Factors Influencing Job Burnout Among Vocational Technical College Teachers in Yunnan Province, China

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Abstract

This study examines the impacts of emotional labor, self-resilience, and social support on the mental well-being and job burnout of vocational college instructors in Yunnan Province, China. Utilizing quantitative research design, data were gathered from 420 teachers and analyzed using descriptive statistics, e.g., frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, and inferential statistics, e.g., independent samples t-tests, one-way ANOVA, and multiple linear regression analysis. The findings reveal that there are significant mean differences in job burnout across age groups and teaching subjects, whereas no significant mean differences are observed with respect to gender, marital status, work experience, or job position. Moreover, both dimensions of emotional labor (surface and deep acting), self-resilience (recovery and exploration orientation), and social support (direct and buffering effects) significantly and positively influence job burnout, collectively serving as key predictors for faculty in this context.

Keywords : Emotional labor, Self-resilience, Social support, Job burnout, Vocational college teachers

1.Introduction

In the era of globalization and the knowledge economy, vocational education plays a crucial role in cultivating skilled professionals, with teaching quality closely linked to the stability and well-being of teachers. Vocational school teachers face substantial pressures from teaching, research, and service responsibilities, and prior research identifies emotional labor, self-resilience, and social support as key factors influencing teachers' mental health and job burnout [1]. Ongoing educational reforms and the COVID-19 pandemic have further intensified teachers' workloads. Many teachers report insufficient preparation and resources for curriculum reforms, increased demands for competency-based assessment, interdisciplinary collaboration, and heightened emotional engagement with students and parents [2], [3]. The rapid expansion of technology-enhanced and online teaching has also increased expectations for teachers' digital competencies and continuous adaptation [4].

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Teaching vocational students, who are at a critical stage of academic, psychological, and career development, further increases teachers' instructional and emotional demands. Prolonged exposure to these stressors can lead to job burnout, negatively affecting teachers' well-being, teaching quality, and student development [5]-[8]. From the perspective of conservation of resources theory, burnout occurs when sustained resource investment exceeds recovery over time [9]. Given the emotionally demanding nature of teaching [10], [11], this study examines emotional labor, self-resilience, social support, and job burnout among higher vocational college teachers.

Importantly, these factors may manifest uniquely within the context of the selected vocational colleges compared to other educational settings. The institutions included in this study are characterized by strong industry linkages, practice-oriented curricula, and diverse student populations with varying academic preparedness and career expectations. Such contextual features may intensify teachers' emotional labor through increased student interaction and performance expectations, while simultaneously shaping the availability and effectiveness of social support systems within the organization. Moreover, institutional differences in administrative structure, resource allocation, and regional development levels may influence how teachers develop and utilize self-resilience. Therefore, examining these factors within this specific context provides a more nuanced understanding of job burnout that may not be fully captured in studies conducted in general academic or non-vocational settings.

The findings aim to provide empirical evidence to inform institutional support strategies and policy decisions to mitigate burnout and promote sustainable educational quality.

2.Research Objectives

Based on research background and motivation, this study aims to examine the relationships among emotional labor, self-resilience, social support, and job burnout among vocational college teachers. The specific objectives are as follows:

*2.1*To investigate differences in job burnout among vocational college teachers based on demographic characteristics.

*2.2*To analyze the impact of emotional labor on job burnout among vocational college teachers.

*2.3*To investigate the influence of self-resilience on job burnout among vocational college teachers.

*2.4*To assess the effect of social support on job burnout among vocational college teachers.

*2.5*To determine the combined effects of emotional labor, self-resilience, and social support on job burnout among vocational college teachers.

*2.6*To propose policy and practical recommendations for reducing and preventing job burnout among vocational college teachers.

3.Research Framework

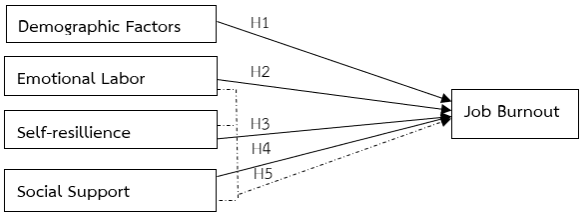


Figure 1 Research Framework

4.Research Hypotheses

H1 : There are significant differences in job burnout among vocational college teachers across different demographic factors.

H2 : Emotional labor has a positive effect on job burnout among vocational college teachers.

H3 : Self-resilience has a positive effect on job burnout among vocational college teachers.

H4 : Social support has a positive effect on job burnout among vocational college teachers.

H5 : Emotional labor, self-resilience, and social support jointly have a positive effect on job burnout among vocational college teachers.

5.Related Concepts and Theories

5.1Demographic Factors

Previous studies indicate that job burnout among vocational college teachers is influenced by multiple demographic and occupational factors. Gender differences show mixed results, with female teachers often reporting higher emotional exhaustion due to greater emotional labor demands, while male teachers face stress related to traditional role expectations [12]. Marital status may both buffer burnout through spousal support and exacerbate it through work–life conflict [13]. Age is associated with career stage, with younger teachers experiencing higher burnout due to limited experience, whereas older teachers benefit from coping strategies but may face adaptation challenges [14].

Burnout across the years of service often follows a U-shaped pattern, being higher among novice and late-career teachers [15]. Current position also matters, as administrative roles increase workload and stress, while leadership positions may offer greater autonomy and support [16]. Additionally, subjects taught influence burnout, with high-stakes or rapidly evolving vocational subjects placing greater pressure on teachers [17]. Overall, the results show variations in job burnout across demographic factors among vocational college teachers, suggesting that demographic characteristics may be associated with differences in burnout levels.

5.2Theory of Emotional Labor

Emotional labor was first introduced by Hochschild [18] as the management of emotions to produce observable expressions in exchange for wages, emphasizing the commercialization of emotions. Ashforth and Humphrey [19] further conceptualized emotional labor as impression management guided by social norms. From the perspective of Conservation of Resources Theory, individuals strive to preserve valued resources, and prolonged emotional regulation without adequate replenishment leads to resource depletion and job burnout [20]. Morris and Feldman [10] defined emotional labor as the effort and control involved in displaying organizationally expected emotions and identified four dimensions: frequency of emotional expression, attention to display rules, diversity of emotional expression, and emotional dissonance. In education, teaching inherently involves emotional labor due to continuous emotional interaction and regulation [21]. Brotheridge and Grandey [22] categorized emotional labor into surface acting and deep acting, a framework widely adopted despite later suggestions to include genuine expression [23].

Subsequent studies refined the concept in educational contexts, defining teacher emotional labor as the regulation and expression of emotions to meet professional norms and goals [24]-[26]. Empirical findings generally indicate a relationship between emotional labor and job burnout, though results are mixed. Surface acting is often positively associated with burnout, while deep acting tends to reduce burnout or buffer its effects [27]-[29]. Conversely, some studies report negative or non-significant relationships, suggesting contextual influences such as

professional training and organizational support [30], [31].

Overall, the literature demonstrates that emotional labor is closely linked to job burnout, with surface acting and deep acting exerting distinct effects. Accordingly, this study adopts these two dimensions to examine their relationships with job burnout among vocational college teachers.

5.3Theory of Self-Resilience

Self-resilience refers to a positive personality trait enabling flexible adaptation and recovery in challenging environments [32], contrasting with ego brittleness and maladaptive stress responses [33]. As a psychological resource, self-resilience helps individuals cope with uncertainty, reduce emotional strain, and sustain functioning, particularly in demanding teaching contexts [34], [35]. Xiang [36] conceptualized self-resilience as comprising recovery orientation and exploration orientation. Recovery orientation emphasizes emotional regulation and stress recovery [37], [38], whereas exploration orientation reflects openness, curiosity, and growth under adversity [39]. Both orientations support adaptation and positive outcomes [40]. In this study, self-resilience is defined as teachers' capacity to recover from difficulties and adapt to instructional challenges, measured using Xiang's scale [41]. Prior research consistently links higher self-resilience to lower burnout and better well-being among teachers [42]-[45].

5.4Theory of Social Support

Social support theory originates from attachment theory, which emphasizes that individuals seek security and stress relief through relationships with significant others [46]. Social support refers to emotional, informational, and tangible assistance obtained from one's social network, including family, colleagues, supervisors, and others, which helps individuals cope with stress and enhance well-being [47]-[49]. House [50] further proposed that social support operates through direct effects, which promote physical and mental health, and buffering effects, which mitigate the negative impact of stress under demanding conditions.

Empirical studies consistently show that higher levels of social support are associated with lower job burnout and greater happiness among teachers. Support from family, colleagues, supervisors, students, and parents has been found to reduce emotional exhaustion, role stress, and work-related strain, while enhancing positive emotions and overall well-being [51]-[54]. Accordingly, this study adopts House's Social Support Theory [50] and defines teacher social support as the emotional, informational, and substantive assistance provided by individuals within a teacher's social network to reduce stress, cope with teaching challenges, and promote well-being.

5.5Theory of Job Burnout

Job burnout is a progressive psychological syndrome commonly observed in helping professions, including teaching. Edelwich and Brodsky [55] conceptualized burnout as a five-stage process—enthusiasm, stagnation, frustration, apathy, and intervention—reflecting the gradual disillusionment between professional ideals and work realities. Similarly, Cherniss [56] described burnout as a three-stage process involving job stress, emotional strain, and defensive coping behaviors.

From a broader perspective, Hassan's ecological model [57] views burnout as the result of interactions between individuals and multiple environmental systems, ranging from personal factors to macro-level social conditions. Buunk's social competence model [58] emphasizes perceived job effectiveness and competence as key determinants of burnout, while Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources Theory [20]

explains burnout as a consequence of sustained resource loss without adequate replenishment.

Empirically, Maslach and Jackson [59] conceptualized job burnout as comprising emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment, forming the widely used Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). Accordingly, this study defines teacher job burnout as a prolonged state of physical and psychological exhaustion, emotional detachment, and diminished professional accomplishment arising from insufficient internal and external resources in the teaching environment.

6.Methodology

This study investigates the effects of emotional labor, self-resilience, and social support on job burnout among vocational college teachers. A conceptual framework and corresponding hypotheses were developed based on an extensive review of prior literature. Data were collected through a structured, pre-tested bilingual questionnaire (English–Chinese) to ensure clarity and cross-language equivalence. Content validity was assessed using the Item–Objective Congruence (IOC) index, evaluated by three experts, with all items exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.50. Reliability analysis demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all constructs exceeding 0.70.

According to the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, Yunnan Province has 56 higher vocational (junior college) institutions, reflecting the scale of vocational education in the region. The target population of this study comprised teachers from six representative vocational technical colleges: Wuxi Vocational Technical College, Zibo Vocational College, Guangdong Light Industry Vocational Technical College, Jinhua Vocational and Technical College, Yellow River Water Conservancy Vocational Technical College, and Shenzhen Information Vocational Technical College. These institutions were selected due to their established reputations, strong industry linkages, and relatively large student enrollments, which make them comparable and influential within the vocational education sector. The total student population across these six colleges was approximately 59,400, based on official institutional data , and was used as a proxy to estimate the overall population size.

Based on Yamane's formula [60] with a 95% confidence level and a sampling error of 0.05, the required sample size was approximately 400. To enhance precision and ensure balanced representation, a total of 420 samples were collected, with 70 respondents from each institution. This study employed a multi-stage random sampling method. First, purposive sampling was used to select the six colleges. Second, a fixed number of respondents was allocated to each institution. Finally, simple random sampling was applied to select individual teachers within each college, ensuring that all participants had an equal probability of selection. This approach enhances the representativeness and reliability of the data for subsequent analysis.

Data were collected via the Wenjuanxing online survey platform. To assess the potential for common method bias, Harman's single-factor test was conducted by performing an exploratory factor analysis on all measurement items. The results indicated that multiple factors emerged, and the first unrotated factor accounted for less than 50% of the total variance, suggesting that common method bias was not a serious concern in this study.

Statistical analyses were conducted using both descriptive and inferential methods. Descriptive statistics included frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Inferential analyses comprised independent-samples t-tests, one-way analysis of

variance (ANOVA), and multiple linear regression to test the proposed hypotheses.

The questionnaire consisted of five main sections. The first section captured demographic characteristics (6 items). The second section measured emotional labor, including surface acting (5 items) and deep acting (5 items). The third section assessed self-resilience, comprising recovery orientation (4 items) and exploration orientation (4 items). The fourth section evaluated social support, including direct effect (10 items) and buffering effect (8 items). The final section measured job burnout across five dimensions—personal factors, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem—with 5 items each, totaling 25 items

7.Research Findings

7.1Descriptive Statistics

The sample comprised 420 vocational college teachers, of whom the majority were male (68.3%). Most respondents were aged between 31 and 40 years (56.2%), and 39.3% were married. In terms of professional background, a substantial proportion reported 6–10 years of teaching experience (38.1%). Administrators, including principals and department heads, constituted a notable segment of the sample, and teaching disciplines were broadly distributed, with Natural Sciences, Social Studies, and Arts most prominently represented. These characteristics suggest that the sample reflects a relatively experienced and professionally diverse group of vocational educators.

Regarding the study variables, teachers reported a moderate-to-high level of emotional labor (M = 3.67, S.D. = 0.52), with surface acting (M = 3.72, S.D. = 0.72) slightly exceeding deep acting (M = 3.63, S.D.= 0.75). Self-resilience was perceived at a moderate level (M= 3.33, S.D.= 0.58), with exploration orientation (M= 3.43, S.D. = 0.58) higher than recovery orientation (M= 3.23, S.D.= 0.97). Similarly, social support was rated at a moderate level (M= 3.28, S.D.= 0.44), with direct support (M= 3.48, S.D.= 0.54) exceeding buffering support (M= 3.08, S.D.= 0.63). Overall, job burnout was also reported at a moderate level (M= 3.43, S.D.= 0.34), indicating that teachers experienced noticeable but not severe levels of occupational strain.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Emotional Labor (N = 420)

Variable	N	M	S.D.	Interpretation
Surface acting	420	3.72	0.72	Agree
Deep acting	420	3.63	0.75	Agree
Overall	420	3.67	0.52	Agree

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of Self-Resilience (N = 420)

Variable	N	M	S.D.	Interpretation
Recovery orientation	420	3.23	0.97	Neutral
Exploration orientation	420	3.43	0.58	Neutral
Overall	420	3.33	0.58	Neutral

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of Social Support (N = 420)

Variable	N	M	S.D.	Interpretation
Direct support	420	3.48	0.54	Neutral
Buffering support	420	3.08	0.63	Neutral
Overall	420	3.28	0.44	Neutral

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics of Job Burnout (N = 420)

Variable	N	M	S.D.	Interpretation
Emotional labor	420	3.67	0.52	Agree
Self-resilience	420	3.33	0.58	Neutral
Social support	420	3.28	0.44	Neutral
Overall	420	3.43	0.34	Neutral

7.2Inferential Statistics

7.2.1Differences in Demographic Factors Result in Differences in Job Burnout

Inferential analysis demonstrated statistically significant mean differences in job burnout across age groups and main teaching subjects among vocational college teachers, as revealed by one-way ANOVA results ($p < .05$). In contrast, no statistically significant mean differences in job burnout were found across gender, marital status, teaching experience, or working position, as indicated by independent-samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA results ($p > .05$).

These findings suggest that job burnout varies according to certain demographic characteristics related to career stage and disciplinary context, rather than personal or positional attributes.

7.2.2The Influence of Emotional Labor on Job Burnout among Vocational College Teachers

Table 5 The Results of Multiple Linear Regression of Dimensions of Emotional Labor (Surface Acting and Deep Acting) on Job Burnout

Predictor Variables	B	SE	β	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.653	.083		19.852	.000***		
X_1 =Surface Acting	.109	.018	.228	5.942	.000***	.913	1.095
X_2 =Deep Acting	.367	.024	.581	15.157	.000***	.913	1.095

Note. $R^2 = .50$, Adjusted $R^2 = .50$, $F(2, 417) = 204.31$, $p < .001$.

B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; β = standardized coefficient.

Tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) were used to assess multicollinearity.

The regression results indicate that emotional labor is a strong predictor of job burnout among vocational college teachers (adjusted R^2 = .50). Both surface acting and deep acting show significant positive associations with burnout. Surface acting has a moderate effect (**β**= .228, p < .001), suggesting that suppressing genuine emotions contributes to increased burnout. Deep acting exhibits a substantially stronger effect (**β**= .581, p < .001), indicating that sustained internal emotional regulation is a major source of resource depletion. Importantly, multicollinearity diagnostics revealed no concerns in the model. The tolerance values for both surface acting and deep acting were high (.913), exceeding the recommended threshold of .10, while the variance inflation factor (VIF) values were low (1.095), well below the conservative cutoff of 5. These results confirm that the independent variables are not highly correlated and that the regression estimates are stable and reliable. Overall, these findings highlight emotional labor—particularly deep acting—as a critical determinant of job burnout in the vocational education context.

7.2.3The Influence of Self-resilience on Job Burnout among Vocational College Teachers

Table 6 The Results of Multiple Linear Regression of Dimensions of Self-resilience (Recovery Orientation and Exploration Orientation) on Job Burnout

Predictor Variables	B	SE	**B**	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.658	.075		22.229	.000***		
X_1 = Recovery Orientation	.148	.012	.419	12.853	.000***	.996	1.004
X_2 = Exploration Orientation	.350	.019	.594	18.224	.000***	.996	1.004

Note. R^2 = .56, Adjusted R^2 = .56, $F(2, 417) = 263.90$, $p < .001$.

B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; **β** = standardized coefficient.

Tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) were used to assess multicollinearity.

Self-resilience significantly predicts job burnout, with the model explaining 56% of the variance (adjusted R^2 = .56). Both recovery orientation and exploration orientation are positively associated with burnout. Recovery orientation shows a moderate effect (**β**= .419, p < .001), while exploration orientation demonstrates a stronger influence (**β**= .594, p < .001). This pattern suggests that although adaptive coping capacities are relevant, growth- and challenge-oriented resilience may intensify burnout under high job demands. Multicollinearity diagnostics indicated no issues in this model. The tolerance values for both recovery orientation and exploration orientation were very high (.996), well above the recommended threshold of .10, and the corresponding VIF values were extremely low (1.004), far below the conservative cutoff of 5. These results confirm that the independent variables are not highly correlated and that the regression coefficients are stable and reliable. Overall, self-resilience-especially exploration orientation-emerges as a salient factor linked to burnout among vocational college teachers.

7.2.4The Influence of Social Support on Job Burnout among Vocational College Teachers

Table 7 The Results of Multiple Linear Regression of Dimensions of Social Support (Direct Effect and Direct Effect) on Job Burnout

Predictor Variables	B	SE	β	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.317	0.083		15.886	.000***		
X_1 = Direct Effect	0.417	0.020	0.648	20.601	.000***	.981	1.020
X_2 = Buffering Effect	0.186	0.017	0.338	10.739	.000***	.981	1.020

Note. R^2 = .60, Adjusted R^2 = .59, $F(2, 417) = 306.53$, $p < .001$.

B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; β = standardized coefficient.

Tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) were used to assess multicollinearity.

Social support exerts a substantial influence on job burnout, with the highest explanatory power among the three models (adjusted R^2 = .59). Both the direct and buffering effects of social support are significant predictors. The direct effect shows a strong association with burnout (β = .648, p < .001), whereas the buffering effect has a weaker but still significant influence (β = .338, p < .001). These results indicate that stable and continuous support plays a more critical role in shaping burnout levels than stress-buffering alone, underscoring the importance of sustained social and organizational support for vocational college teachers. Multicollinearity diagnostics confirmed that there were no concerns in this model. The tolerance values for both the direct effect and buffering effect were high (.981), exceeding the recommended threshold of .10, while the VIF values were low (1.020), well below the conservative cutoff of 5. These findings indicate that the independent variables are not highly correlated and that the regression coefficients are stable and reliable. Overall, social support-particularly its direct effect-emerges as the strongest predictor of job burnout among the three models.

7.2.5The Influence of Emotional Labor, Self-resilience, and Social Support on Job Burnout among Vocational College Teachers

Table 8 The Results of Multiple Linear Regression of Emotional Labor, Self-resilience, and Social Support on Job Burnout

Predictor Variables	B	SE	β	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.969	.079		12.323	.000***		
X_1 = Emotional Labor	.261	.019	.406	13.463	.000***	.981	1.020
X_2 = Self-Resilience	.118	.025	.200	4.702	.000***	.412	2.430
X_3 = Social Support	.316	.033	.404	9.590	.000***	.410	2.438

Note. R^2 = .70, Adjusted R^2 = .70, $F(2, 417) = 260.31$, $p < .001$.

B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; β = standardized coefficient.

Tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) were used to assess multicollinearity.

The multiple linear regression results indicate that emotional labor, self-resilience, and social support significantly predict job burnout among vocational college teachers, with strong explanatory power (adjusted $R^2 = .70$). Emotional labor ($\beta = .406$, $p < .001$) and social support ($\beta = .404$, $p < .001$) exert the strongest positive effects on burnout, while self-resilience also shows a significant but weaker positive influence ($\beta = .200$, $p < .001$). Overall, the findings confirm that these factors jointly contribute substantially to teachers' job burnout. Multicollinearity diagnostics indicated that there were no concerns in the model. The tolerance values ranged from .410 to .981, all exceeding the recommended threshold of .10, while the VIF values ranged from 1.020 to 2.438, remaining well below the conservative cutoff of 5. These results demonstrate that the independent variables are not highly correlated and that the regression estimates are stable and reliable. In comparison, emotional labor and social support emerge as the most influential predictors, exhibiting nearly equal standardized effects, whereas self-resilience plays a complementary but less dominant role in explaining job burnout.

8.Discussion

This study examined the effects of emotional labor, self-resilience, and social support on job burnout among vocational college teachers, drawing on Conservation of Resources Theory and related psychological and organizational frameworks. Overall, the findings provide strong empirical support for the proposed research model and highlight the multifaceted determinants of teacher burnout in the vocational education context.

8.1Demographic Differences in Job Burnout

The results partially support H1, indicating that job burnout among vocational college teachers varies significantly by age and main teaching subject, but not by gender, marital status, years of service, or working position. This pattern suggests that burnout may be associated with differences related to career stage and disciplinary context; however, these relationships should be interpreted with caution and warrant further investigation. Younger teachers may lack coping experience and professional confidence, while teachers in rapidly evolving or high-demand vocational disciplines face greater instructional pressure and role overload. These findings are consistent with prior studies highlighting age-related adaptation processes and subject-specific workload stress in educational settings [14], [15].

8.2Emotional Labor and Job Burnout

Consistent with emotional labor theory and Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, the findings indicate that emotional labor is a significant predictor of job burnout among vocational college teachers. Surface acting was positively associated with burnout, corroborating prior evidence that emotional dissonance resulting from the suppression of genuine emotions accelerates emotional exhaustion and depersonalization [10], [18], [22]. This result aligns with studies in educational contexts showing that surface acting undermines teachers' psychological well-being [27], [28].

Contrary to research suggesting that deep acting mitigates burnout by enhancing emotional congruence [23], [29], the present study found a strong positive relationship between deep acting and burnout. This finding supports contextualized interpretations of emotional labor [30], [31], indicating that when emotional demands are intensive and persistent-as in vocational education under reform and performance pressure-deep acting may constitute sustained emotional investment rather than an adaptive strategy. From a COR perspective [20], prolonged emotional engagement without adequate recovery or organizational support leads to cumulative resource

depletion. Thus, this study extends the emotional labor literature by demonstrating that deep acting is not inherently protective and may contribute to burnout under high-demand institutional conditions.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that deep acting is generally considered healthier than surface acting in the broader literature. This is because deep acting involves modifying internal feelings to align with required emotional expressions, thereby reducing emotional dissonance and promoting a sense of authenticity. In contrast, surface acting relies on suppressing or faking emotions, which creates internal conflict and psychological strain. Therefore, although deep acting showed a positive association with burnout in this study, it may still represent a comparatively less harmful strategy than surface acting. The current findings suggest that under conditions of excessive and prolonged emotional demands, even this relatively adaptive strategy can lead to resource depletion and burnout.

8.3Self-Resilience and Job Burnout

Self-resilience was found to be significantly associated with job burnout, with exploration orientation exerting a stronger influence than recovery orientation. While prior studies have emphasized resilience as a protective factor against burnout [34], [42], [45], the present findings suggest that resilience may operate differently in highly demanding vocational contexts. Xiang conceptualization of self-resilience [41] as an active, growth-oriented trait provides a useful interpretive lens. Teachers with strong exploration orientation are more likely to embrace change, innovation, and additional responsibilities, particularly during periods of curriculum reform and technological transition. However, as noted by Garner [35] and Makateng [44], high personal engagement and professional commitment can paradoxically increase burnout risk when institutional support is insufficient. From a COR perspective, resilient teachers may continuously invest internal resources to meet external demands, thereby increasing their exposure to resource loss. This finding contributes to resilience research by highlighting that resilience without structural support may intensify, rather than alleviate, burnout.

8.4Social Support and Job Burnout

The results confirm that social support is a strong predictor of job burnout, with the direct effect of support outweighing its buffering function. This finding is consistent with House's social support model [50], which emphasizes that ongoing emotional, informational, and instrumental support exerts a direct influence on well-being. Prior research has consistently shown that support from colleagues, supervisors, and family reduces emotional exhaustion and enhances teachers' psychological health [51]-[54]. The stronger direct effect observed in this study suggests that stable and continuous support is more influential than situational stress buffering alone. This aligns with Cobb [49] argument that perceived availability and quality of support constitute essential psychological resources. In vocational colleges, where teaching tasks are complex and closely linked to labor market demands, institutionalized support mechanisms appear particularly critical for sustaining teacher well-being.

It is important to note that the positive relationship observed between social support and job burnout in this study may be attributed to the measurement design. Specifically, the items used to assess social support were negatively worded, such that higher scores reflect lower levels of perceived support. As a result, the positive regression coefficients should be interpreted as indicating that reduced social support is associated with higher levels of burnout, which is consistent with existing theoretical and empirical evidence.

8.5 Integrated Effects of Emotional Labor, Self-Resilience, and Social Support

The combined effects of emotional labor, self-resilience, and social support on job burnout provide strong support for an integrated, resource-based understanding of teacher burnout. In line with COR Theory [20] and ecological models of burnout [57], [59], the findings indicate that burnout emerges from the interaction between emotional demands, individual coping resources, and social–organizational support systems.

Emotional labor represents a persistent resource drain, self-resilience reflects internal resource investment, and social support functions as an external replenishing mechanism. When emotional demands are high and resilient teachers continuously invest in personal resources without sufficient social or institutional support, burnout becomes more likely. This integrative result advances the burnout literature by empirically validating a multidimensional framework in the vocational education context and underscores the limitations of interventions that focus exclusively on individual coping strategies.

It should be noted that the positive relationships observed between the three independent variables (emotional labor, self-resilience, and social support) and job burnout may be influenced by the measurement design. Specifically, several items for the independent variables were negatively worded, such that higher scores reflect higher levels of strain (e.g., greater emotional demands, lower effective resilience, or reduced perceived support), whereas job burnout was measured in a positive direction, with higher scores indicating greater burnout. Consequently, the positive regression coefficients should be interpreted as indicating that higher levels of strain or lower effective resources are associated with increased burnout. This interpretation is consistent with the theoretical expectation that insufficient resources and sustained demands contribute to burnout.

9.Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated the determinants of job burnout among vocational college teachers based on data collected from 420 respondents. Overall, the results indicate that teachers experience moderate levels of emotional labor, self-resilience, social support, and job burnout, suggesting that burnout is a salient occupational issue influenced by multiple interacting factors rather than an extreme or isolated problem. Significant differences in job burnout were found across age groups and teaching disciplines, whereas gender, marital status, years of service, and working position showed no significant effects. These findings suggest that burnout among vocational college teachers is more strongly associated with career stage and disciplinary demands than with demographic or administrative characteristics.

Further analysis demonstrates that emotional labor, self-resilience orientations, and social support are significant predictors of job burnout. Emotional labor shows a strong positive relationship with burnout, highlighting the cumulative resource costs of sustained emotional regulation in teaching. Both recovery and exploration orientations of self-resilience are positively associated with burnout, with exploration orientation exerting a stronger influence. This indicates that teachers who actively engage in change, innovation, and professional growth may experience greater resource depletion when job demands are high. In addition, social support exhibits both direct and buffering effects on burnout, confirming its importance as an external resource in sustaining teachers' psychological well-being.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be proposed. Vocational colleges should place greater emphasis on managing teachers' emotional labor by providing training in emotional regulation, boundary setting, and psychological recovery. Resilience development initiatives should be accompanied by appropriate workload management

and recovery mechanisms to prevent highly engaged teachers from experiencing excessive resource depletion. Moreover, social support should be institutionalized through supportive leadership practices, peer mentoring, and collaborative work environments to ensure consistent access to emotional and instrumental assistance. At the policy level, teacher burnout should be recognized as a systemic organizational issue, and staffing policies, evaluation systems, and reform implementation strategies should be aligned with teachers' emotional and psychological capacities to promote the sustainable development of vocational education.

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