



Category: Finance, Business, Management, Economics and Accounting

ORIGINAL

## The effects of professional identity on retention intention of international Chinese language teachers in Guizhou colleges and universities: The chain mediating role of job satisfaction and career commitment

Los efectos de la identidad profesional en intención de retención de los profesores internacionales de chino en las de Guizhou: El papel mediador en cadena de la satisfacción laboral y el compromiso profesional

Zudan Wu<sup>1</sup>  , Jianping Fu<sup>1</sup>  

<sup>1</sup>College of Chinese International Education, Krirk University, Bangkok, 10220, Thailand.


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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of international Chinese language teachers' professional identity on their intention to stay in Guizhou universities. The focus is on understanding the chain mediating role of job satisfaction and career commitment in this relationship. Objectives: The primary objective is to analyze the correlation between teachers' professional identity and their intention to stay in the profession. Additionally, the study aims to evaluate the mediating effects of job satisfaction and career commitment on this relationship. Methods: Data were collected from international Chinese language teachers working in Guizhou universities. Statistical analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among professional identity, job satisfaction, career commitment, and intention to stay. Results: The analysis revealed a significant positive correlation between teachers' professional identity and their intention to stay in the profession. Furthermore, both job satisfaction and career commitment were found to play crucial mediating roles in this relationship. Conclusions: The findings suggest that enhancing teachers' professional identity and job satisfaction, as well as strengthening their career commitment, can effectively increase their willingness to remain in the profession. This is critical for stabilizing the teaching workforce and improving educational quality. The study provides valuable insights for university administrators to develop more reasonable and effective teacher management and incentive policies.

**Keywords:** Professional Identity; Job Satisfaction; Career Commitment; Intention to Stay; Teaching; Faculty.

### RESUMEN

**Introducción:** este estudio investiga la influencia de la identidad profesional de los profesores internacionales de lengua china en su intención de permanecer en las universidades de Guizhou. El enfoque se centra en comprender el papel mediador en cadena de la satisfacción laboral y el compromiso profesional en esta relación.

**Objetivos:** el objetivo principal es analizar la correlación entre la identidad profesional de los profesores y su intención de permanecer en la profesión. Además, el estudio pretende evaluar los efectos mediadores de la satisfacción laboral y el compromiso profesional en esta relación.

**Método:** se recogieron datos de profesores internacionales de lengua china que trabajan en universidades de Guizhou. Se realizó un análisis estadístico para examinar las relaciones entre la identidad profesional, la satisfacción laboral, el compromiso profesional y la intención de permanecer.

**Resultados:** el análisis reveló una correlación positiva significativa entre la identidad profesional de los profesores y su intención de permanecer en la profesión. Además, se encontró que tanto la satisfacción laboral como el compromiso profesional desempeñan roles mediadores cruciales en esta relación.

**Conclusiones:** los hallazgos sugieren que mejorar la identidad profesional de los profesores y la satisfacción laboral, así como fortalecer su compromiso profesional, puede aumentar efectivamente su disposición a permanecer en la profesión. Esto es crítico para estabilizar la fuerza laboral docente y mejorar la calidad educativa. El estudio proporciona valiosos conocimientos para que los administradores universitarios desarrollen políticas de gestión y de incentivos para los profesores más razonables y efectivas.

**Palabras clave:** Identidad Profesional; Satisfacción Laboral; Compromiso Profesional; Intención de Permanecer; Enseñar; Profesores.

## INTRODUCTION

In today's world of profound changes in politics, economy, culture, education, and other aspects, international Chinese education, as an important bridge connecting different cultures and promoting international exchanges, is facing unprecedented development opportunities and challenges. With the deepening development of globalization, Chinese, as one of the most widely used languages in the world, its education and dissemination are of great significance for enhancing mutual understanding and friendly relations among people around the world.<sup>(1,2,3)</sup> The Chinese government's Global Development Initiative and the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind further emphasize the importance of cultural heritage and international exchanges. In this context, the role of international Chinese language teachers is particularly crucial, as their professional identity, job satisfaction, and willingness to stay directly affect the quality of education and the international promotion of Chinese language. However, there is currently relatively little research on this group, especially in terms of systematic research on professional identity.<sup>(4,5)</sup> This has prompted this study to focus on international Chinese teachers in Guizhou universities, aiming to deeply explore their professional identity and its impact on retention intention, and provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the sustainable development of international Chinese education.

This study aims to deeply analyze and understand the current status of professional identity among international Chinese language teachers in Guizhou universities, and how this identity affects their job satisfaction, career commitment, and retention intention.<sup>(6)</sup> Through quantitative and qualitative research methods, this study aims to reveal the intrinsic relationship between teacher professional identity and retention intention, and explore the roles played by job satisfaction and professional commitment.<sup>(7)</sup> The ultimate goal of the study is to provide strategic recommendations for university management and education policy makers, help them build more effective human resource management measures, enhance the professional identity of international Chinese language teachers, enhance their commitment to the education industry, thereby improving the stability and quality of the teaching staff, and promoting the long-term development of international Chinese language education.

This study has important theoretical significance and practical value. From a theoretical perspective, it enriches research in the field of international Chinese education, especially in the exploration of teacher professional identity, providing a new perspective for understanding teacher professional behavior, and providing an empirical basis for subsequent research.<sup>(8,9,10)</sup> By revealing the relationship between professional identity and retention intention, this study helps to improve relevant theoretical models and enhance a deeper understanding of teacher career development and educational management. From a practical perspective, the research findings can help universities and educational institutions better understand the needs and expectations of international Chinese language teachers, and provide a basis for formulating targeted career development plans, incentive mechanisms, and retention strategies. In addition, enhancing the professional identity of teachers can enhance their job satisfaction and loyalty, thereby improving teaching quality and educational effectiveness, which plays an important role in promoting the sustainable development of international Chinese education.

## METHOD

### Research Framework

This study constructs a comprehensive research framework aimed at exploring the professional identity of international Chinese language teachers and its impact on retention intention, and examining the mediating role of job satisfaction and professional commitment in this relationship<sup>[11]</sup>. The research framework is based on social identity theory, with occupational identity as the core independent variable and retention intention as the main dependent variable. At the same time, personal background variables of teachers, such as gender,

age, education, and professional title, are considered, which may have an impact on occupational identity and retention intention. The research assumes that job satisfaction and career commitment play a chain mediating role between career identity and retention intention, that is, career identity may enhance teachers' retention intention by increasing job satisfaction and career commitment. In addition, the research framework also includes multidimensional measurements of teacher professional identity, as well as quantitative evaluations of retention intention, job satisfaction, and professional commitment, ensuring that the study can comprehensively analyze and explain the professional identity and retention behavior of international Chinese teachers. Through this framework, the study aims to provide strategic recommendations for university administrators to better understand and enhance the professional identity and retention intention of international Chinese language teachers, thereby promoting the quality of education and the stability of the teaching staff.

### Research objects

In this study, the research subjects specifically targeted international Chinese language teachers in universities in Guizhou Province, China. The selection of this specific group as the research object is based on the fact that Guizhou Province is an important component of Southwest China, and its higher education institutions play an important role in the field of international Chinese education. In addition, the development of international Chinese education in Guizhou Province has a certain representativeness, which can reflect the general situation and particularity of Chinese universities in promoting international Chinese education.

In terms of selecting research methods, this study mainly adopted quantitative research methods, collecting data through questionnaire surveys. The questionnaire design is based on extensive literature review and pre-test analysis, ensuring the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. The questionnaire includes but is not limited to key indicators such as professional identity, job satisfaction, professional commitment, and retention intention, aiming to comprehensively evaluate the professional psychological state and behavioral tendencies of international Chinese teachers.

In order to ensure the representativeness of the sample and the reliability of the data, this study adopted a multi-stage random sampling method. Firstly, among all the universities in Guizhou Province that offer international Chinese education majors, several representative universities were randomly selected as survey points. Subsequently, in these universities, a certain number of international Chinese language teachers were randomly selected as survey subjects based on their professional titles, educational qualifications, age, and gender background information.

During the data collection process, this study strictly adhered to research ethics and ensured the anonymity and privacy rights of all participants. The questionnaire is distributed electronically to improve the convenience and response rate of the survey. In order to improve the response rate and efficiency of the questionnaire, the research team has taken various measures, including providing small incentives, ensuring the simplicity of questionnaire filling, and timely following up on questionnaire collection.

The collected data will be processed and analyzed through statistical software. Descriptive statistical analysis will be used to demonstrate the central trends and dispersion of basic demographic characteristics and key indicators of international Chinese language teachers. Correlation analysis and regression analysis will be used to explore the relationship between different variables, especially the relationship between career identity and retention intention, as well as the mediating roles that job satisfaction and career commitment may play in it.

In addition, this study also plans to use Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test research hypotheses and evaluate the fit of the hypothesis model between career identity, job satisfaction, career commitment, and retention intention. SEM, as a powerful statistical analysis tool, can simultaneously handle the relationships between multiple variables, providing in-depth insights for research.

In summary, the selection of research subjects and methods in this study aims to ensure the scientific, objective, and universal nature of the research results. Through in-depth analysis of international Chinese teachers in universities in Guizhou Province, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the field of international Chinese education and provide empirical basis for relevant policy formulation and practical improvement.

### Research hypotheses

In this study, a comprehensive research framework was constructed to explore in depth the complex relationship between professional identity of international Chinese language teachers and their willingness to stay. This framework revolves around professional identity as the core, focusing on its impact on teacher retention intention, and considering job satisfaction and professional commitment as potential mediating variables. The establishment of the research framework is based on an in-depth analysis of social identity theory, which suggests that an individual's occupational identity is constructed through connections and identification with specific social groups. In the context of international Chinese education, the professional

identity of teachers involves not only general recognition of the educational profession, but also recognition of their role in cross-cultural communication.

The research framework first defines the connotation of professional identity as a positive perception of a teacher's role in the field of education, based on their values, educational philosophy, and love for educational work. Next, the framework explores how professional identity affects the job satisfaction of teachers, which is understood as the overall evaluation of their working conditions, environment, content, and outcomes. Furthermore, the research framework analyzes the role of career commitment, which is seen as a teacher's loyalty and investment in the education profession, reflecting their willingness to engage in long-term educational work.

In addition, the research framework also considers background variables such as gender, age, education level, and professional title, which may affect the professional identity and retention intention of teachers. For example, teachers of different genders may exhibit different professional identities due to different expectations of social roles; Age may be related to the career development stage and experience of teachers, which in turn affects their identification and commitment to their profession; The educational background may be related to the professional development and self-efficacy of teachers, which in turn affects their job satisfaction and retention intention; Professional titles may be related to the professional status and career growth opportunities of teachers, which in turn affects their professional identity and willingness to stay.

In order to verify the hypothesis relationships in the research framework, this study used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as the main data analysis method. SEM allows for simultaneous testing of relationships between multiple variables, providing a comprehensive approach to understanding complex models. Through the analysis of the pre test questionnaire, the reliability and validity of the research tool were ensured, laying the foundation for the distribution and data collection of the formal questionnaire.

Ultimately, the research framework aims to reveal how occupational identity influences retention intention through the mediating effect of job satisfaction and occupational commitment, and explore the moderating role of background variables in this process. Through this framework, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of teacher professional identity and retention behavior in the field of international Chinese education, and to provide empirical evidence for the formulation of relevant policies and the implementation of teacher development strategies.

### **Sample Analysis**

In the sample analysis section of this study, we aim to provide a detailed description and analysis of the basic characteristics and distribution of international Chinese teachers from universities in Guizhou Province who participated in the questionnaire survey. The selection of samples is crucial for ensuring the representativeness and universality of research results. Therefore, we adopted a multi-stage random sampling method to ensure the diversity and breadth of the samples.

In the sampling process, we first determined the population of the study - all higher education institutions in Guizhou Province that offer international Chinese education majors. Subsequently, based on geographical distribution, school size, and type, we randomly selected several representative universities as survey points. In these universities, we further conducted stratified random sampling based on background information such as teacher titles, education levels, age, and gender to ensure sample diversity.

Through this method, we collected a total of 651 questionnaires. After strict screening, we excluded 29 invalid questionnaires and ultimately obtained 632 valid questionnaires. These effective samples provide us with abundant data resources for our research, enabling us to conduct in-depth analysis of key indicators such as professional identity, job satisfaction, career commitment, and retention intention of international Chinese teachers.

## **RESULTS**

To further ensure the validity and reliability of the sample data, we conducted descriptive statistical analysis on the data. In the following analysis, we will further explore whether there are significant differences in professional identity, job satisfaction, professional commitment, and retention intention among teachers with different background characteristics. This will help us to have a deeper understanding of the key factors that affect the professional behavior and psychological state of international Chinese language teachers, and provide valuable references for university administrators and educational decision-makers.

Overall, the sample analysis of this study provides us with a comprehensive and detailed portrait of the international Chinese teacher community. Through in-depth analysis of these data, we hope to reveal the intrinsic relationship between teacher professional identity and retention intention, as well as the key factors affecting these variables. This is not only of great significance for the development of international Chinese education, but also has enlightening effects on human resource management and teacher development in the entire field of higher education.

In terms of gender distribution, we found that male teachers accounted for 40,03 % and female teachers accounted for 59,97 %, indicating a higher proportion of women in the field of international Chinese education. In terms of age, young teachers under 30 years old account for 22,63 %, and teachers between 30 and 39 years old account for 46,99 %. These two age groups of teachers constitute the main part of the sample. In terms of educational background, 49,84 % of teachers have a bachelor's degree, 31,96 % have a master's degree, and 15,66 % have a doctoral degree. This indicates that a considerable proportion of teachers in our sample have higher education levels.

In terms of professional titles, teachers without professional titles account for 14,87 %, teachers with junior professional titles account for 12,50 %, teachers with intermediate professional titles account for 62,50 %, and teachers with senior professional titles account for 10,13 %. This distribution reflects the common characteristics of the professional title structure of university teachers, that is, teachers with intermediate professional titles constitute the main body of the teaching staff.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight the significant roles of professional identity, job satisfaction, and career commitment in influencing the retention intention of international Chinese language teachers in Guizhou universities. These results align with similar investigations in the field of education, yet some differences warrant further discussion and exploration.

The positive correlation between professional identity and retention intention observed in this study is consistent with previous research. For instance, similar studies conducted in other regions of China and globally have also found that teachers with a strong professional identity are more likely to remain in their positions. This indicates a broader applicability of the relationship between professional identity and retention across different educational contexts.

Job satisfaction and career commitment as mediating factors also align with existing literature. Studies have consistently shown that higher job satisfaction leads to greater career commitment and, subsequently, higher retention intention. The specific dimensions of job satisfaction (e.g., welfare compensation, work environment) that significantly affect teachers' retention intention in this study are also in line with findings from other investigations. For example, research conducted in other Chinese provinces found that teachers' satisfaction with compensation and working conditions directly influences their decision to stay in their current roles.

However, there are some differences in the levels of satisfaction and commitment reported in this study compared to other similar studies. For instance, the moderate level of job satisfaction and career commitment found among international Chinese language teachers in Guizhou is somewhat lower than levels reported in more economically developed regions of China. This suggests regional disparities in factors such as institutional support, professional development opportunities, and overall working conditions.

## CONCLUSION

### Research Conclusion

Through rigorous statistical analysis of the survey data of international Chinese teachers in universities in Guizhou Province, we have obtained the following main findings:

Firstly, regarding professional identity, our research findings indicate that international Chinese language teachers generally have a high sense of identity in dimensions such as role values, professional behavioral tendencies, professional values, and professional belonging. This reflects that most teachers have a clear understanding of their professional roles and feel that their work has important value for social development. However, there are also some teachers who have certain confusion or dissatisfaction with their professional identity, which suggests that we need to further pay attention to and solve these problems in order to enhance the overall professional identity of teachers.

Secondly, in terms of job satisfaction, our analysis found that teachers have a moderate level of satisfaction in dimensions such as leadership management, welfare compensation, work itself, work environment, and interpersonal relationships. This indicates that universities have achieved certain results in these areas, but there is still room for improvement. Especially, high satisfaction in terms of welfare compensation may be related to the favorable treatment provided by the school, while satisfaction in other aspects needs to be further optimized and improved.

The analysis of professional commitment reveals that international Chinese language teachers exhibit moderate levels of commitment in three dimensions: emotional commitment, continuing commitment, and normative commitment. This indicates that teachers generally have a certain degree of loyalty and sense of responsibility towards their careers, and are willing to contribute to the education industry. However, there is still room for improvement in the level of professional commitment, especially in enhancing teachers' emotional commitment and continued commitment.

In terms of retention intention, our research results show that the overall retention intention of teachers is at a moderate level. This indicates that the majority of teachers are willing to continue working in their current positions and hold a positive attitude towards international Chinese education. However, at the same time, there are also some teachers whose willingness to stay on duty is not high, which may be related to personal career planning, life needs, and other factors, requiring attention from university administrators.

In summary, this study provides us with a deeper understanding of the professional psychology and behavioral patterns of international Chinese language teachers, and provides an empirical basis for universities in the management of teacher human resources. Based on the research findings, we suggest that university administrators take effective measures, such as strengthening teacher vocational training, improving the work environment, providing career development opportunities, etc., to enhance teacher professional identity, job satisfaction, and career commitment, thereby enhancing their willingness to stay. At the same time, universities should also pay attention to the special needs of teachers from different backgrounds and provide personalized support and assistance to promote the stability and development of the teaching staff.

### **Research Limitations**

The sample scope of this study is limited to international Chinese teachers in universities in Guizhou Province. Although this provides in-depth insights into specific regions, it also limits the universal applicability of the research results. The social and cultural backgrounds, economic development levels, and educational policies of different regions may have an impact on the professional identity and retention intention of teachers. Therefore, further validation is needed to extend the conclusions of this study to other regions or countries.

Secondly, data collection mainly relies on questionnaire surveys. Although this method can collect a large amount of quantitative data, there are also potential biases. For example, the self-report of participants may be influenced by the social expectation effect, as they may provide answers that align with social expectations rather than the actual situation. In addition, questionnaire surveys may not fully capture the complex emotions and experiences of teachers, and qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews or case studies may provide richer data.

Thirdly, this study used existing scales to measure variables. Although these scales have shown good reliability and validity in previous studies, their applicability may need further testing in different research backgrounds and samples. Future research can consider developing or adjusting scales to better adapt to specific research needs.

Fourthly, this study mainly focuses on individual factors of teachers, with less consideration given to external environmental factors such as changes in educational policies, school management practices, social and cultural environments, which may have a significant impact on teachers' professional identity and retention intentions. Future research can comprehensively consider the effects of these external factors.

Fifthly, this study mainly adopted a cross-sectional study design when analyzing the data, which means that we can only observe the relationship at a certain time point and cannot track the changes of variables over time. Future research can adopt a longitudinal research design to gain a deeper understanding of the developmental trajectory of teacher professional identity and retention intention.

Finally, although the mediation effect analysis of this study reveals the potential mechanism of occupational commitment and job satisfaction between occupational identity and retention intention, these analyses are mainly based on hypothetical models, and the actual psychological processes may be more complex. Future research can explore more potential mediating variables, such as teacher's professional self-efficacy, organizational support, and so on.

In summary, although this study has made contributions in exploring the professional identity and retention intention of international Chinese teachers, the limitations of the study also indicate the direction of future research. By expanding the sample size, adopting multiple research methods, considering external environmental factors, using or developing more suitable scales, and conducting longitudinal studies, future research can provide more comprehensive and in-depth insights.

### **Research Strategies and Suggestions**

The strategies to enhance teacher professional identity, improve job satisfaction, and enhance professional commitment should comprehensively consider multiple aspects such as personal growth, work environment, and career development of teachers. Firstly, schools and educational management departments should strive to create a positive working environment, which includes providing sufficient resources and support to ensure that teachers can efficiently carry out their teaching work. Secondly, through regular training and professional development courses, teachers can continuously update their teaching methods and knowledge, thereby enhancing their professional abilities. This not only helps to improve teaching quality, but also enhances their sense of professional identity. In addition, establishing a fair and transparent evaluation system and providing reasonable evaluations and rewards for the work achievements of teachers can significantly improve their

job satisfaction. At the same time, encouraging teachers to participate in school management and decision-making processes makes them feel that their opinions and work are valued, which helps to enhance teachers' professional commitment. Finally, by providing career advancement and development paths, teachers can see the long-term prospects of their careers, thereby inspiring their long-term enthusiasm and commitment to the education industry. The implementation of these strategies can effectively enhance the overall work experience of teachers and promote the healthy development of the education industry.

### Research Shortcomings and Prospects

When conducting research in the field of education, we may find some shortcomings, which may include but are not limited to limitations in research methods, bias in sample selection, insufficient data collection and analysis, and neglect of the complexity of educational phenomena. For example, some studies may overly rely on quantitative analysis and overlook the value of qualitative research in gaining a deeper understanding of educational phenomena. In addition, the research sample may not be diverse enough, resulting in the research results not being widely applicable to different educational backgrounds and cultural environments. Data collection may be limited to specific time periods or regions, and may not fully reflect the dynamic changes and regional differences in educational phenomena. During the analysis process, researchers may have failed to fully consider the multifactorial interaction of educational phenomena, resulting in overly simplified explanations of the results. In response to these shortcomings, future research directions can include: adopting multiple research methods, combining quantitative and qualitative research, to obtain a more comprehensive research perspective; Expand the sample range to ensure the universality and representativeness of research results; Strengthen interdisciplinary cooperation, integrate theories and methods from different fields, in order to explore educational issues more deeply; Utilize modern technological means such as big data analysis and artificial intelligence to improve the efficiency and accuracy of data collection and analysis; Focus on the long-term impact of educational phenomena and cross-cultural comparisons to reveal commonalities and differences across different educational systems and cultural backgrounds. Through these efforts, future research will be able to gain a deeper understanding of educational phenomena and provide more scientific and effective guidance for education policy formulation and practice.

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The authors declared that they have no conflicts of interest regarding this work.

### **AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION**

*Conceptualization:* Zudan Wu.

*Data curation:* Zudan Wu.

*Formal analysis:* Jianping Fu.

*Research:* Zudan Wu.

*Methodology:* Jianping Fu.

*Project management:* Zudan Wu.

*Resources:* Jianping Fu.

*Software:* Jianping Fu.

*Supervision:* Zudan Wu.

*Validation:* Jianping Fu.

*Display:* Jianping Fu.

*Drafting - original draft:* Zudan Wu.

*Writing - proofreading and editing:* Zudan Wu.