95% upper limit excluding 0. The direct effect

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value of occupational mission on professionalism was 0.320 between the 95% upper limit excluding 0 indicating a significant direct effect.

Table 17. Bootstrapping was used to verify the mediation effect.

Effect	Way	Effect value	Bias-corrected 95%CI	
			Lower limit	Superior limit
Indigo effect	Career mission-burnout-professionalism	0.078	0.043	0.114
Direct effect	Career mission-professionalism	0.320	0.228	0.410

The mediation effect was significant and was a partial mediation effect.

Test of Regulation Effect: 1

The results of the regulatory effect test by process of SPSS are shown in Table 18.

Table 18. The results of the regulatory effect test by process of SPSS.

Dependent variable: Professionalism	B	Se	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3.683	0.229	16.065	0.000	3.233	4.133
Sex	-0.030	0.051	-0.595	0.552	-0.130	0.070
Age	0.023	0.018	1.235	0.217	-0.013	0.058
Record of formal schooling	0.013	0.046	0.283	0.777	-0.078	0.104
Of school age	-0.039	0.022	-1.750	0.080	-0.082	0.005
Professional ranks and titles	-0.002	0.039	-0.041	0.968	-0.077	0.074
Career mission	0.290	0.028	10.302	0.000	0.235	0.345
Social support	0.068	0.033	2.065	0.039	0.003	0.132
Career mission social support	0.092	0.034	2.682	0.007	0.025	0.160

According to the analysis results, social support has a significant positive effect on professionalism (B=0.068, p <0.05), and interactive occupational mission. Social support has a significant positive effect on professional literacy (B=0.092, p <0.05) and the specific influence mechanism is as follows (see Figure 2).

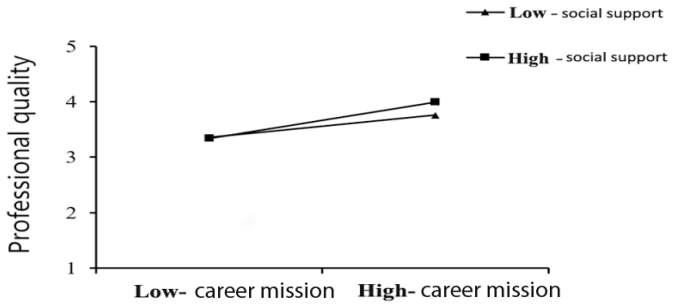

Figure 2. The specific influence mechanism.

According to the preceding figure, professional literacy serves as more significant role in high social support interventions than it does in low social support interventions when it comes to increasing professional purpose. Thus, the regulatory effect is positive.

5.3. Correlation Analysis Results: Correlation Analysis and Differential Validity

We used an effective method in our study to assess differential validity in depth: the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) method. The AVE square root value for each factor should surpass the correlation coefficient between every pair of variables demonstrating that our study maintains discriminative validity among these factors.

Each factor's AVE square root value surpasses the standardized correlation coefficient that falls outside the diagonal further validating the discriminative nature of our study. These relationships are explore in greater detail for a comprehensive overview (see Table 19).

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Table 19. The relationships in greater detail.

	Average value	Standard error	Career mission	Job burnout	Professional ethics	Professional knowledge	Professional ability	Colleagues support	Superior support	Family support	Friends support
Career mission	3.64	0.91	0.81								
Job burnout	3.56	1.01	-0.430	0.822							
Professional ethics	3.74	0.96	0.327	-0.258	0.838						
Professional knowledge	3.58	0.95	0.255	-0.218	0.494	0.805					
Professional ability	3.55	1.04	0.245	-0.200	0.521	0.500	0.833				
Colleagues support	3.53	1.01	0.142	-0.115	0.093	0.052	0.142	0.817			
Superior support	3.60	1.01	0.116	-0.119	0.077	0.007	0.090	0.540	0.772		
Family support	3.61	0.87	0.128	-0.089	0.104	0.065	0.109	0.515	0.497	0.821	
Friends support	3.76	1.05	0.116	-0.073	0.086	0.016	0.064	0.528	0.510	0.478	0.833

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6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This research offers valuable insights for academia, educational institutions, policymakers and practitioners. The following recommendations and implications can guide future actions and decisions based on the study's findings:

6.1. Enhancing Teacher Well-Being

Implement well-being programs: Educational institutions should consider introducing well-being programs that target the emotional and mental health of college teachers. These programs can help mitigate job burnout promote a stronger sense of professional mission and improve professional quality.

6.2. Strengthening Social Support Systems

6.2.1. Encourage Collaborative Environments

Educational institutions should foster a collaborative and supportive environment among teachers encouraging mutual support and the sharing of best practices.

6.2.2. Institutional Support

Academic institutions should provide mechanisms for social support such as counseling services or mentorship programs to assist teachers in managing job-related stress and enhancing their professional mission.

6.3. Professional Development

6.3.1. Continuous Training

Educational institutions should offer ongoing professional development opportunities to help teachers continually enhance their skills, subject knowledge and teaching techniques. This can contribute to higher professional quality and a strengthened sense of professional mission.

6.4. Policy Implications

Policy Development: Policymakers in the field of education should consider the findings of this study when formulating policies related to teacher support, workload management and professional development.

6.5. Research Continuation

6.5.1. In-Depth Research

Future research can delve deeper into the specific strategies and interventions that can effectively mediate job burnout and amplify the impact of professional mission on professional quality. This will provide a more nuanced understanding of the mechanisms at play.

6.6. Teacher Training Programs

6.6.1. Integrate Mission Orientation

A strong sense of professional mission should be ingrained in teachers and we should support them in maintaining this commitment in the face of obstacles connected to their employment. Teacher training programmes should incorporate mission-oriented education.

6.7. Organizational Culture

6.7.1. Promote a Supportive Culture

Educational institutions should foster a supportive organizational culture that values the well-being and professional growth of teachers. A supportive culture can encourage a stronger professional mission and help teachers manage the effects of job burnout.

6.8. Data-Driven Decision-Making

6.8.1. Data Utilization

Educational institutions should make use of data and research findings to inform their decision-making processes. This study's insights can aid institutions in optimizing their support systems and resource allocation to benefit teachers and ultimately the quality of education.

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The research underscores the complex relationships between professional mission, job burnout, social support and professional quality among college teachers. The professional calibre of college teachers and the calibre of education they deliver can both be improved by putting the aforementioned suggestions into practice and creating a more resilient and supportive learning environment. These actions can pave the way for a more motivated, dedicated and effective teaching workforce in higher education.

7. CONCLUSION

This study delved into the intricate relationship between professional mission, job burnout, social support and the professional quality of college teachers. The following key conclusions emerge from our research:

7.1. The Significance of Professional Mission

The professional mission significantly influences the professional quality of college teachers. Those with a strong sense of professional mission are more inclined to perceive their role in education as a mission. This heightened commitment leads to increased investments of energy and time in their teaching and research endeavors, ultimately fostering the enhancement of their professional quality (Fathi, Zhang, & Arefian, 2023; Vlachopoulos, Thorkelsdóttir, Schina, & Jónsdóttir, 2023).

7.2. The Mediating Role of Job Burnout

Job burnout emerges as an intermediary variable between the sense of professional mission and professional accomplishment. Teachers who experience emotional weariness and occupational stress face the risk of losing their passion and sense of purpose in teaching. Their professional quality may be indirectly impacted by the emotional exhaustion caused by burnout which could hinder their professional purpose (Bobbio & Manganelli, 2015; Sommovigo, Bernuzzi, & Setti, 2022; Taleghani & Sabokro, 2016).

7.3. The Regulatory Role of Social Support

Social support acts as a crucial regulator within the intricate relationship between professional mission and professional quality. Teachers who receive diverse forms of support from colleagues, family and organizations are better equipped to cope with the challenges and stress of their profession. This support enhances teachers' self-efficacy, job satisfaction and sustains their high level of professional mission and professional quality (Ahmed, 2019; Canrinus, Helms-Lorenz, Beijaard, Buitink, & Hofman, 2012; Katz, 2015). In a nutshell, college teachers who have a strong sense of their professional mission reflect higher levels of professionalism. However, in this complex relationship, job burnout serves as an intermediary variable while social support plays a crucial regulatory role in alleviating the detrimental effects of burnout on professional mission and consequently, professional accomplishment. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the factors shaping the professional quality of college teachers and can guide interventions to enhance the teaching profession's well-being and efficacy.

FUNDING

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INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD STATEMENT

The Ethical Committee of the International College, Krirk University, Thailand has granted approval for this study on 20 March 2023 (Ref. No. 2023-0320).

TRANSPARENCY

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Both authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study. Both authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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