

Enhancing the Ideological Standing of Medical Teachers: Insights and Solutions for Educational Excellence

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Abstract: *The primary component that significantly impacts the school's overall development trajectory, teaching quality, and student training quality is the ideological state of medical professors. Specifically, its impact is seen in three different domains. First and foremost, the primary factor influencing the quality of instruction is the mental state of the instructor, which directly influences their attitudes, strategies, and outcomes. Second, the academic environment on campus and teachers' mental health are strongly related to their capacity to carry out scientific research and innovation. Furthermore, a positive attitude can rekindle teachers' enthusiasm for their work, enhancing instruction and allowing pupils a more enjoyable educational experience. This study, which uses a quantitative research approach and is based on a questionnaire survey on the ideological state of teachers in a medical college in Shandong Province, China, finds that the school's teaching staff exhibits a good ideological style. Nonetheless, a few issues with medical professors' ideological stance are also worth mentioning. In light of this, this study uses the ideological standing of instructors at a Shandong Province medical college as an example to propose several methods for enhancing and fortifying teachers' ideological standing. These countermeasures are crucial for developing exceptional medical talent, enhancing the general standard of medical education, and encouraging the long-term growth of medical specialties.*

Keywords: medical teachers, ideological state, quality of teaching, medical education

1. Introduction

Medical education is an important cornerstone of the development of health care. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, medical workers trained in medical education have played an important role. However, at the same time, faced with new challenges posed by the epidemic, China's medical education still needs to optimize the structure of talent training, improve the quality of training, and improve the ability of medical innovation (Chinese People's Government, 2020). College teachers are the key and core elements to solving these problems, affecting the quality of college personnel training (Jia et al., 2023).

Since the 21st century, research on medical education has mainly included curriculum and teaching problems, skills and attitudes related to professional structure, personal characteristics of medical students, and evaluation of students and residents. Still, there is little research on the state of mind of teachers in medical colleges (Regehr, 2004). The Implementation Outline for the Construction of Civic Morality in the New Era issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council points out that: Strengthen the construction

of teachers' ethics and style; guide teachers to establish themselves by virtue; learn by virtue; teach by virtue; and be good teachers with ideals and beliefs, moral sentiments, solid knowledge, and benevolence (Xinhua News Agency, n.d.). It provides a criterion for teachers' ideological and political work in the new era. Colleges and universities are the focus of intellectuals.

Teachers' ideological and political level is not only the basis for teachers' development but also related to the growth of college students and the sustainable development of national higher education in the new era (Cao, 2020). It is of great and far-reaching significance to comprehensively understand the ideological status of college teachers and effectively strengthen the construction of college teachers to improve the quality of education and promote the all-round development of students (Wang, 2015). Employing a questionnaire survey, this study aims to investigate the ideological status of teachers in a medical university (BZMU) in Shandong Province, China, further find out the ideological status of teachers, and then propose countermeasures to strengthen and improve the ideological and political work of medical teachers. This study is of great significance for understanding medical teachers' mental health and ideological dynamics, promoting their physical and mental health, and improving the quality of education.

The survey results show that BZMU teachers' ideological state is generally good. Most teachers have a firm political stance, actively carry out ideological and political learning, and adhere to the fundamental task of educating people by virtue. They are confident in the university's future development and are positive about the importance of teaching and educating students. However, the survey also revealed some concerns and challenges teachers face, such as financial pressure, workload, difficulties in career development, and the need for more humanistic care.

2. Purpose of Research

This study aims to comprehensively investigate the mental state of teachers in a medical university (BZMU) in Shandong Province, China, analyze the main factors affecting the mental state of teachers and put forward feasible countermeasures and suggestions based on the research results to improve the mental health level and professional identity of teachers and promote their career development. The specific purpose of this study includes the following aspects:

A comprehensive understanding of teachers' ideological status. Through the research on the ideological state of BZMU teachers in different disciplines, different professional titles, and different career development stages, their specific performance in teaching pressure, job burnout, mental health, career satisfaction, and other aspects can be deeply understood.

- O1: To comprehensively understand the ideological status of medical teachers. Through the research on the ideological state of BZMU teachers in different disciplines, different professional titles, and different career development stages, their specific performance in teaching pressure, job burnout, mental health, career satisfaction, and other aspects can be deeply understood.
- O2: To explore the main factors affecting teachers' ideological states. Through data analysis and theoretical discussion, the core factors affecting teachers' state of mind are explored, including but not limited to school policy support, teaching task burden,

scientific research pressure, career development opportunities, collaboration between teachers, and personal psychological adaptability.

- O3: To put forward the suggestions of improving the teachers' state of mind. The paper provides suggestions for educational administrators and decision-makers based on the investigation results and the analysis of influencing factors.

3. Research Questions

- Q1: What is the ideological status of medical teachers?
- Q2: What are the main factors affecting teachers' state of mind?
- Q3: What are the suggestions for improving teachers' state of mind?

4. Literature Review

The core role of medical teachers in the education system of medical colleges and universities cannot be ignored. They are the imparts of medical knowledge and the important guides of students' medical ethics, professional quality, and personality. Effective medical teaching is very important to train high-quality doctors. The ideological and political quality and moral sentiment of medical teachers have an important demonstration and guiding effect on the healthy growth of students. They influence students imperceptibly through words and deeds, cultivate students' medical ethics, and make them have noble and good professional ethics (Singh et al., 2013).

The outbreak of COVID-19, the rise of blended teaching models, and the increased burden of teaching have combined to pose significant challenges to the state of mind of teachers (Ozamiz-Etxebarria et al., 2021). Research shows that the intensification of teachers' anxiety is closely related to stress and poor communication, and there is a significant positive correlation between stress and anxiety (Pressley et al., 2021). In this context, educational technology, as a key factor in improving the quality of teaching, has become increasingly important. However, the effective integration of technology into teaching requires teachers to acquire corresponding skills, which is a pressure for many teachers (Fernández-Batanero et al., 2021).

There is widespread concern in the world about the high-pressure teachers face. They influence students imperceptibly through words and deeds, cultivate students' medical ethics, and enable them to have noble and good professional ethics and job burnout. The survey found that multiple factors such as individual emotional regulation ability, subjective well-being, workload, and working environment would all impact teachers' work pressure and burnout and affect their psychological state (Carroll et al., 2022). The widespread stress among teachers and the negative emotions it causes, such as fatigue and depression, have become a phenomenon that cannot be ignored. It is worth noting that the stress level of teachers is also closely related to the level of care and support provided by the school (Ramberg et al., 2020). From the perspective of individual factors, the professional pressure of teachers may come from their characteristics, such as age, gender, educational background, and teachers' cognition of their professional ability (Wu & Hu, 2023). In terms of students, most of the teachers' pressure is to deal with the differences in students' abilities, students' safety problems, and students' boredom (Xu, 2017). The current research shows that the overall level of occupational stress teachers bear is relatively high, and excessive occupational stress will not only affect teachers' own psychological and physical health, reduce teaching effectiveness, and affect their development but also adversely affect students' learning and healthy growth (Wu & Hu, 2023).

The research shows that strengthening teachers' mental health education is helpful to improve teachers' self-efficacy (Xu, 2017). After receiving mental health education, teachers can learn self-regulation methods, carry out various activities beneficial to physical and mental development in a combination of work and rest, face up to the double-sided nature of pressure on individuals, avoid the adverse effects of pressure, learn to use the incentive effect brought by pressure, and cultivate a positive attitude (Wang et al., 2018). At the school level, a scientific and reasonable management evaluation system and implementation of humanized management should be built.

For teacher evaluation results, we can learn from the methods of presenting the evaluation results of new teacher evaluation systems abroad in China and adopt the method of combining descriptive evaluation and grade evaluation. Descriptive evaluation can provide key information for teacher development, and grade evaluation can reduce the pressure of reward and punishment evaluation (Zhang et al., 2021). In addition, the professional support given by the instructors can help the teachers manage the student behavior and reduce the teaching pressure. The school atmosphere, the emotional support from the people around them, and the support from policies and leaders strongly support teachers in carrying out their work (Xie et al., 2021).

5. Methodology

Theoretical Framework

As shown in Figure 1, the theoretical framework of this paper is constructed from four aspects: individual teacher, student factor, school factor, and social factor. The theory of teachers' aspect is self-efficacy theory (Self-Efficacy Theory) (Lippke, 2020). Self-efficacy is the teacher's confidence in achieving the expected results in the teaching process. Teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors in teaching, overcome challenges, and achieve success. The theory of students' aspect is an expectation-value theory (Shang et al., 2023). The theory holds that individual motivation comes from the expectation of success and the evaluation of the value of the task. For teachers, students' learning attitudes and performance are important sources of motivation. If teachers expect students to achieve good learning outcomes and believe their learning progress is valuable to them, their state of mind will be more positive. The school side is the organizational justice theory (Wolfe & Lawson, 2020). Organizational justice theory emphasizes individual perceptions of fairness in organizations, including distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactive justice. Teachers' perception of fairness to the school system and management directly affects their job satisfaction, emotional identification, and work attitude. Social factors are social support theory (Baum et al., 2020). The social support theory holds that an individual's support (from colleagues, leaders, family, and society) in work and life impacts his mental health and state of mind. Social support can relieve stress at work and improve individual emotional health.

The interrelation of the four theories:

- T1: Interaction of personal factors and student factors. Teachers' self-efficacy directly affects their expectations of students, and students' performance will also feedback to teachers' self-efficacy. If the students perform well, the teacher's sense of efficacy will be enhanced, and the state of mind will be more positive. On the contrary, students' poor performance may weaken teachers' self-efficacy and lead to a depressed state of mind.
- T2: The interaction of individual factors and school factors. Teachers' sense of self-efficacy is closely related to their sense of justice in school organization. A just school environment (such as a fair promotion and reward system) can enhance teachers' self-

efficacy and keep their state of mind positive. On the other hand, the perceived unfairness may weaken the teacher's sense of efficacy and decrease their work enthusiasm.

- T3: The interaction between student factors and school factors. School management systems and resource allocation directly affect students' performance and teachers' states of mind. Supportive policies in universities (such as providing more teaching resources and reducing the burden on teachers) are helpful in improving students' learning environment and performance, thereby raising teachers' expectations of students and indirectly influencing their state of mind.
- T4: The interaction of social factors with the other three factors. Social support acts as a buffer in all of these factors. Teachers' state of mind can be improved if they receive emotional and practical support from society, colleagues, and leaders when they encounter work stress or perceived injustice. Even in the face of poor student performance or low self-efficacy, social support can help teachers stay positive.

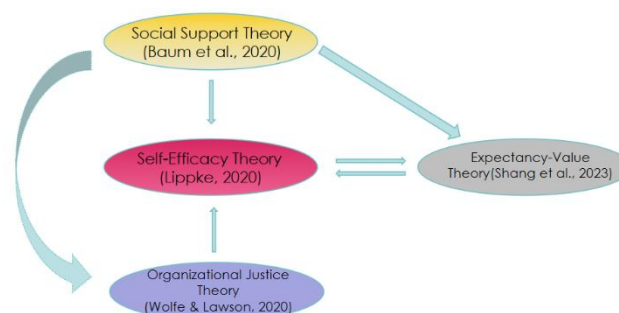


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Research Design

This study mainly used the literature research method and questionnaire method to investigate the teachers in BZMU, obtain the ideological state of the teachers in this school, analyze the main factors affecting the ideological state of the teachers, and put forward feasible suggestions based on the research results.

Questionnaire Content

This new questionnaire has been independently designed based on the existing literature and questionnaires. The questionnaire covered various topics: political beliefs, policy awareness, career development, teaching philosophy, personal values, religious views, and work challenges. After its draft was consulted with researchers, the questionnaire was revisited to guarantee reliability.

Respondents

BZMU is a full-time general undergraduate university in Shandong Province. It is now a famous application-oriented talents training university in Shandong Province, an application-oriented undergraduate university in Shandong Province, a provincial and municipal co-construction university in Shandong Province, and a doctoral degree-granting project construction unit in Shandong Province. The university has 34 undergraduate programs, including clinical medicine, stomatology, nursing, pediatrics, traditional Chinese medicine, pharmacy, rehabilitation therapy, biopharmaceutical, and intelligent medical engineering, with 16,757 full-time students and 11,350 faculty and medical staff (including 5 directly affiliated hospitals) (BZMU, n.d.). The diverse distribution of disciplines and the huge faculty provide a broad sample basis for the study of the state of mind of medical college teachers, which has certain representativeness and typicality.

Survey Method

This study was conducted by random sampling. Five hundred forty-three questionnaires were sent out as questionnaire stars, and 441 were recovered, with a recovery rate of 81%. The sample included teachers from different age groups, professional levels, and positions to ensure diversity and representation of the data. The data analysis of this questionnaire is a visual statistical analysis.

6. Findings

This study investigated the ideological and professional status of BZMU teachers in Shandong Province using a questionnaire. The main findings of this study are as follows:

Political and ideological beliefs: As shown in Figure 2, the teachers interviewed strongly aligned with China's political leadership and ideological principles. 97.1% of respondents strongly agreed with the leadership of the Communist Party of China. This reflects a generally high level of political engagement and awareness among teachers.

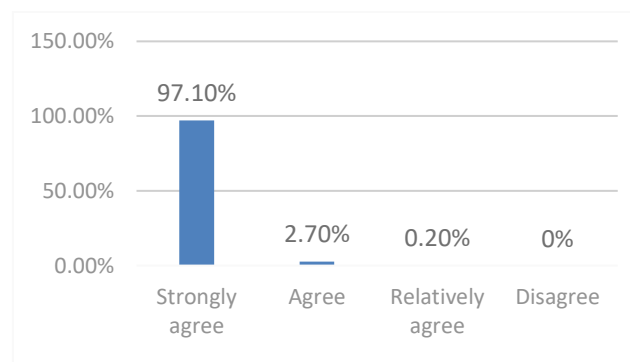


Figure 2: Identification with the leadership of the Communist Party of China

However, 3.6% of respondents believe religious activities should be allowed on campus, suggesting little ideological divide, as shown in Figure 3. According to Decree No. 21 of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China on the Administration of Students in Ordinary Institutions of Higher Learning, "Universities shall adhere to the principle of separating education from religion, and no organization or individual shall conduct religious activities in universities." (Government of the People's Republic of China, n.d.). This suggests that while overall ideology is in good shape, some areas may require further attention to ensure faculty ideological consistency.

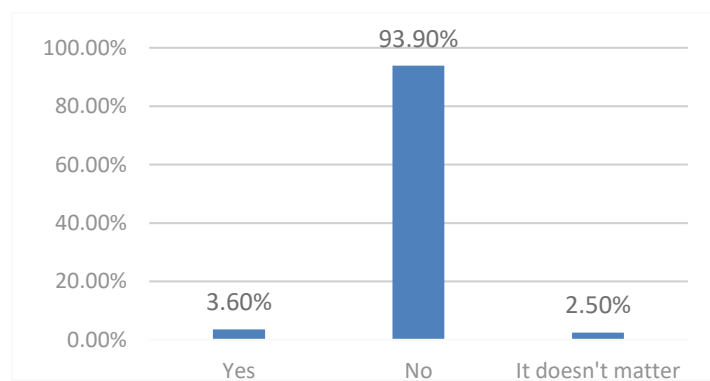


Figure 3: Whether religion can be spread and religious activities carried out on campus

Professional development and educational roles: A key aspect of a teacher's professional attitude is their perception of teaching responsibility. Figure 4 shows that 96.1% of the respondents believe that teaching is about imparting professional knowledge and teaching students life skills and moral values. This demonstrates a holistic approach to education in which teachers see their role as contributing not only to the academic growth of students but also to their personal development.

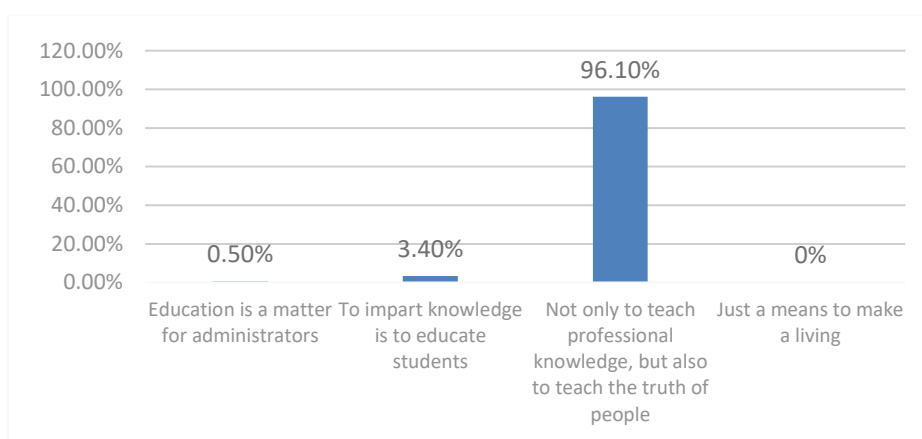


Figure 4: Understanding of teaching and educating people

In addition, the survey highlighted teachers' concern for professional development. Figure 5 shows that 97.5% of respondents believe continuous professional development is essential to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, the findings also reveal some challenges in this field, such as insufficient professional advancement and training opportunities.

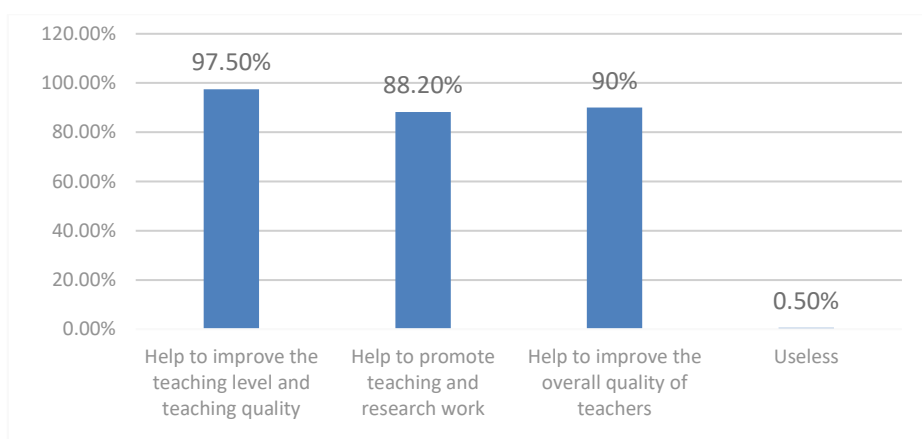


Figure 5: The meaning of strengthening teachers' professional learning

Challenges faced by teachers: After investigation, it was found that teachers faced some challenges. As shown in Figure 6, the most important questions are as follows.

- **Work stress:** 49.4% of respondents said heavy workloads were their main job challenge.
- **Career development:** 43.1% of respondents in the survey said they had difficulties in job promotion and career development, especially in administrative positions and professional and technical positions.
- **Personal life stress:** Teachers also reported significant stressors in their personal lives. The biggest concern is work-life balance. 51.2% of respondents said the concern was related to their child's development.

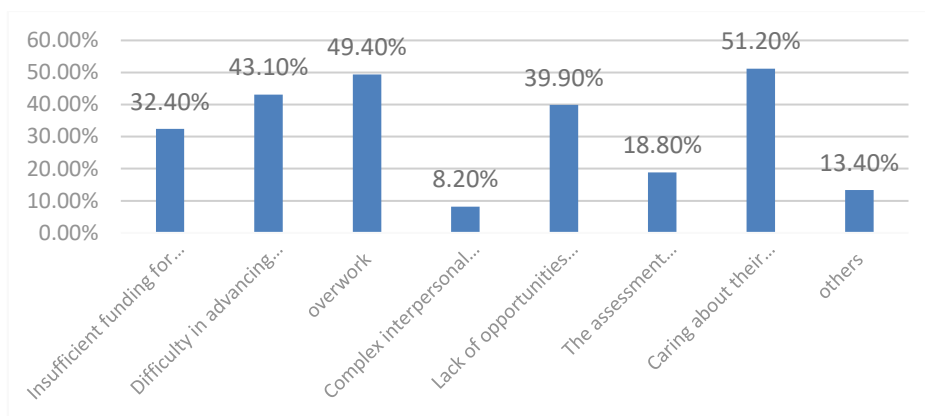


Figure 6: The main problem that medical teachers face at present

Faculty Morale and Attitudes Toward the Future: Figure 7 shows that despite facing some challenges, teachers generally showed a positive attitude toward their personal and professional futures. 96.1% of the respondents expressed confidence in the development prospects of their universities. 83.9% of respondents are committed to deepening their expertise and progressing in their current roles. However, 2.3% of respondents are dissatisfied with their current lives, indicating a need for more personalized support and engagement.

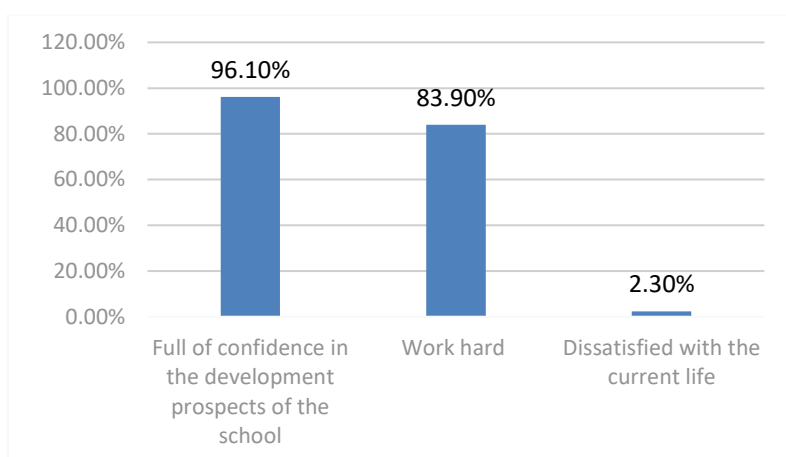


Figure 7: The current state of medical teachers

Ethical Concerns and Faculty Integrity: The survey also revealed some ethical problems within the faculty. Figure 8 shows that 60.1% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with certain colleagues, citing issues such as prioritizing personal financial interests and neglecting academic duties. These findings suggest that while teachers generally maintain high professional and ethical standards, some obvious ethical issues need to be addressed to ensure a cohesive and healthy academic environment.

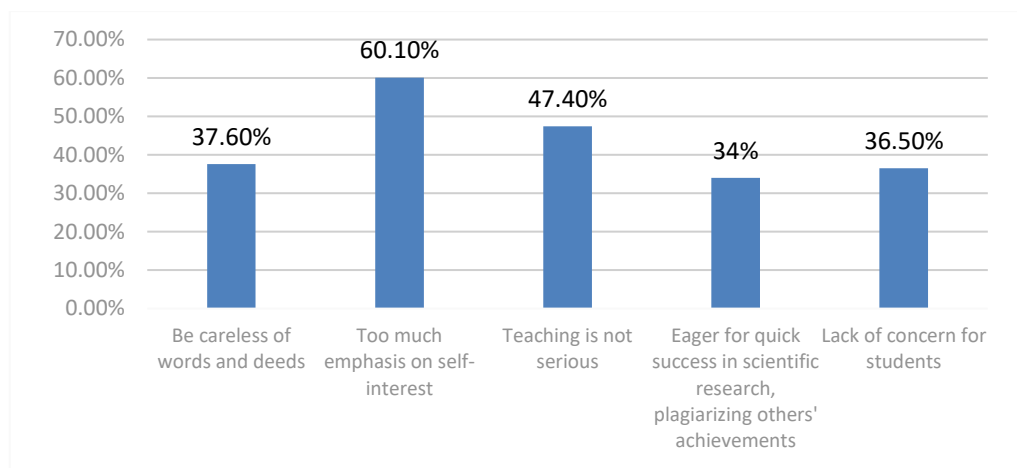


Figure 8: What are the medical teachers most dissatisfied with

The survey results show that the faculty is largely aligned with the political and ideological standards set by the Chinese state, committed to professional development, and generally satisfied with institutional policies. However, teachers' workload, career development, and work-life balance have some effects on teachers' states of mind. In addition, the problem of the professional ethics of a few teachers also highlights the necessity of strengthening the construction of teachers' professional ethics.

This study found that 97.1% of the respondents showed a high degree of identification with the leadership of the Communist Party of China, which is consistent with previous studies; that is, Chinese university teachers have a firm political stance and generally show a positive attitude (Chen et al., 2022). However, in this study, a small number of teachers have ideological biases (such as attitudes toward religion), indicating the need to strengthen further the ideological and political education of college teachers, which is consistent with the challenges in ideological and political work in colleges and universities pointed out by some studies (Ke, 2009). Regarding career development pressure and job pressure, this study found that 43.1% of teachers thought that promotion was difficult, and 49.4% of teachers felt overburdened with work, which was related to teachers' social role and self-concept, indicating that teachers' career development limitation and high pressure may affect their career self-concept. In addition, in a demanding teaching and research environment, teachers' overall ability development is also important.

7. Discussion

Based on the questionnaire survey results, this paper discusses the influence mechanism of teachers' ideological states from four aspects: individual teachers, students, universities, and society.

Personal factors of teachers: Teachers' self-efficacy directly influences their state of mind. According to the questionnaire, most teachers have confidence in their teaching competencies and show a high sense of professional identity. However, 43.1% of teachers have difficulty in career promotion. The limited promotion opportunities have a negative impact on their self-efficacy, and some teachers, therefore, show job burnout and ideological fluctuation.

Student factors: Students' learning attitude and performance are important sources of motivation for teachers. 96.1% of teachers believe that teaching is about imparting knowledge and cultivating students' moral character, which shows that teachers attach great importance to

the value of their teaching tasks. Students' learning performance and progress can significantly motivate teachers to maintain a positive state of mind in their work.

School-related factors: School management system and teachers' perception of organizational justice significantly affect their state of mind. According to the results of the questionnaire, 49.4% of teachers think that the work burden is too heavy, and 43.1% of teachers feel that promotion is difficult, which indicates that teachers are dissatisfied with the fairness of school distribution. In addition, 60.1% of teachers believe that some colleagues focus too much on personal gain and neglect academic responsibility, reflecting teachers' concerns about fairness in interactions. These feelings of unfairness reduce teachers' emotional identification with the school and affect their job satisfaction and state of mind.

Therefore, the school must improve the management system to ensure fairness in evaluating professional titles and job assignments to enhance teachers' working motivation and ideological stability.

Social factors: The social support teachers receive impacts their mental health and state of mind. According to the survey, 53.7% of teachers feel great pressure from work, and 51.2% are worried about the growth and development of their children. In addition, some teachers are also under pressure in terms of income, housing, and supporting the elderly. Nevertheless, 79.8% of teachers mainly rely on family members and friends for support when facing confusion, indicating that social support systems play an important role in relieving teachers' stress. However, universities have limited support in providing teachers with mental health services and work-life balance. Therefore, universities and society need to provide teachers with a more comprehensive support system to help them balance career and life, thereby improving their state of mind.

Through the analysis of individual teachers, students, universities, and society, this study reveals the multi-dimensional factors that affect teachers' states of mind. Self-efficacy, students' performance, school fairness, and social support all determine teachers' career satisfaction and state of mind. In response to these factors, universities should further improve management and support systems to help teachers achieve better career development and life balance.

From the aspects of teachers: Teachers' development planning should be strengthened. According to the needs of teachers at different stages of development, personalized teacher professional development implementation plans are formulated to promote the improvement of teachers' teaching and scientific research skills. Provide career development planning counseling to help teachers clarify their career goals and enhance their self-efficacy.

Enhance teachers' professional happiness and sense of gain. Encourage teachers to participate in school decision-making, establish teachers' sense of ownership, and enhance role cognition and mission identification. Mental health support and career development counseling help teachers balance work-life stress.

From the aspects of students: Students should be motivated to study actively. Hold academically related lectures, forums, and knowledge competitions to stimulate students' interest in learning. To commend outstanding students, set a model for learning, and create a model atmosphere for upward learning. Strengthen the construction of the style of study. Provide students with a good learning environment and ensure that the library, laboratories,

and other learning places are well equipped. Strictly implement the attendance system to ensure students' attendance on time and reduce lateness and absenteeism in class.

From the universities' perspectives, the management and support systems should be improved. Strengthen the top-level teacher training work design and conduct regular investigations and research on teachers' ideological and political work. Improve the management and service mechanisms and provide development platforms, resources, and logistics support for teachers. Cultural education should be promoted. The campus civilization level and the campus's spiritual and cultural life should be enhanced. The educational function of positive guidance and negative punishment of teachers' ethics should be strengthened, creating a cultural atmosphere of upholding virtues and being good.

From the aspects of society: The reform of education, teaching, and research management should be deepened. Medical universities should establish close cooperative relations with all sectors of society to jointly promote education and teaching reform and scientific research and innovation. The teachers should be encouraged to participate in social services and scientific research projects to enhance their social influence and practical ability. The social support should be enhanced. Medical universities should strive for support and funding from all walks of life and provide the school with more educational resources and research funds. The universities should strengthen communication and cooperation with parents and pay attention to the growth and development of students. Through implementing these measures, comprehensive efforts can be made from the four aspects of teachers, students, universities, and society to jointly improve teachers' career satisfaction and state of mind and promote the overall development and progress of the universities.

8. Implications of the Study

The significance of this study lies in the in-depth analysis of the multiple factors affecting the ideological state of medical teachers. It provides a basis for the practice and policy formulation of ideological and political education, career development support, and humanistic care for medical teachers. By optimizing the teacher management mechanism, strengthening ideological and political education, and providing an effective support system, the ideological state and work enthusiasm of medical teachers can be comprehensively improved, which is conducive to the improvement of the quality of medical education and the overall development of the medical teacher teams.

9. Limitations of the Study

The study also has some limitations. First, the sample was limited to a medical university in Shandong Province, China, which failed to cover the teachers in medical universities throughout the country. The regional size of the sample limited the universality of the results. Second, although the questionnaire design covers a wide range of teachers' states of mind, the design of some questions may have subjective biases, especially in the survey about ideology; respondents may choose more "safe" answers out of the social expectation effect. In addition, the lack of qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews also limits the in-depth understanding of teachers' state of mind.

10. Further Research

Under the background of China's medical education reform, the ideological state of teachers is not invariable, and the ideological state of teachers in different professional stages is also different. For the possible direction of future research, the sample scope can be expanded to cover different provinces and different types of university teachers to improve the external validity of the research results. In addition, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews with teachers or focus group discussions, will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of teachers' states of mind's intrinsic motivation and impact. Finally, because of the special needs of teachers in the context of blended teaching, future research should also explore how to improve teachers' ideological enthusiasm and teaching competencies through teaching competencies enhancement programs and career development support policies.

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