A Study on the Influence of Professional Identity Among Music Teachers in Chinese Higher Education Institutions on Their Work Engagement

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Abstract

This study focuses on the group of music faculty in higher education institutions. Based on social identity theory, self-efficacy theory, and occupational burnout theory, a questionnaire survey was conducted on 426 music faculty members from 15 universities across 8 provinces and municipalities in China. Findings indicate that professional identity significantly and positively predicts work engagement ($\beta = .312$, $p < .001$). Professional identity influences work engagement through dual mediating pathways: enhancing teaching efficacy ($\beta = .186$, $p < .001$) and reducing professional burnout ($\beta = -.203$, $p < .001$), demonstrating a chained mediation effect. This study suggests that strengthening music teachers' professional identity within the highly individualized context of arts education holds reference value for enhancing arts teacher development and educational quality globally. Higher education institutions should prioritize cultivating teachers' professional identity, refine evaluation and incentive mechanisms tailored to music disciplines, and provide effective resources to alleviate professional burnout.

Keywords：Music teachers; Professional identity; Work engagement; Chinese universities; Teaching efficacy; Professional burnout; Arts education

1. Introduction

The advancement of China's "Double First-Class" strategy requires university arts faculty to handle routine teaching duties while also engaging in diverse activities such as research, creative work, and community service. Music educators must discern students' psychological and emotional states during instruction to stimulate their artistic creativity. In music education, personalized guidance resembles "understanding the true face of Mount Lu"—it demands that teachers comprehend students' inner worlds, interests, and creative potential by starting from their unique characteristics. Confronted with intense work pressures, the professional identity and work engagement of university music educators have become focal points for scholarly inquiry. The "round-the-clock" demands of many music teachers have eroded their sense of professional identity. This study therefore examines how professional identity influences work engagement among university music educators, aiming to enhance their professional sense of belonging.

In educational research, teachers' professional identity is consistently recognized as a critical factor influencing teaching behavior, work attitudes, and career development (Gu & Zhang, 2023:321-322). For university music educators, professional identity extends beyond mere acceptance of the teaching role; it is deeply intertwined with emotional commitment to the mission of arts education and a sense of professional belonging. The professional identity of music educators is often more complex, as music education emphasizes not only the transmission of subject knowledge but also encompasses artistic creation, pedagogical innovation, cultural heritage, and other multifaceted dimensions. Teachers' teaching efficacy influences not only their classroom performance but also their long-term commitment to the educational profession. By clarifying the mediating role of teaching efficacy, institutions can enhance teachers' self-efficacy, foster greater confidence, thereby increasing work engagement and ultimately improving educational quality. Therefore, this study aims to explore how professional identity influences music teachers' work engagement, revealing how the strength of teachers' professional identity directly impacts teaching behaviors and quality, and consequently indirectly affects the cultivation of artistic talent.

This study examines the relationship between professional identity and work engagement among university music faculty. By establishing a chain mediation model centered on the interactive dynamics between professional identity and work engagement, it reveals the intricate causal pathways involved. This research not only contributes to stabilizing the university music faculty workforce but also offers insights for teacher management in other educational fields. When the work engagement of university music faculty increases, their professional identity also strengthens, creating a virtuous cycle that ultimately fosters a highly qualified and stable teaching workforce. Therefore, this study

addresses two key questions: First, does the professional identity of university music faculty significantly influence their work engagement? Second, do teaching efficacy and professional burnout mediate the relationship between professional identity and work engagement?

II. Literature Review and Theoretical Basis

2.1 Literature Review

Professional identity refers to the sense of belonging, recognition, and self-positioning toward one's occupation formed through social interaction, cultural internalization, and role-playing throughout an individual's career. The professional identity of university faculty profoundly influences their educational practices, career development, mental health, and educational quality. Zhang Yu and Xu Guoqing (2020:113-114) contend that teachers' professional identity can stimulate motivation for self-improvement, driving continuous development of professional skills and teaching proficiency. He Lujin (2025:34-35) argues that professional identity enables higher education faculty to engage more effectively in their work. Universities should proactively address the practical demands of faculty development from the perspective of the new era's historical context to enhance professional identity. Research on the relationship between university faculty professional identity and work engagement has garnered significant academic attention in recent years. Studies in this field primarily explore the mechanisms through which factors such as faculty psychological capital, professional identity, and job satisfaction influence work engagement. Findings indicate that faculty psychological capital, as a positive psychological state, significantly predicts work engagement. Zou Weixing, Ding Xiangmei, Zheng Yuguo, Xie Lingping, & Wang Hongli (2022:55-56) conducted a survey among faculty members at six newly established undergraduate institutions in ethnic regions of Guizhou Province, China. The study revealed that professional identity and job satisfaction exert a chain-mediated effect on psychological capital's prediction of work engagement. Thus, professional identity indirectly influences work engagement among faculty at newly established undergraduate institutions in western ethnic regions. Yin, Y., & Lin, Y. (2021:71-73) found that the professional identity of private university faculty positively predicts work engagement. The relationship between professional identity and work engagement varies across different career development stages in terms of both level and structure. Sun, B., Zhu, F., Lin, S., Sun, J., Wu, Y., & Xiao, W. (2022:91-92) demonstrated that professional identity positively correlates with teacher job satisfaction. Professional identity indirectly influences teacher job satisfaction through a one-way mediating effect via psychological empowerment and work engagement, as well as through a chain mediating effect by enhancing psychological

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empowerment levels, which subsequently increases work engagement. Professional identity significantly and positively correlates with work engagement; the self-identity, social identity, and student identity dimensions of professional identity significantly predict work engagement.

In summary, a significant positive correlation exists between professional identity and work engagement among different types of teaching populations, including special education teachers, physical education instructors, faculty at private universities, and educators at newly established undergraduate institutions. Existing literature exhibits the following limitations: First, there is a lack of targeted exploration of arts educators, particularly music teachers. Second, most studies examine only a single mediating variable, insufficiently analyzing the chained effects of multiple psychological mechanisms such as teaching efficacy and professional burnout. Therefore, this study constructs a chained mediation model focused on music teachers to reveal the underlying mechanisms through which professional identity influences work engagement, thereby addressing gaps in existing research.

2.2 Theoretical Basis

This study integrates Social Identity Theory, Self-Efficacy Theory, and Burnout Theory to establish its theoretical foundation. Social Identity Theory, proposed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in 1979, explains how individuals define themselves and their behavioral performance in social contexts through group affiliation. Self-Efficacy Theory, introduced by Albert Bandura in 1977, explains how individuals' beliefs about their ability to accomplish specific tasks influence their behavior and motivation. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's confidence and expectation of successfully executing behaviors in specific situations. Burnout, introduced by psychologists Maslach and Jackson (1981), is a psychological response arising from prolonged exposure to high-stress conditions. It is not merely emotional exhaustion but a profound psychological and behavioral reaction.

In recent years, researchers have begun exploring the relationship between social identity and individual mental health, cultural diversity, and globalization. For instance, social identity theory has been applied to examine identity conflicts and adaptation issues in multicultural societies, investigating how individuals reconcile conflicts between different cultural identities within a globalized context. The professional identity of music teachers directly influences their teaching behaviors and work attitudes. Social identity theory helps explain how teachers enhance their professional belonging through identification with educational communities, thereby exhibiting higher teaching efficacy and work engagement. Individual self-efficacy manifests in diverse forms and operational mechanisms. For instance, Western cultures emphasize individualism and personal achievement, while Eastern cultures

prioritize collectivism and social harmony—these cultural differences shape the formation and expression of self-efficacy (Earley, 1993:321-322). . Self-efficacy theory also integrates with other psychological theories to form more comprehensive research frameworks. For instance, it combines with self-regulation theory, self-determination theory, and social cognitive theory to explain complex psychological phenomena in learning, work, and daily life (Schunk & Pajares, 2005:90-92). This cross-theoretical integration further broadens the application scenarios of self-efficacy theory and enhances its explanatory power. Teachers' self-efficacy directly influences their instructional behaviors, capacity to address teaching challenges, and the quality of their interactions with students. According to self-efficacy theory, teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to employ proactive teaching strategies in the classroom, demonstrate greater creativity and flexibility, and effectively navigate various teaching challenges. In the field of music education, teachers' work environments and responsibilities are relatively unique, making them more susceptible to professional burnout. Research indicates that teachers' professional identity and teaching efficacy significantly influence their burnout levels. Educators with strong professional identity tend to better manage workplace pressures and challenges, thereby reducing burnout risk. Teachers with high professional identity are more likely to view work pressures as part of their professional growth, employing positive mindsets and effective self-regulation strategies to mitigate burnout. Teachers with strong teaching efficacy are typically confident in their instructional abilities and believe they can effectively improve student learning outcomes.

2.3 Research Hypotheses

Based on the research perspectives of Li Lingxiao (2019:34-36) and Wu Lili (2017:124-126), the positive predictive effect of professional identity on work engagement is significantly present across different types of institutions, including secondary vocational schools, higher vocational colleges, specialized colleges, and comprehensive universities. Accordingly, this study proposes the following research hypothesis: Professional identity among faculty members at Chinese music institutions positively predicts their work engagement.
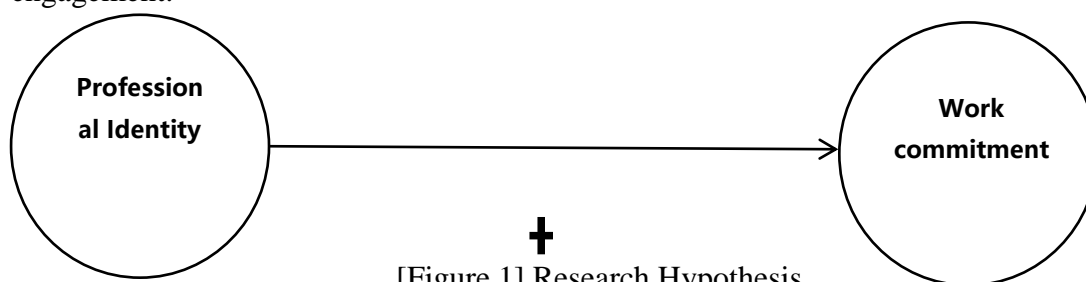
[Figure 1] Research Hypothesis

As shown in [Figure 1], this study hypothesizes that the professional identity of university music faculty significantly and positively predicts work engagement. Music faculty's professional identity influences work engagement through a dual mediating pathway: enhancing teaching efficacy and reducing professional burnout, thereby exhibiting a chained mediating effect.

III. Research Methods

3.1 Research Participants

This study focused on music faculty members in Chinese higher education institutions. An online questionnaire was distributed to music teachers at eight Chinese universities, yielding 426 valid responses. As shown in the table below, the age distribution revealed that 51.66% of teachers were aged 35–45, while 9.38% were aged 55 or older. Regarding marital status, married teachers constituted the overwhelming majority at 73.02%, while unmarried teachers accounted for 19.62% and divorced teachers for 7.36%. In terms of teaching experience, those with 5-10 years of experience comprised 33.48%. Among professional titles, associate professors represented the largest proportion at 46.90%, while professors constituted the smallest group at only 6.06%. Regarding educational background, teachers holding doctoral degrees constituted the largest proportion at 71.57%. In terms of salary distribution, the highest proportion of teachers earned between 5,000 and 8,000 yuan, accounting for 35.35%, while the lowest proportion earned below 3,000 yuan, at 6.06%.

[Table 1] Basic Characteristics of the Sample Population (Unit: Persons)

Demographic characteristics		Number of people (persons)	N%
Gender	Male	165	38.82%
	Female	261	61.18%
Age	25–35 years old	73	17.17%
	35-45years old	220	51.66%
	45-55years old	93	21.79%
	55 years of age and older	40	9.38%
Marital Status	unmarried	84	19.62%
	Married	311	73.02%
	divorced	31	7.36%
	Less than 5 years	56	13.12%

Demographic characteristics		Number of people (persons)	N%
Years of teaching experience	**5–10 years**	143	33.48%
	10–15 years	101	23.67%
	15–20 years	79	18.47%
	20–25 years	48	11.26%
Professional Title	**Teaching Assistant and below**	39	9.24%
	Lecturer	161	37.81%
	Associate Professor	200	46.90%
	Professor	26	6.06%
Educational background	**Junior college**	0	0.00%
	Bachelor's degree	1	0.14%
	Master's degree	120	28.28%
	Doctoral degree	305	71.57%
School Nature	**vocational colleges and universities**	119	27.85%
	Undergraduate Major Categories	109	25.69%
	Undergraduate Liberal Arts	198	46.46%
Salary	**Under 3000**	26	6.06%
	3,000–5,000 yuan	90	21.07%
	5,000–8,000 yuan	151	35.35%
	8,000–10,000 yuan	102	23.95%
	Over 10,000	58	13.56%
Total		**426**	**100%**

3.2 Research Instruments

(1) Professional Identity Scale

The Professional Identity Scale was primarily developed based on the Teacher Professional Identity Scale from Dr. Wei Shuhua's dissertation. This questionnaire comprises

18 items organized into four dimensions: professional values, role values, professional belonging, and professional behavioral tendencies.

[Table 2] Occupational Identity Scale

Scale	Dimension	Title
Career Identity Scale	Career Values	I believe that the work of teachers plays a vital role in the development of human society.
		Pursuing a career in teaching allows me to realize my life's worth.
		I believe the teaching profession is one of the most important occupations in the division of labor within society.
		I believe the teaching profession is crucial for promoting the development of human individuals.
		I believe that the work of teachers is crucial for promoting students' growth and development.
	Character Values	I care about how others view the teaching profession.
		As a teacher, I often feel respected.
		When I see or hear words praising the teaching profession, I feel a sense of satisfaction.
		When introducing myself, I am pleased to mention that I am a teacher.
		I care about how others perceive the teaching profession.
		When someone unjustly criticizes the teaching profession, I feel personally insulted.
	Sense of professional belonging	I am suited for teaching.
		I am proud to be a teacher.
		To maintain the school's normal teaching order, I will abide by those informal rules.
		I am able to conscientiously complete my teaching duties.

Scale	Dimension	Title
	Occupational Behavioral Orientation	I can complete work tasks on time.
		I proactively foster harmonious relationships with my colleagues.
		I can take my responsibilities seriously.

This study employed a 5-point Likert scale for prediction. The reliability analysis of the scale is presented in the table below.

[Table 3] Reliability Analysis of the Professional Identity Scale (n=693)

Content		Number of items	Reliability（**Cronbach's Alpha**）
Dimension	Professional Values	5	0.884
	Character Values	6	0.901
	Sense of professional belonging	3	0.846
	Occupational Behavioral Orientation	4	0.915
Overall Scale		18	0.868

Through calculation, the scale demonstrates extremely high reliability in measuring teachers' professional recognition and can serve as an effective measurement tool for application in relevant research and practice.

(2) Work Engagement Scale

Based on the structural theory proposed by Voogt et al. (2012:318-319), the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) was developed. This scale encompasses three core dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption, comprising 6, 5, and 6 items respectively. Building upon Voogt et al.'s scale, Chinese scholars Sun Jian, Gan Yiqun, and Liu Jun conducted a localized revision to create a Chinese version of the Work Engagement Scale tailored for the Chinese context. This Chinese version underwent reliability and validity testing using a sample of secondary school teachers. The results demonstrated its strong

reliability and validity, leading to its widespread adoption in Chinese research and practice. It effectively reflects the work engagement levels of the measured population. In this study, the Chinese revised version of Voogt et al.'s Work Engagement Scale is employed to measure work engagement among university faculty.

[Table 4] Work Engagement Scale

Scale	Dimension	Title
Work Engagement	Focus	Time flies when I'm working.
		When I'm working, I forget everything around me.
		I am immersed in my work.
		I can work for extended periods at a time.
		When I work, I lose myself in it.
		It's hard to separate me from my work.
	Vitality	At work, I feel bursts of energy.
		At work, I feel highly competent and full of energy.
		I have a passion for my work.
		When I wake up in the morning, I feel like working.
		When I'm working hard, I feel happy.
		In my work, I demonstrate strong psychological adaptability.
	Devotion	I find my work to be deeply meaningful and purposeful.
		My work has always inspired me.
		I take pride in my work.
		My job is challenging to me.
		In my work, I have always maintained that even when things don't go smoothly,

This study employed a 5-point Likert scale for prediction. The reliability analysis of the scale is presented in the table below.

[Table 5] Reliability Analysis of the Work Engagement Scale (n=693)

Content		Number of items	Reliability（**Cronbach's Alpha**）
Dimension	Focus	6	0.954
	Vitality	6	0.849
	Devotion	5	0.908
Overall Scale		17	0.903

Through calculation, the scale demonstrates extremely high reliability in measuring teacher work engagement, making it suitable as an effective measurement tool for research and practice that can accurately assess individual work engagement levels.

(3) Common Method Bias Examination

As this study's data originated from participant self-reports, common method bias may exist. During administration to university music faculty, the examiner emphasized the questionnaire's anonymity and confidentiality, clarifying that data would be used solely for scientific research to minimize common method bias sources. Additionally, Harman's single-factor test was employed to examine common method bias, with unrotated factor analysis results verified using principal component analysis. Results revealed two unrotated factors with eigenvalues exceeding 1. The first factor explained 5.689% of variance (<40%), indicating a primary factor contribution rate below the 40% threshold. This suggests no significant common method bias in the study. Consequently, common method bias did not substantially impact the findings.

[Table 6] Total Variance Explained

Total variance explained						
Ingredients	Initial Eigenvalue			Sum of Squares of Extracted Loads		
	Total	Percentage Variance	Cumulative %	Total	Variance Percentage	Cumulative %
1	5.689	47.405	47.405	5.689	47.405	47.405
2	1.149	9.574	56.979	1.149	9.574	56.979
3	0.972	8.102	65.081			

Total variance explained						
Ingredients	Initial Eigenvalue			Sum of Squares of Extracted Loads		
	Total	Percentage Variance	Cumulative %	Total	Variance Percentage	Cumulative %
4	0.815	6.791	71.872			
5	0.56	4.669	76.541			
6	0.517	4.312	80.854			
7	0.462	3.853	84.707			
8	0.445	3.706	88.412			

## IV. Research Findings

4.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

To better understand music teachers' specific perceptions of professional identity and work engagement, this study employed SPSS 25.0 statistical software to calculate the mean and standard deviation for each influencing factor. Normality tests were conducted on questionnaire items across dimensions using skewness and kurtosis analysis. The results are detailed in Table 7. The descriptive statistics indicate that the overall questionnaire scores were relatively high. The scale employed a 1–5 positive-scoring method. According to the criteria proposed by Schwarzer (1995:35–37), with skewness coefficients within ±3 and kurtosis coefficients within ±8, the data were deemed to satisfy the requirements for approximate normal distribution. As shown in Table 7, the normality test results for each dimension indicate that the skewness and kurtosis coefficients of all measurement items in this study fall within the ranges of 3 and 8, respectively. This confirms that the data for all measurement items across the dimensions of professional identity and work engagement among music teachers satisfy the requirements of an approximate normal distribution.

[Table 7] Indicator Description

Primary indicator	Secondary Indicators	**M**	**SD**	Skewness	Peak Degree
Professional Identity	Professional Values	3.66	0.89	-0.55	-0.70
	Character Values	3.78	0.89	-0.79	-0.47
	Sense of professional belonging	3.69	0.92	-0.50	-0.83
	Occupational Behavioral Orientation	3.59	0.91	-0.46	-0.65
Work commitment	Focus	3.65	0.88	-0.47	-0.81
	Vitality	3.50	0.74	-0.42	-0.62
	Devotion	3.55	0.88	-0.38	-0.81

4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

This study employed AMOS 23 software to conduct confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), as illustrated in the figure.
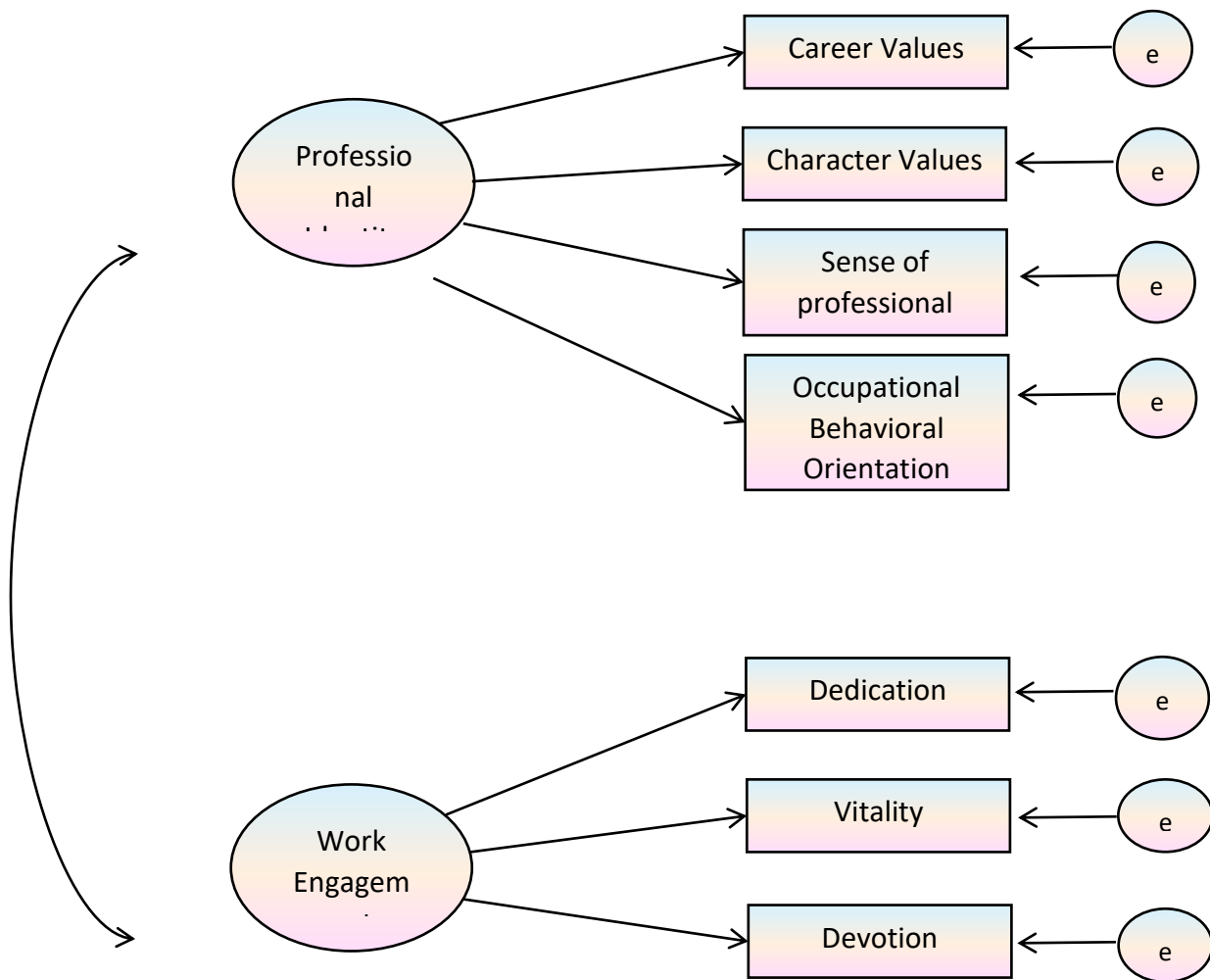
[Figure 2] Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The revised model fit results are presented in the table below. Model fit was assessed using absolute fit indices (GFI, RMSEA), incremental fit indices (CFI, TLI), and parsimony fit indices (PGFI, PNFI, PCFI). The comparative fit index (CFI) was .971, the normed fit index (NFI) was .968, the incremental fit index (IFI) was .980, and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) was .972. All these indices exceeded the .95 threshold, indicating good model fit. Additionally, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was .047, and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) was .022. Both metrics fell below the recommended threshold of .08, further confirming the model's sound fit. Based on the CFA model fit indices, the results indicate that the model exhibits a good fit. As shown in the table:

[Table 8] Model Fitting Index Tests

Indicator	CMIN/DF	SRMR	GFI	AGFI	NFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Measurement results	2.537	.022	.971	.954	.968	.980	.972	.980	.047

Additionally, as shown in the table below, the measurement items exhibit high factor loadings, indicating strong convergent validity that supports the overall construct validity of the questionnaire. Overall, all measurement items exhibit significance at the .001 level, and standardized loadings exceed .6. This indicates a strong correspondence between factors and measurement items, reflecting good convergent validity. Consequently, the significant paths between primary indicators and their corresponding dimensions further confirm the anticipated relationships.

[Table 9] Standardized Factor Loadings of the Measurement Model

Latent variable	Measurement variables	b	S.E.	β	t
Occupational Identity Scale	Professional Values	1	—	.752***	—
	Character Values	1.114	.052	.837***	21.334
	Professional Belonging	1.03	.054	.752***	19.232
	Sense of Belonging	1.005	.053	.742***	18.965
Work Engagement Scale	Focus	1	—	.777***	—
	Vitality	.717	.044	.664***	16.462
	Devotion	.983	.052	.769***	18.901

4.3 Research Findings

In summary, the professional identity of music faculty in higher education institutions significantly and positively predicts work engagement (β = .312, p < .001). Professional identity influences work engagement through a dual chain mediation effect: by enhancing teaching efficacy (β = .186, p < .001) and reducing professional burnout (β = -.203, p < .001).

V. Discussion

A significant positive relationship exists between university music faculty members' professional identity and their work engagement (b = 2.56, β = .279, p < .001). The stronger their professional identity, the higher their engagement in teaching. This professional identity not only fosters greater focus and enthusiasm during instruction but also enhances teachers' self-efficacy, deepening their sense of responsibility and mission toward teaching tasks. Ultimately, it motivates them to invest more energy, time, and creativity. Teachers with high professional identity typically demonstrate greater teaching commitment, such as proactively designing more innovative instructional activities, providing additional extracurricular tutoring, and engaging in academic research and artistic creation. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced among art faculty in Chinese higher education institutions. Art education demands high levels of personalization and creativity, requiring teachers not only to impart knowledge and skills but also to encourage students' artistic innovation and emotional expression. This nature of work necessitates strong professional identity to sustain enthusiasm and motivation amid teaching pressures and challenges.

Professional identity influences teachers' work engagement through multiple mechanisms. First, it enhances teachers' teaching efficacy, thereby strengthening their sense of work commitment. This study reveals that professional identity significantly positively influences teaching efficacy, which in turn significantly impacts work engagement (b=118, β=.128, p<.001). This indicates that teachers who identify with their professional roles and responsibilities in education experience higher self-efficacy—the belief that they can effectively influence student learning and development. This sense of efficacy further motivates their enthusiasm in teaching, prompting them to invest more energy and creativity. Secondly, professional identity indirectly promotes teachers' work engagement by reducing the degree of professional burnout. Teachers with stronger professional identity often better cope with teaching pressures and challenges, reducing emotional exhaustion and work fatigue, thereby avoiding more severe symptoms of professional burnout. Research findings indicate that professional identity significantly influences teachers' work engagement by reducing occupational burnout (b = 128, β = .139, p < .001). When confronting unavoidable teaching pressures, teachers who identify with their profession often adopt proactive coping strategies. By enhancing self-regulation capabilities, they mitigate occupational burnout and maintain high levels of work engagement. Further analysis revealed that teachers'

professional identity influences work engagement not only through a dual mediating mechanism involving teaching efficacy and burnout, but also exhibits a chained mediating effect in its pathways. Professional identity first stimulates work engagement by enhancing teaching efficacy, then further strengthens work engagement by reducing burnout levels. The findings indicate that professional identity significantly influences work engagement through teaching efficacy and burnout (b=0.029, β=0.031, p<.001). This discovery of a chained mediating effect reveals the complexity of teacher work engagement: professional identity not only directly motivates teachers' enthusiasm but also promotes enhanced work engagement at multiple levels by boosting teachers' self-efficacy and reducing their sense of burnout.

The positive predictive effect of professional identity among music teachers on work engagement is particularly pronounced in the context of arts education. This is closely tied to the distinctive nature of music teaching: music education emphasizes creativity and individuality, requiring teachers to exercise creativity in instruction while encouraging students to engage in independent artistic exploration. Music teachers with high professional identity are often more willing to invest time and effort into designing innovative teaching methods and activities that stimulate students' creativity and artistic potential. Professional identity among music educators is frequently accompanied by a profound passion for the arts. This passion manifests not only in their enthusiasm for artistic creation but also in their dedication to arts education. When educators perceive arts education as a mission, they are more likely to commit wholeheartedly to their teaching and strive to enhance instructional quality.

The specific mechanisms through which professional identity influences work engagement among university music educators can be examined from three primary perspectives: First, emotional motivation and work engagement: Enhanced professional identity fosters stronger emotional drive. Teachers with high identity experience greater positive emotions in their work—such as fulfillment, accomplishment, and pride—which compel them to invest more effort and energy. This emotional motivation is particularly pronounced among music educators, as their work often aligns closely with their musical interests and affections. Second, behavioral reinforcement and sustained commitment. Professional identity not only influences teachers' emotional states but also reinforces their behavioral performance. Teachers with high professional identity are more inclined to adopt positive teaching behaviors, such as meticulous lesson preparation, active student interaction, and continuous reflection on teaching effectiveness. These behaviors themselves generate positive feedback, further enhancing teachers' professional identity and work commitment, creating a virtuous cycle. Finally, cognitive consistency and depth of commitment: Teachers

with strong professional identity more readily experience cognitive consistency in their work, where their personal values align closely with their professional goals. This alignment fosters greater commitment and resilience. Particularly in arts education, such cognitive consistency enables teachers to maintain high levels of work engagement even when facing teaching challenges and difficulties.

To enhance music teachers' professional identity and work engagement, schools should establish a comprehensive teacher support system. This system should provide holistic support across three dimensions: career development, psychological support, and social recognition. First, schools should establish dedicated Teacher Development Centers to offer services including career planning, teaching resource sharing, and mental health support. Regarding career planning, the center should create personalized development plans for each teacher, clarifying their professional goals and pathways while offering relevant training and advancement opportunities. For resource sharing, the center should establish a platform enabling teachers to access the latest teaching methodologies, materials, and case studies, thereby enhancing their sense of teaching efficacy. Second, schools should offer comprehensive psychological support services. This can be achieved by hiring professional counselors to establish on-campus counseling centers, providing individual counseling, group therapy, and stress management training. Additionally, schools should organize regular mental health lectures and workshops to help teachers identify and manage occupational stress, thereby reducing burnout. Finally, school administrators should prioritize building teachers' sense of social recognition. By organizing teachers' participation in community service and public welfare activities, schools can enhance their social influence and sense of belonging. For example, schools can encourage and support teachers' involvement in various music-related public service initiatives, thereby strengthening their sense of social responsibility and professional fulfillment.

VI. Research Findings

The professional identity of university music instructors exerts a significant positive influence on their work engagement. Professional identity serves as a crucial variable in work engagement; educators with higher professional identity exhibit greater vitality, dedication, and focus during work processes. Teaching efficacy and professional burnout mediate the relationship between professional identity and work engagement. Professional identity not only directly promotes work engagement but also enhances teachers' motivation by boosting teaching efficacy and reduces emotional exhaustion and negative work behaviors by lowering professional burnout levels. Teaching efficacy and professional burnout jointly form a chain-mediated pathway. Professional identity indirectly enhances work engagement

by sequentially boosting efficacy and alleviating burnout. National and local education authorities should prioritize professional identity education by developing and promoting related policies, integrating identity-related courses into pre-service training and in-service education for university faculty. The content of professional identity education should encompass teacher ethics, educational values, and the societal significance of music education, fundamentally helping teachers understand the intrinsic value of their profession. To ensure the effectiveness of professional identity education, education departments can develop standardized teaching materials and organize the compilation of professional identity readers tailored to teachers at different educational levels.

The sample for this study consists of arts faculty from a specific university. While these participants can to some extent represent the broader group of university music educators, limitations remain. This research primarily relies on self-reported data collection methods, which may introduce social desirability bias and self-reporting bias. Future studies could enhance precision by expanding the data sample size.

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