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Exploring the Impact of Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction on the Performance of Novice High School Teachers in Shenzhen City, China

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Abstract: In recent years, work-life balance and job satisfaction have become critical factors in educational research, concerning their impact on teacher performance. Novice high school teachers in Shenzhen, China, face significant stress and work demands, making it essential to understand how these factors influence their effectiveness. This study aims to examine the effects of work-life balance and job satisfaction on the performance of novice teachers in Shenzhen high schools and to identify whether job satisfaction acts as a mediating variable in this relationship. Using a quantitative research approach, data were collected from a sample of 400 teachers through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) path analysis. The findings reveal that work-life balance has a significant positive impact on teacher performance, both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction, with job satisfaction serving as an essential mediator in this relationship. These results highlight the importance of fostering work-life balance to enhance teacher satisfaction and effectiveness, particularly in high-pressure educational settings. This study contributes to the literature by providing localized insights into the factors that influence novice teachers' performance in urban China and offers practical recommendations for educational administrators to support teacher retention and improve student outcomes.

Key words: Work-life balance, job satisfaction, performance of novice teachers, novice teachers, high schools

1. Introduction

In recent years, the significance of work-life balance and job satisfaction has received substantial attention in the field of educational research (Zhang et al.2024). These factors are relevant in educational settings where teachers face a unique set of challenges that can impact their overall performance and job satisfaction. High school teachers, especially novice teachers, in Shenzhen City, China, often confront intense work demands, which may lead to stress, burnout, and a decrease in teaching effectiveness (Liu et al., 2021). This is largely attributed to China's high expectations for educational achievement, competitive work environments, and the pressures of adjusting to a demanding profession. Novice teachers, defined as those within their first three years of teaching experience, are typically at a higher risk of leaving the profession due to work-related stress and dissatisfaction, making this group a critical focus for studies on teacher retention and performance (Graham et al.2020).

As cities like Shenzhen grow and modernize, the role of teachers becomes even more critical in shaping the future of the region's educated workforce. Teachers' ability to deliver high-quality education is affected by various factors, including professional satisfaction, emotional well-being, and a balanced life outside work (Erturk, 2022). Given the importance of these factors, there is a need to understand how work-life balance and job satisfaction interact to influence teachers' performance, particularly among novice teachers who may lack experience in managing such stressors. The high turnover rates and reports of burnout among novice teachers underscore the need for targeted interventions to enhance teacher retention and effectiveness in high-demand educational settings like Shenzhen (Cheng et al.2023).

The challenges faced by novice teachers are significant and multifaceted. In Shenzhen, high school teachers often report long hours, extensive workloads, and difficulties in achieving a balance between their professional and personal lives (Wei et al.2022). The early years of teaching are generally marked by high stress and an adjustment period where teachers try to acclimate to their professional roles and responsibilities (Lindqvist et al.2023). For novice teachers, this phase is crucial, as their early experiences in the profession often shape their long-term commitment and efficacy as

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educators (Sasson et al.2020). While work-life balance and job satisfaction have been studied in organizational research, there is a lack of focused research examining how these factors specifically impact the performance of novice teachers in the Chinese high school setting.

Existing literature suggests that when teachers experience a better work-life balance, they are more likely to report higher job satisfaction and a greater sense of well-being, which can lead to improved teaching performance (Ertürk & Ramazan, 2022). Conversely, poor work-life balance and low job satisfaction can lead to burnout, absenteeism, and a decrease in teaching quality (Mathew et al.2021). This creates a cycle of negative outcomes, affecting not only teachers' well-being but also students' learning experiences and achievements. Given the high stakes involved, addressing these issues is critical for educational success in Shenzhen. However, while there is general agreement on the importance of these factors, empirical studies exploring the specific impact of work-life balance and job satisfaction on the performance of novice teachers in Shenzhen high schools remain limited. Furthermore, existing research often fails to capture the complexity of the local context, particularly within high-pressure urban centers in China, where educational expectations are high, and the work environment can be especially demanding.

The existing literature has examined work-life balance and job satisfaction among teachers in various contexts, but there is a significant gap in understanding how these factors specifically impact novice teachers in high-demand urban settings like Shenzhen. Most studies have focused on experienced teachers or failed to differentiate between novice and veteran educators, despite evidence suggesting that novice teachers face unique challenges that are likely to affect their work-life balance, job satisfaction, and performance differently (Wang et al.2019). Additionally, while studies in Western contexts have explored the impact of work-life balance on job performance, research specific to high schools in rapidly urbanizing cities in China is still limited. Given the cultural, economic, and educational differences, findings from other countries may not directly apply to the Chinese context, highlighting the need for localized research.

Furthermore, Shenzhen's rapid urban development and educational reforms create a unique set of pressures that may not be present in other regions of China, emphasizing the importance of studying this context specifically. Urban centers like Shenzhen have higher educational standards, a more competitive environment, and often a greater emphasis on academic achievement, which may exacerbate the work-life balance issues faced by novice teachers. This research aims to fill the existing gap by examining the influence of work-life balance and job satisfaction on the performance of novice high school teachers in Shenzhen, thereby providing valuable insights for educational administrators and policymakers seeking to improve teacher retention and performance in similar high-pressure environments.

2. Literature review

2.1 Studies on Work-Life Balance and Teacher Performance

Recent studies have examined how work-life balance can positively influence teacher performance, highlighting the importance of a balanced lifestyle for educators.

Al-Alawi et al. (2021) investigated the impact of work-life balance on the performance of teachers in schools. The study found a significant positive relationship between teachers' work-life balance and their overall job performance, suggesting that teachers who reported a better balance between their professional and personal lives tended to show higher levels of engagement, productivity, and satisfaction in their roles. According to the study, teachers with a healthy work-life balance were better able to manage classroom responsibilities, maintain energy throughout the day, and sustain motivation over the course of the academic year. This increased motivation and energy not only benefited their teaching quality but also had a positive effect on student engagement and learning outcomes. The study underscores that when teachers achieve a balance between work obligations and personal time, their performance improves, as they are less likely to experience burnout and stress, which can otherwise detract from their effectiveness in the classroom.

Rashid et al. (2022) conducted a study focusing on how work-life balance influences teacher performance in schools. The research indicated that teachers who managed to establish a harmonious balance between their professional duties and personal lives demonstrated improved performance across various teaching dimensions, including lesson planning, student interaction, and overall teaching effectiveness. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods, revealing that teachers with a satisfactory work-life balance were more proactive in classroom management and more creative in lesson delivery, often resulting in higher student engagement and improved academic outcomes. The study concluded that the benefits of work-life balance extended beyond the individual teachers, as students also showed better performance and satisfaction in classrooms led by balanced teachers. The findings emphasize the notion that work-life balance is a critical factor in enhancing teacher performance, as it allows educators to invest their energy and focus more fully in their teaching roles.

Suryani et al. (2021) explored the relationship between work-life balance and teacher effectiveness and found that teachers who successfully balanced their work and personal lives exhibited higher levels of job satisfaction and were more effective in achieving educational objectives. According to the study, a good work-life balance contributed to teachers' emotional well-being, which directly influenced their teaching style and classroom interactions. Teachers with balanced lives were more patient, empathetic, and responsive to students' needs, leading to a more supportive and conducive learning environment. The study also highlighted that these teachers showed greater resilience in handling classroom challenges, as their personal well-being allowed them to approach work-related stressors with a positive

outlook. The findings suggest that fostering work-life balance among teachers is essential for schools aiming to enhance teacher performance and, consequently, student success.

In summary, recent research underscores the positive impact of work-life balance on teacher performance, showing that educators with a balanced lifestyle exhibit higher job satisfaction, engagement, and effectiveness in teaching. These teachers are less likely to experience burnout, leading to enhanced classroom dynamics, improved student engagement, and higher academic outcomes. In conclusion, work-life balance is crucial for teacher well-being and optimal educational achievements.

2.2 Studies on work-life balance and job satisfaction

Many recent research has documented the positive impact of work-life balance on job satisfaction, suggesting that when individuals are able to manage their work and personal lives effectively, they report higher levels of satisfaction in their jobs.

Aruldoss et al. (2022) conducted a survey-based study that explored employees' perceptions of work-life balance and its impact on job satisfaction. The study found that individuals who reported feeling that their work-life balance needs were met also expressed higher satisfaction in their roles. The research highlighted that when employees feel they have sufficient time for personal responsibilities and leisure activities outside of work, they tend to experience a greater sense of fulfillment and contentment in their professional lives. The study suggested that work-life balance allows employees to recharge and reduce stress, which, in turn, positively impacts their outlook on work. According to the study, this balance not only fosters a sense of well-being but also enhances overall job satisfaction by making work feel less burdensome and more manageable.

Kasbuntoro et al. (2020) examined the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction and the findings supported the hypothesis that work-life balance is a significant predictor of job satisfaction. The study revealed that employees who felt they could successfully balance their professional and personal obligations were more likely to report high levels of job satisfaction compared to those who struggled with this balance. The study argued that when work-related responsibilities do not interfere excessively with personal time, employees tend to have a more positive view of their job and are less likely to experience job dissatisfaction. The research suggested that achieving a work-life balance fosters a sense of autonomy and control over one’s schedule, which is a crucial element of job satisfaction. The study concluded that when employees perceive a healthy balance between work and life, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and satisfied in their jobs.

Jessica et al. (2023) conducted a study to investigate how changes in work-life balance influence job satisfaction. Their findings indicated that improvements in work-life balance were directly correlated with increases in job satisfaction. The study demonstrated that employees who were able to enhance their work-life balance over the course of the study period reported higher levels of job satisfaction as their work demands and personal responsibilities became more compatible. The study suggested that employees derive satisfaction not only from the content of their work but also from the ability to manage work-related stress and maintain personal well-being. The study concluded that work-life balance serves as an essential component of a positive work environment, as it contributes to job satisfaction by allowing employees to meet both their professional and personal needs without one domain compromising the other. This research emphasized that fostering a balance between work and life can be a valuable strategy for enhancing employee satisfaction and creating a more positive and sustainable work experience.

In summary, recent studies underscore the significant positive impact of work-life balance on job satisfaction. Research indicates that employees with effective work-life management experience higher job satisfaction, as they feel less overwhelmed and more content in their roles. These findings reveal that a good balance allows individuals to feel fulfilled, reduces work-related stress, and enhances their professional outlook by fostering autonomy and decreasing job dissatisfaction.

2.3 Studies on job satisfaction and teacher performance

Several studies have examined the direct relationship between job satisfaction and teacher performance, consistently revealing that job satisfaction has a positive influence on teachers' effectiveness in the classroom.

Atika et al. (2022) explored the impact of job satisfaction on teacher performance within a large sample of educators. Using a comprehensive survey approach, the study collected data on teachers' levels of job satisfaction in relation to their self-reported performance in areas such as lesson planning, student engagement, and assessment practices. The findings demonstrated a strong positive correlation between job satisfaction and teacher performance, suggesting that teachers who experience higher levels of satisfaction in their roles are more motivated, engaged, and effective in delivering educational content. The study concluded that satisfied teachers are better able to manage classroom dynamics and engage students, resulting in improved educational outcomes. This study supports the notion that enhancing job satisfaction among teachers could be a critical pathway to improving their overall performance.

Kilag et al. (2023) reinforced the positive impact of job satisfaction on teacher performance through an analysis of school teachers and employed both quantitative and qualitative methods, gathering data from teacher surveys, performance evaluations, and interviews. The study revealed that teachers who reported high levels of job satisfaction showed significant improvements in their teaching performance over time, particularly in terms of instructional quality

and student interaction. According to the study, job satisfaction contributed to higher levels of intrinsic motivation, which in turn encouraged teachers to invest more effort into refining their teaching practices and building stronger relationships with students. The study concluded that job satisfaction fosters a sense of commitment and enthusiasm among teachers, which translates directly into enhanced classroom performance. This study provides compelling evidence that job satisfaction not only affects teachers' immediate performance but also promotes sustained improvement in their professional development.

Mallillin et al. (2021) focused on the relationship between job satisfaction and teacher performance in the context of teaching quality and classroom management. Using a cross-sectional design, the study surveyed a diverse group of teachers and assessed their satisfaction levels alongside measures of their classroom management effectiveness and instructional clarity. The results showed that teachers with higher job satisfaction scores tended to exhibit better classroom management skills and clearer instructional methods, which are key components of effective teaching performance. The study argued that job satisfaction enables teachers to approach their work with greater positivity and resilience, which helps them manage the complexities of the classroom more effectively. The study emphasized that when teachers feel valued and content in their jobs, they are more likely to exhibit behaviors that support a productive and supportive learning environment for students. This study further supports the positive link between job satisfaction and teacher performance, highlighting that job satisfaction can directly enhance key aspects of teaching effectiveness.

In summary, research consistently indicates a positive correlation between job satisfaction and teacher performance. These studies suggest that increasing job satisfaction may enhance teachers' performance by fostering greater motivation, effectiveness, and resilience in educational settings.

3. Research Methodology

This section outlines the research methodology employed in this study, which includes a quantitative research approach, sampling technique, data collection, and data analysis methods. The research methodology is designed to systematically investigate the influence of work-life balance and job satisfaction on the performance of novice high school teachers in Shenzhen, China.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research method to examine the relationships between work-life balance, job satisfaction, and performance among novice teachers. The quantitative approach allows for systematic data collection and analysis, providing an objective means to test hypotheses and draw conclusions based on statistical evidence.

The choice of a quantitative research method is grounded in the study's objective to measure and analyze variables related to work-life balance, job satisfaction, and teacher performance. Quantitative research is suitable for this study because it enables the use of statistical tools to identify patterns, relationships, and potential causal links among the variables. Given that this study seeks to generalize findings to a larger population of novice teachers in Shenzhen, the quantitative approach is advantageous due to its capacity to produce replicable and statistically robust results. Additionally, a quantitative approach allows the researcher to control for potential biases, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings. The Fig. 1. presents the following the research process to explore the impact of work-life balance and job satisfaction on the performance of novice high school teachers in Shenzhen city, China.

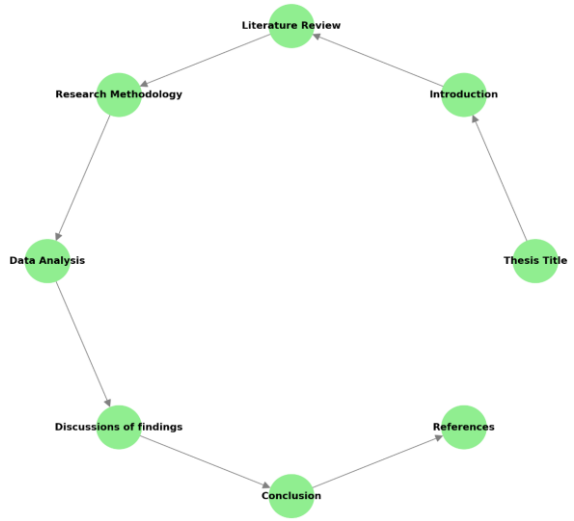


Figure 1. Research process

3.2 Sampling Technique

The study focuses on 36 high schools in Shenzhen City, China, which employ a total of 3,128 teachers. Given the large

population, the study uses Slovin's formula to determine a sample size that balances representativeness with manageability. Using Slovin's formula at a 95% confidence level and an acceptable margin of error, the study identifies a sample size of approximately 400 teachers. These teachers are selected through a simple random sampling method, ensuring that every teacher within the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample. This approach minimizes sampling bias and enhances the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of high school teachers in Shenzhen. For data collection, a structured questionnaire was designed and distributed to 400 novice teachers across the selected schools. The questionnaire was distributed with the assistance of the Human Resources departments of the schools, which facilitated access to the teachers and ensured that the process adhered to ethical standards of research during a month from October 28 to November 28, 2024. Out of the 400 questionnaires distributed, a total of 389 were collected, reflecting a high response rate which underscores the relevance and engagement of the participants with the subject matter of the study.

3.3 Data Collection Instrument

The study employs a structured survey-based questionnaire based on a Likert-5 scale, which is adapted and designed from previous validated scales used in studies on work-life balance, job satisfaction, and teacher performance. The Likert-5 scale items range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), allowing respondents to express varying degrees of agreement with each statement. The questionnaire includes sections on demographic information, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and teacher performance.

3.4 Data Analysis Method

The data collected from the survey are analyzed using two primary methods: descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) path analysis. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution, are used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample and provide an overview of the responses for each variable. This helps to identify general trends and patterns in work-life balance, job satisfaction, and teacher performance among the sampled teachers.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) path analysis is applied to examine the relationships between work-life balance, job satisfaction, and teacher performance. SEM is a powerful statistical technique that allows for the analysis of complex relationships between observed and latent variables. In this study, SEM is used to test the hypothesized model, where work-life balance and job satisfaction are independent variables influencing the dependent variable, teacher performance. Path analysis within the SEM framework enables the estimation of direct and indirect effects, providing a comprehensive understanding of how work-life balance and job satisfaction interact to impact teacher performance.

4. Data analysis

In this research, the Structural Equation Modeling technique was employed to analyze the interactions between three key variables of the study, including work-life balance, job satisfaction and performance of novice teachers. The SEM path, shown in Fig.2, details how each path coefficient directly influences another variable within the model.

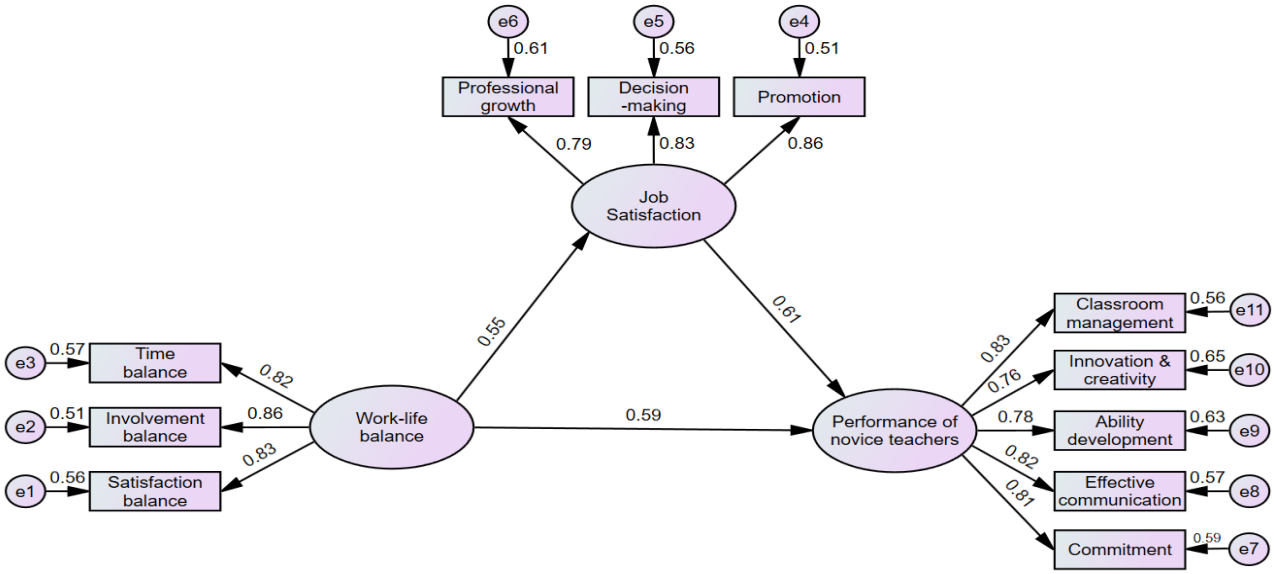


Figure 2. Structural equation model

This study utilizes SEM path analysis to analyze the influence of work-life balance on performance of novice teachers as well as investigate the mediating effect of job satisfaction between them in high schools of Shenzhen city,

China. The specific SEM path analysis results are detailed in the following figures and subsequent analyses.

Fig. 3. delineates the standardized path coefficient, which represents the link between work-life balance and the performance of novice teachers, measured at 0.586. This coefficient is supported by a statistically significant p-value of 0.000. These findings indicate that work-life balance positively influences the performance of novice teachers. The data indicates a clear trend: as the work-life balance of novice teachers improves, so does their performance. This finding underscores the critical role that maintaining a balanced work and personal life plays in enhancing the effectiveness and productivity of novice educators within the educational context.

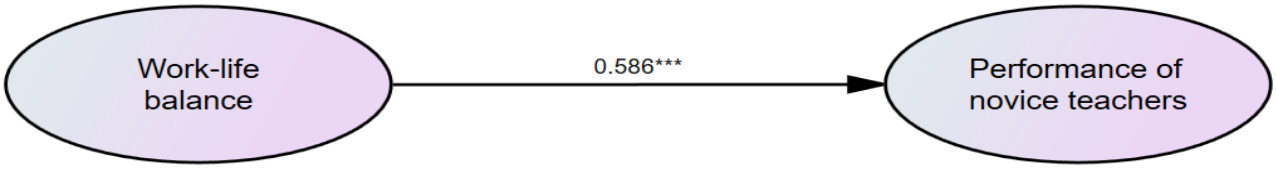


Figure 3. Path analysis results between work-life balance and performance of novice teachers

Fig. 4. details the findings on the standardized path coefficient that links work-life balance to job satisfaction, which is quantified at 0.551. This coefficient is supported by a p-value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant outcome. These results indicate that a favorable work-life balance significantly enhances job satisfaction. The analysis demonstrates that enhancements in work-life balance are directly correlated with improvements in job satisfaction. This correlation underscores the essential role that achieving a healthy balance between professional and personal life plays in boosting the overall job contentment among employees, thereby highlighting its critical impact in organizational settings.

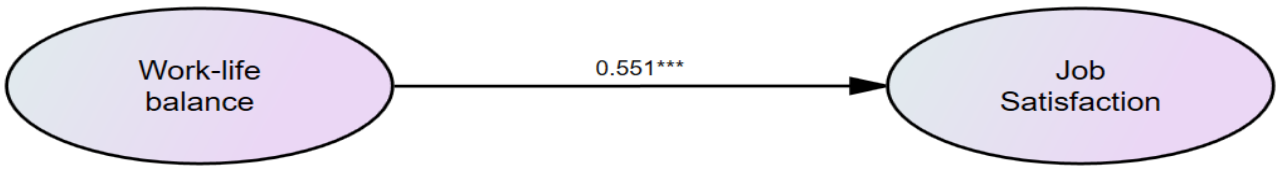


Figure 4. Path analysis results between work-life balance and job satisfaction

Fig. 5. reveals the findings on the standardized path coefficient that connects job satisfaction to the performance of novice teachers, which stands at 0.605. This coefficient is substantiated by a p-value of 0.000, signifying a high level of statistical significance. These results indicate that an increase in job satisfaction significantly boosts the performance of novice teachers. The analysis demonstrates that higher levels of job satisfaction among novice teachers are associated with marked improvements in their performance. This correlation highlights the critical influence of job satisfaction on the effectiveness and success of novice teachers in their professional roles, emphasizing the need for policies and practices that enhance job satisfaction in educational settings.

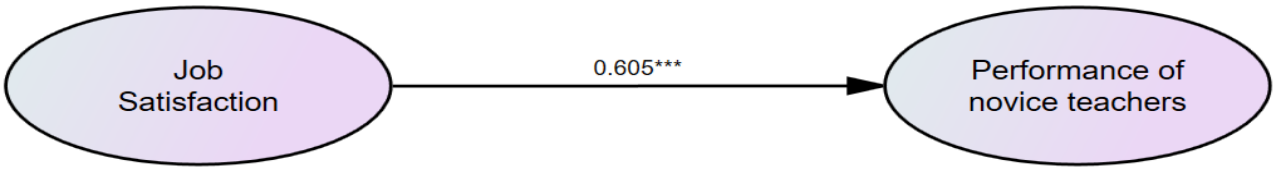


Figure 5. Path analysis results between job satisfaction and performance of novice teachers

Besides, to check whether job satisfaction is a mediator, the study employed the bootstrapping method, incorporating 5,000 resamples as advised by the seminal work of Grzegorzewski et al. (2022). The detailed results of this mediating analysis, highlighting the pivotal role of job satisfaction, are presented in Table 1, which provides the statistical significance and strength of the mediation.

Table 1. Mediating effect analysis of job satisfaction

Standard effect	Path	Effect coefficient	95% confidence interval		S.E.	P-value
			Lower	Upper		
Total effect	Work-life balance --->Performance of novice teachers	0.919	0.872	0.966	0.024	0.000
Direct effect	Work-life balance --->Performance of novice teachers	0.586	0.541	0.631	0.023	0.000
Indirect effect	Work-life balance --->Job satisfaction --->Performance of novice teachers	0.333	0.292	0.374	0.021	0.000

The mediating effect analysis, as presented in the table 1, explores the role of job satisfaction as a mediator in the relationship between work-life balance and the performance of novice teachers in Shenzhen high schools. This analysis is conducted through the bootstrapping method, which provides a robust method for estimating the indirect effect and assessing the statistical significance of mediation pathways.

The total effect of work-life balance on novice teachers' performance is represented by an effect coefficient of 0.919 with a confidence interval between 0.872 and 0.966, and a standard error of 0.024. This total effect includes both the direct impact of work-life balance on performance and the indirect impact mediated through job satisfaction. The significant p-value (0.000) indicates a strong and statistically significant relationship, suggesting that work-life balance, when considered in its entirety, has a substantial positive influence on teacher performance. This result underscores the importance of a balanced personal and professional life as a crucial factor in enhancing novice teachers' effectiveness in their roles.

The direct effect of work-life balance on the performance of novice teachers is shown by an effect coefficient of 0.586, with a confidence interval ranging from 0.541 to 0.631 and a standard error of 0.023. This statistically significant relationship (p-value of 0.000) indicates that even without accounting for job satisfaction, work-life balance independently contributes to improved teacher performance. However, the direct effect (0.586) is lower than the total effect (0.919), which suggests that part of work-life balance's influence on performance operates through an indirect pathway, specifically, via job satisfaction.

The indirect effect of work-life balance on teacher performance, mediated by job satisfaction, has an effect coefficient of 0.333, with a confidence interval between 0.292 and 0.374 and a standard error of 0.021. This indirect effect is also statistically significant (p-value of 0.000), confirming that job satisfaction serves as a meaningful mediating variable. In other words, improvements in work-life balance positively impact job satisfaction, which in turn boosts the performance of novice teachers. The mediation effect indicates that fostering a supportive work-life balance not only enhances teachers' job satisfaction but also leads to indirect improvements in their performance. This suggests that job satisfaction is an essential link in fully realizing the benefits of work-life balance for novice teachers.

5. Discussions of findings

The findings of this study provide a nuanced understanding of the relationships between work-life balance, job satisfaction, and performance among novice high school teachers in Shenzhen, China. By employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) path analysis, this study has uncovered significant connections between these variables, shedding light on how improvements in work-life balance and job satisfaction can positively impact teacher performance.

One finding of this study is the significant positive influence of work-life balance on the performance of novice teachers. The SEM path analysis reveals a standardized path coefficient of 0.586 ($p < 0.001$) between work-life balance and teacher performance, indicating that teachers who manage to achieve a balance between their professional and personal lives are more effective in their roles. This finding is consistent with previous research by Johari et al.(2018), which reported that teachers with better work-life balance showed higher engagement, productivity, and satisfaction. The study by Johari et al. (2018) highlights that work-life balance enables teachers to manage their classroom responsibilities more effectively and maintain energy levels throughout the day, ultimately enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes. As Shenzhen is a rapidly urbanizing city with high academic expectations, the intense work environment can place additional stress on novice teachers, making work-life balance even more crucial. When teachers can dedicate time to their personal lives, they are less likely to experience burnout, which can otherwise detract from their teaching performance. The consistency between the findings of this study and prior research emphasizes that work-life balance is critical not only for the well-being of novice teachers but also for their professional effectiveness.

The study also finds a strong positive relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction, with a standardized path coefficient of 0.551 ($p < 0.001$). This indicates that teachers who report a better work-life balance also tend to experience higher job satisfaction. The significance of this relationship is in line with existing literature, including the study by Yadav et al. (2014), which found that employees who achieve a balance between work and personal responsibilities experience greater fulfillment and contentment in their roles. For novice teachers in Shenzhen, the

pressure to meet high educational standards can result in long working hours and limited personal time. Consequently, a lack of work-life balance may lead to job dissatisfaction, potentially increasing turnover rates. The implication is that improving work-life balance for novice teachers could be a strategic measure to boost their satisfaction and retain them in the profession, which is crucial in high-pressure urban settings like Shenzhen.

The results also reveal a strong positive relationship between job satisfaction and teacher performance, with a path coefficient of 0.605 ($p < 0.001$). This finding suggests that higher job satisfaction among novice teachers leads to marked improvements in their performance. The importance of job satisfaction in this study aligns with prior research, such as the study by Chamundeswari (2013), which found that satisfied teachers exhibit better classroom management and clearer instructional methods. For novice teachers, who may lack the experience to navigate classroom challenges confidently, job satisfaction provides an essential foundation for resilience and positivity in their roles. Job satisfaction is not merely an outcome of favorable work conditions but an essential driver of effective teaching performance. Satisfied teachers are more likely to bring enthusiasm and commitment to their work, fostering a supportive learning environment for students.

The study also examines job satisfaction as a mediating variable between work-life balance and teacher performance, finding a significant indirect effect with a coefficient of 0.333 ($p < 0.001$). This indicates that improvements in work-life balance led to increased job satisfaction, which subsequently enhances teacher performance. The mediation effect suggests that job satisfaction plays a crucial role in fully realizing the benefits of work-life balance on performance. This finding supports the argument made by Wesarat et al. (2018), who noted that work-life balance contributes to job satisfaction, which in turn positively impacts teachers' effectiveness. For novice teachers, who are particularly vulnerable to stress and dissatisfaction, achieving a work-life balance that enhances job satisfaction could serve as a protective factor, helping them to build resilience and sustain high performance in demanding educational settings.

6. Conclusion

This study provides significant insights into the influence of work-life balance and job satisfaction on the performance of novice high school teachers in Shenzhen, China, highlighting the critical role these factors play in enhancing teacher effectiveness. The findings reveal a strong positive relationship between work-life balance and teacher performance, indicating that novice teachers who can maintain a balanced personal and professional life are more likely to succeed in the classroom. Additionally, the study establishes that work-life balance positively affects job satisfaction, which in turn serves as a crucial mediator in the relationship between work-life balance and performance. Job satisfaction emerges as a vital factor in improving teacher performance, as satisfied teachers are more motivated, resilient, and effective in handling classroom responsibilities. This suggests that enhancing work-life balance not only improves job satisfaction but also has a direct and indirect impact on teacher performance, especially for novice educators who face high levels of stress and adjustment challenges in their early years of teaching. These findings have practical implications for educational administrators and policymakers in Shenzhen and similar high-pressure educational environments. By implementing policies that support a healthy work-life balance, schools can improve job satisfaction and reduce burnout among novice teachers. In doing so, they can foster a more supportive environment that not only enhances teacher retention but also improves educational outcomes for students.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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