

# Empowering Educators: Exploring the Link Between Teacher Leadership and Self-Efficacy at Chongqing Preschool Education College

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## Abstract

Education is commonly acknowledged as the first stage in the traditional activities carried out by persons in the age of globalization and rapid advancement. The notion being discussed is of utmost importance in enhancing individuals' human capital and is closely connected to their overall well-being and prospects for enhanced quality of life. The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy among educators at Chongqing Preschool Education College. The study utilized quantitative research methodology, employing the Teacher Effectiveness Scale and the Teacher Leadership Scale to assess these concepts. 200 teachers completed the survey questions. The survey findings indicated that the level of teacher leadership at the school was moderate, while teacher self-efficacy was rather low. Additionally, a robust positive link between the two variables was seen, with a correlation coefficient of .77. The study is significant because it explores the connection between teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy in the classroom. It also provides useful suggestions for improving the quality of higher education.

**Keywords:** Teacher Leadership, Teacher Self-efficacy, Educational Leadership, Chongqing Preschool Education College

## Introduction

In the field of education, educators have a crucial role that goes beyond simply imparting knowledge. They have a significant impact on determining the future of societies by fostering the development of young minds. This is especially accurate in the field of early childhood education, where the groundwork for lifelong learning and development is laid. Chongqing Preschool Education College places great importance on empowering educators by improving teacher leadership and self-efficacy. This issue is crucial because it focuses on the necessity for educators who possess not only knowledge and skills but also confidence and influence in their professional jobs.

Enabling educators is crucial for multiple reasons. Teacher leadership is crucial for the efficiency of educational institutions (Smith, 2022). Teacher leaders are individuals who motivate and direct their colleagues, champion the needs of their pupils, and actively participate in efforts to enhance the school. By promoting teacher leadership, educational institutions can establish a cooperative and encouraging atmosphere that improves the overall standard of education (Gümüş et al., 2022). Over the past three decades, alternative leadership models have been developed within the field of Educational Leadership and Management (EDLM) study. The concept of teacher leadership has received significant attention in academic literature, making it a major topic in ongoing school reform efforts (Gümüş et al., 2022). Multiple studies conducted in China have demonstrated a significant association between teachers' favorable mindset toward leadership and their job happiness. Previous academic research in the area of school leadership has primarily focused on the managerial strategies employed by school principals. However, there has been a noticeable shift in the focus of leadership studies in recent years, with a growing emphasis on regular teachers. Therefore, the investigation of teacher leadership may be seen as an expansion of the notion of distributed leadership in educational institutions (Wang & Zhu, 2020).

Self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's confidence in their capability to achieve success, plays a crucial role in the performance and motivation of instructors (Bandura, 1977). Teachers who have high levels of self-efficacy exhibit increased enthusiasm, persistence, and resilience when confronted with adversities. Teachers who possess high levels of self-efficacy are more inclined to utilize creative teaching methods, efficiently handle classroom management, and actively involve students in meaningful learning opportunities (Mok & Moore, 2019). Previous academic studies have predominantly employed Bandura's self-efficacy theory to investigate teacher self-efficacy. The studies repeatedly demonstrated a positive correlation between teacher self-efficacy and various educational outcomes, teacher instructional methods, and teacher well-being. The results encompass several factors such as student motivation, student engagement, student achievement, student self-efficacy, teacher work satisfaction, job commitment, teacher efficacy, and instructional behaviors (Mok & Moore, 2019). Teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy are both influential characteristics that have a substantial impact on the process of school reform and development. Prior studies have established a connection between teacher leadership and external elements including school climate and school leadership. On the other hand, teacher self-efficacy has been linked to job dedication, teacher well-being, and teacher satisfaction. Nevertheless, there is a scarcity of studies investigating the relationship between teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy. As the roles and duties of teacher leaders increase, it is crucial to get a more profound understanding of teachers' inherent qualities, such as their self-efficacy (Smith, 2022). An analysis of the correlation between these two factors could aid in identifying attributes that have a good impact on student learning and the general ambiance of the institution. Furthermore, it can offer vital perspectives to school leaders, empowering them to make more knowledgeable choices.

Chongqing Preschool Education College, which has been in operation for a century, provides training for individuals aspiring to become kindergarten teachers. In 2013, the secondary vocational school transitioned into a higher education college, resulting in growth and difficulties. The primary objective is to enhance and optimize the teacher structure during the school's upgrading and transition. The previous team of professional and academic instructors is unable to satisfy the present development needs of the school, and there is a significant scarcity of highly educated and certified teachers. Due to the rise in

enrolment, there is a shortage of regular instructors and administrative workers. Moreover, there are educational prerequisites that must be attended to. The transition from secondary vocational schools to higher vocational institutions has likewise revolutionized the cultivation of talent. To meet China's preschool teacher development criteria during the past five years, teachers need to have enhanced classroom management skills, which will contribute to the production of competent preschool educators. Speedier expansion is necessary for the instructors of this university to address all of the aforementioned difficulties. Teacher leaders are those who are deeply committed to the school and actively implement policies that strive to improve student accomplishment. According to Smith (2022), teacher leadership is vital in promoting the development of instructional knowledge and skills among teachers, making it an important factor in education reform efforts. Furthermore, research has shown that it improves teachers' motivation and effectiveness, while also cultivating a strong feeling of dedication among teacher leaders towards their peers.

The college can enhance the educational achievements of its students by improving teacher leadership and self-efficacy. Competent educators play a vital role in delivering excellent instruction and cultivating a favorable atmosphere for learning. The findings of this study can be used to enhance professional development programs, ensuring that they are customized to enhance both leadership abilities and self-confidence among educators. Consequently, this can result in enhanced pedagogy and improved student performance. The results of this study have the potential to impact policy and practice both within and outside of the institution. By emphasizing the significance of teacher leadership and self-efficacy, educational leaders and policymakers may make well-informed choices that promote teacher empowerment and, ultimately, student achievement. Examining the connection between leadership and self-efficacy can contribute to the maintenance of teacher motivation and job satisfaction. Educators who possess a strong sense of self-assurance and competence are more inclined to maintain their dedication to their careers and make constructive contributions to their school community.

Therefore, this study is important because it has the potential to change educational practices, guide policy decisions, improve teacher well-being, and ultimately enhance student outcomes. This study illuminates the important connection between teacher leadership and self-efficacy, which can lead to a more empowered and effective teaching staff. As a result, it contributes to the progress of early childhood education.

Previous research indicates a direct relationship between teacher leadership and teacher efficacy. While there exists previous research on teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy in the broader educational environment, the majority of this study has been conducted in Western contexts (Nguyen et al., 2020). Therefore, there is a scarcity of research and a limited amount of data about the correlation between teacher leadership and teacher efficacy in non-Western research settings, namely in China (Liu et al., 2023). There is a significant lack of understanding of the specific dynamics of the link between Chinese and Western educational philosophies and school administration methods, due to the discrepancies between them and the paucity of research in this area. This study aims to address the lack of research by examining the outcomes of the interaction between teacher leadership and teacher efficacy as variables in this educational institution. By examining the relationship between teacher leadership and teacher efficacy in an educational institution, we can get valuable insights that can guide the implementation of educational reforms and

enhance the overall quality of education in the school. Hence, this study puts out three research inquiries:

1. What is the level of teacher leadership at Chongqing Preschool Education College?
2. What is the level of teacher efficacy at Chongqing Preschool Education College?
3. Is there a relationship between teacher leadership and teacher efficacy at Chongqing Preschool Education College?

### **Teacher Leadership**

The importance of teacher leadership in school reform, especially in terms of instructional transformation, is widely recognized. Teacher leaders can foster individual innovation and support their colleagues in aligning their beliefs, abilities, and knowledge (Cheung et al., 2018). Although there is a substantial body of literature on teacher leadership, a generally acknowledged definition that is clear, consistent, and widely accepted has not been established. Teachers carry out numerous duties that are shaped by the organization and operations of their school. The positions indicated exert a significant impact on the efficacy and progress of the school, as evidenced by the research conducted by Kiranli (2013). Teacher leaders are currently encountering educational transformations via various pathways, such as assuming the role of college directors (Berry, 2019). According to York-Barr and Duke (2004), teacher leaders are educators who have extra duties outside their main duty of teaching in the classroom. These teacher leaders have the responsibility of overseeing community communication, managing induction and mentorship programs, and providing guidance for educational data groups. The evolution from being a teacher to becoming a teacher leader is an ongoing process, driven by administrators who acknowledge the promise of teacher leadership programs and teachers who are becoming more willing to share their knowledge and expertise with their peers (Berry, 2019).

The research on teacher leadership regularly presents it positively, highlighting its influence on teacher retention, effectiveness, performance, and collaboration among teachers (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). According to Xie et al (2021), teacher leadership is a multifaceted concept that involves educators assuming greater responsibility, whether formally or informally, to exert a greater influence on educational practices and school communities. Teacher leadership plays a vital role in the advancement of teacher professional development, involving many duties such as mentoring, coordinating, and motivating colleagues. The approach is distinguished by the utilization of decentralized and cooperative leadership methods (Gümüş, et al., 2022). Teacher leadership is not limited to an individual but rather distributed across several members of the school community. This emphasizes the need for collective leadership behaviors that are mutually shared among members. Teacher leadership contributes to the improvement of teaching quality, school effectiveness, and student learning, ultimately leading to an indirect influence on student accomplishment (Gümüş, et al., 2022). Liu, et al (2023) also observed that teacher leaders are people who motivate, assist, and enable their colleagues. Their focus is on fostering collaboration rather than emphasizing authority. They are also known for advocating for the democratization of schools, boosting teacher learning, and cultivating a culture of collaboration. In this study, the phrase "teacher leadership" refers to educators who demonstrate expertise in leadership both inside and outside of the classroom. These individuals actively engage in and provide valuable input to networks of educators and leaders. They motivate their colleagues to improve their teaching methods and gladly assume responsibility for accomplishing their stated goals (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).

Teacher leadership comprises educators actively influencing and directing the educational practices of their colleagues, encompassing various elements (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). The phenomenon is characterized by several designations, such as mentor, planner, and principal and is differentiated by its dynamic and spontaneous nature rather than a rigid structure. Teacher leadership is closely linked to decentralized and collaborative leadership approaches, which emphasize collaboration over authority and seek to democratize schools (York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

Teachers in leadership roles motivate, assist, and empower their colleagues (Crippen & Willows, 2019). They participate in innovative educational activities, provide community service, mentor, and assist new teachers, actively attend educational seminars, contribute to addressing school-related difficulties, and develop partnerships with universities (Crippen & Willows, 2019). These practices extend beyond the boundaries of the classroom and broaden a teacher's sphere of influence. According to Leithwood et al (2010), teacher leadership is essential for enhancing the professionalism of teachers and has an indirect influence on student accomplishment. Nevertheless, Berg and Zoellick (2019) argue that the existing research on teacher leadership is deficient in terms of a robust conceptual framework and has yielded few dependable results. Berg and Zoellick (2019) provide a concise overview of teacher leadership, highlighting four essential aspects: the leader's credibility, assistance in their tasks, the objective of their impact, and the strategies they employ to exert influence.

In 2003, Lambert proposed the concept that every teacher has the ability and should actively take on leadership responsibilities. The author argued that educational leadership, power, and authority should be demonstrated outside traditional hierarchical structures, enabling instructors to engage in collaborative and mutually beneficial processes of generating meaning (Webber & Okoko, 2021). This perspective has sparked extensive discussion, with Day and Harris (2002) highlighting that all teachers do not need to assume leadership roles. They also employ the concept of dispersed leadership theory to illustrate how official leaders can delegate responsibility and power to the teachers in their schools. The synthesis conducted by York-Barr and Duke (2004) integrates studies on teacher leadership by considering their professional and experience backgrounds. It explores the connection between teacher leaders, school culture, roles, and organizational structure. An important discovery in this review is the perception of teacher leadership from a long-term career standpoint. It is found that collaborations between teacher education organizations and schools or districts can enhance the leadership abilities of both novice and experienced teachers by integrating specialized knowledge into administrative tasks.

Researchers have attempted to determine the specific aspects of teacher leadership as it has been conceptualized. Most of these dimensions revolve around the concept of teacher leadership. Day and Harris (2002) proposed four elements for school improvement: adopting principles of school improvement in the classroom, leading change, and development as a participative leader, negotiating school development, and providing interpersonal communication. The Teacher Leadership Learning Action Domain Model is a framework that delineates dimensions by identifying the behaviors exhibited by teacher leaders. This concept elucidates the actions and impact of instructors on other teachers, whether through formal or informal means, to enhance student learning (Chen, 2022). Wenner and Campbell (2017) conducted a narrative review where they classified the elements of teacher leadership into five overarching categories. The areas encompassed in this context are not restricted to but include extending activities beyond the traditional

classroom setting, promoting professional growth throughout the entire school, and, to a lesser extent, participating in policy-making or decision-making processes to enhance student performance and learning outcomes, as well as facilitate organizational transformation.

### **Teacher Self-Efficacy**

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to effectively control and overcome challenges and obstacles that affect their life (Bandura, 1988). Teacher efficacy refers to a teacher's evaluation of their capacity to achieve desired outcomes in student engagement and learning, even when faced with students who may encounter challenges or lack motivation (Teshannen-Moran and Hoy, 2001). The concept of teacher effectiveness originated in the mid-1970s because of research conducted by the RAND Corporation and has subsequently been widely recognized among educational scholars. Teacher self-efficacy, as described in this study, refers to educators' perception of their ability to effectively educate students, enabling them to achieve academic success that aligns with their age and academic abilities (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

Self-efficacy, which originates from social cognitive theory, refers to an individual's confidence in their capacity to achieve desired results (Bandura, 2006). An individual's level of tenacity when faced with problems is influenced by this notion (Bandura, 1977). Kosar (2015) explains that according to social cognitive theory, self-efficacy can be divided into three categories: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. Self-efficacy, as defined by Teshannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), is the belief a teacher has in their ability to achieve desired outcomes in student engagement and learning, especially when faced with challenging situations such as students who may struggle or lack motivation. In addition, Shaukat and Iqbal (2012) and Sarfo et. al (2015) explained that self-efficacy refers to the belief that instructors have in their abilities to effectively implement teaching methods, manage their classrooms, and engage their students. Self-efficacy pertains to a teacher's perception of their capability to accomplish objectives and their evaluation of their effectiveness in teaching (Angelle & Teague, 2014).

This study delineates teacher self-efficacy as comprising three discrete dimensions: instructional efficacy, classroom management, and student involvement. The concept of multidimensionality has been extensively studied and widely applied in educational research since its introduction (OECD, 2014; Teschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Ashton (1985) and Ashton, Ames and Ames (1985) extended Bandura's theory to educational settings and suggested that a teacher's beliefs about the outcomes of their teaching may be seen through a concept known as "instructional efficacy". Conversely, a teacher's evaluations of their capacity to carry out a certain course of action and achieve desired goals are demonstrated in a dimension known as "teaching efficacy", as suggested by (Soodak and Podell, 1996). According to the authors, teacher efficacy consists of three distinct factors: "personal efficacy", "outcome efficacy", and "teaching efficacy". Personal efficacy refers to a teacher's confidence in their ability to effectively instruct, while outcome efficacy refers to their belief that utilizing their teaching skills will result in desired student accomplishments. Pedagogical efficacy is the belief that effective teaching can overcome external obstacles. According to Teschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), pedagogical effectiveness refers to a teacher's confidence in effectively communicating topic material and using instructional tactics to improve student understanding and achievement.

Teachers' efficacy in classroom management refers to their confidence in their ability to effectively maintain discipline and control in the classroom (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000). Hoy and Hoy and Spero (2005) investigated the relationship between instructors' self-assurance in managing the classroom and their actual teaching methods. They also explored how teachers' views about their ability to manage the classroom impact their behavior. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2019) contended that teacher self-efficacy, encompassing their efficacy in classroom management, exerts a substantial influence on teacher motivation and work satisfaction. Additionally, they proposed that instructors' perceptions of their proficiency in classroom management will influence their overall views towards their profession.

Teacher efficacy in student engagement is the extent to which a teacher believes in their capacity to encourage and involve students in active learning (Jang et al., 2010). When analyzing the correlation between teacher self-efficacy and student learning outcomes, it is important to consider various factors. Teachers regularly and closely interact with their students. The behavior of teachers can influence the academic achievement of students (Martinez et al., 2016). In their study, De Jong et al (2014) investigated the interactions between instructors and students and found that the effectiveness of teachers' classroom management does not directly correlate with student engagement or instructional strategies. Therefore, there may be other factors that have an impact on student performance.

According to Bandura (1977), instructors' beliefs in their ability to perform well are shaped by various factors, including exposure to different situations, receiving persuasive feedback from others, experiencing psychological arousal, and achieving expertise in their field. Alternative experience refers to the act of viewing positive or bad experiences under the leadership of an experienced instructor. Linguistic persuasion refers to the linguistic interactions that impact a teacher's performance or achievement. Mental arousal is the subjective experience of one's competence, accompanied by feelings of anxiety or enthusiasm that result from participating in an activity. Mastery experience is the knowledge gained via active participation in a class led by a teacher (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Research conducted by Yeung and Watkins (2000) has shown that the perception of teaching abilities among teacher candidates is influenced by the level of supervision they receive, specifically through verbal persuasion, as well as their practical experience in honing their teaching skills, known as mastery experience. Tschannen-Moran and Johnson (2011) emphasize the significance of verbal persuasion from administrators and coworkers in shaping self-efficacy beliefs in interpersonal relationships. Studies suggest that self-efficacy beliefs frequently experience substantial transformations throughout the early years of teaching and that positive interpersonal interactions positively impact the self-efficacy of new educators (Bandura, 1997). These findings indicate that instructors are more likely to feel comfortable expressing themselves when they are in positive interactive school environments with supportive administrators and coworkers. Thus, educators can help their students discover and develop their hidden talents. When developing a holistic approach, it is crucial to address difficulties related to interpersonal interactions, school relationships, teacher leadership, and self-efficacy.

### **Relationship between teacher leadership and self-efficacy**

Zheng et al (2019) conducted a study to examine the distinct correlation between distributed leadership and teacher self-efficacy. They discovered that collaborative activities, de-privatization practices, and reflective conversation had a substantial impact on

the connection between instructional leadership and teachers' self-efficacy. Previous studies have demonstrated a strong correlation between teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy. Additionally, teacher leadership has been found to influence teacher self-efficacy through various mediating factors. However, these studies have not sufficiently examined whether the previous connections between teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy vary in diverse policy contexts. Is there a correlation between degrees of teacher leadership and the developmental needs of teacher self-efficacy in well-organized schools with a positive organizational climate compared to high-pressure organizations? It is important to note that not all types of teacher leadership have a beneficial effect on teacher self-efficacy. A study could investigate the correlation between teachers' high levels of leadership and their corresponding high levels of self-efficacy to identify the most effective approaches for enhancing teacher self-efficacy. An important aspect to consider is the potential relationship between teacher self-efficacy and teachers' inclination to take on leadership roles and enhance their leadership abilities. Previous studies have not yet established this correlation, but according to social cognitive theory, motivation can greatly influence the results. Ultimately, the impact of various aspects of teacher leadership on meeting the specific professional requirements of individual instructors in fostering higher levels of self-confidence remains uncertain.

The study conducted by Shengnan and Hallinger (2021) examined the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teachers' professional growth in mainland China, as well as the elements that influenced this process. The study examined the role of principals' instructional leadership in facilitating teachers' professional growth in mainland China, taking into account the specific factors that influenced this process. The study investigated a model that analyzed the impact of instructional leadership on teacher professional learning. The model incorporated teacher self-efficacy as a mediator variable and instructors' power distance orientation as a moderator variable.

Hence, when examining the correlation between the two, it is imperative to consider the policy considerations of the educational institution, the teachers' inclination to cultivate leadership skills, and the congruence of leadership with the distinct requirements and objectives of teachers to facilitate professional growth.

### **Research Method**

This study employed a correlational quantitative methodology to investigate the relationship between teacher leadership and self-efficacy at Chongqing Preschool Education College. Given the limitations of conducting research in an educational institution, the utilization of correlational methodologies is appropriate for efficiently investigating the connection between teacher leadership and self-efficacy. Simultaneously, the outcomes of correlational research might directly influence practical applications. By assessing the correlation between teacher leadership and self-efficacy, administrators and teachers in an educational institution can obtain a valuable understanding of how increased teacher leadership can have a beneficial influence on teacher self-efficacy, and vice versa.

This study focuses on the specific group of classroom teachers at Chongqing Preschool Education College. These teachers originate from various cities and regions across China, encompassing diverse age groups and population areas, namely rural and urban areas. Based on the data provided by the school's personnel department, the current staff count of the school is 1000, out of which 750 are instructors. Therefore, the population size for this study is 750. The error margin was set at 5 percent, the confidence level at 90 percent, the answer



distribution at 50 percent, and the sample size was determined to be 200 using the calculation procedure. Hence, we employed a random sampling technique to pick a cohort of 200 educators from various departments and disciplines inside the educational institution. The purpose of this selection was to investigate the correlation between teacher leadership and self-efficacy.

This study employed two instruments, specifically the Teacher Leadership Scale and the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale. The initial scale utilized in this research, referred to as the Teacher Leadership Scale, was developed based on the six-factor model proposed by Xie et al. in 2021. This model synthesized the common attributes seen in prominent definitions, models, and frameworks related to teacher leadership. The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale, developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), was used to assess the level of self-efficacy among educational professionals.

### Findings

This part presented the study's findings based on the data obtained, in conjunction with SPSS data analysis. We utilized descriptive statistics to assess research questions 1 and 2 and employed Pearson's correlation to analyze research question 3. The objective of this study is to address all three concerns.

A total of 200 preschool instructors from Chongqing Preschool Education College took part in the survey. The participants in the study had an average age of 39 years. The study included teachers with diverse genders, educational levels, and years of experience. The survey had 118 female participants, accounting for 59 percent of the total, and 82 male participants, accounting for 41 percent. A bachelor's degree was held by most participants, specifically 57.5 percent (n=115). In addition, 29.5 percent (n=59) of the participants had achieved a master's degree, while 13 percent (n=26) had received a PhD degree. According to the participants' job experience, 41 percent (n=82) had a work history of 7-10 years. 26.5 percent (n=53) of the teachers had worked for more than 10 years. 24 percent (n=48) had working experience of 4-6 years. Lastly, 8.5 percent (n=17) of the participants had worked for 1-3 years.

### The level of teacher leadership among teachers at Chongqing Preschool Education College

Table 1

#### *Level of teacher leadership*

Dimension	Mean	SD	Level
Promoting Professional Learning	3.17	1.13	Medium
Focusing on Learning Process	3.34	1.15	Medium
Encouraging Collegial Collaboration	3.32	1.07	Medium
Engaging in Decision-Making	3.23	1.51	Medium
Liaising with External Affiliations	3.19	1.18	Medium

Table 1 displays the data that has been analyzed about the level of teacher leadership. The study revealed that teacher leadership was assessed based on five dimensions. The dimension with the highest average score was "Focusing on Learning Process" (M=3.34, SD=1.15), followed by "Encouraging Collegial Collaboration" (M=3.32, SD=1.07), "Engaging in Decision-Making" (M=3.23, SD=1.51), "Liaising with External Affiliations" (M=3.19, SD=1.18), and "Promoting Professional Learning" (M=3.17, SD=1.13). In summary, the study found that the teachers in this school exhibited a moderate level of leadership across the five dimensions. This suggests that they placed a significant emphasis on the learning process, fostered collaboration with their colleagues, and demonstrated average performance in terms of leadership for professional learning and engaging with external affiliations.

**The level of teacher self-efficacy among teachers atChongqing Preschool Education College**

Table 2

*Level of teacher self-efficacy*

Dimension	Mean	SD	Level
Efficacy in Student Engagement	5.37	1.97	Medium
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies	5.37	2.06	Medium
Efficacy in Classroom Management	5.40	1.97	Medium

Table 2 displays the level of teacher self-efficacy and the corresponding findings for three dimensions. The dimension of Efficacy in Classroom Management has the highest average score (M=5.40, SD=1.97), followed by Efficacy in Student Engagement (M=5.37, SD=1.97) and Efficacy in Instructional Strategies (M=5.37, SD=2.06). The results suggest that the level of teacher self-efficacy in this study is moderate, indicating that teachers feel more confident in their ability to manage their classrooms.

Relationship between teacher leadership and self-efficacy of teachers in Chongqing Preschool Education College

Table 3

*Pearson's correlation values between teacher leadership and self-efficacy*

Teacher self-efficacy	Results
Teacher leadership	.770** Significant

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

In the discipline of statistics, the measurement of the correlation between two variables was conducted using Pearson's correlation coefficient, which ranges from -1 to 1. Table 3 displays the findings of Pearson's correlation analysis, which was used to validate research question 3. This question attempted to investigate the connection between teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy. The results demonstrate a strong and positive correlation between teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy (r =.770, p <.01). There is a strong positive relationship between teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy. The results indicate that the level of leadership demonstrated by the participants has an impact on teachers' self-

efficacy. A stronger sense of self-efficacy can be linked to a greater level of teacher leadership.

### **Discussion and Recommendations**

Research on teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy has gained significant importance in the field of educational administration in recent decades, aligning with the demand for shared authority and responsibility in school management. This study investigated the degrees of teacher leadership and self-efficacy among teachers at Chongqing Preschool Education College, as well as the potential correlation between these two factors. The topic of teacher leadership has been the focus of more qualitative and conceptual debates rather than quantitative studies. Furthermore, there have been even fewer investigations that have examined this topic in different cultural contexts. Hence, this study was carried out within the framework of China's education policy and background, to obtain more precise quantitative data for leadership research by focusing on the selection of public specialized schools.

This study conducted at Chongqing Preschool Education College examined the correlation between teacher leadership and teachers' self-assurance in their classroom competencies. A total of 200 teachers participated in the survey. Based on the findings, there was a strong correlation between the two variables. The survey revealed that teachers demonstrated a modest level of leadership qualities in general but had negative evaluations of their interactions with external affiliates. In addition, teachers exhibited a reduced inclination to engage in communication with parents and the community, demonstrated decreased receptiveness to acquiring new knowledge, and displayed a diminished probability of fostering relationships with school officials or teacher leaders. Contrary to the findings of Riffe (2018) who argue that professors in both high-resource and low-resource departments are likely to collaborate with external groups to gain more resources and opportunities due to potential financial gains Julaihi et al (2019), this study presents a different perspective.

Furthermore, it contradicts the conclusions of Akman, et. al., who proposed that teachers exhibit a greater propensity for embracing novel concepts, collaborating effectively, communicating proficiently, and proactively contributing to the development of the school (Burgees, 2012). In contrast to the financial systems of Chinese and Western education, public schools in the Western environment mostly depend on off-campus foundation programmes or alumni donations, in addition to financial assistance from the State. Conversely, Chinese public universities mostly rely on state funding for support. Additionally, there are variations in the nature and extent of interaction across different disciplines, which are tightly linked to their respective fields of study. Chongqing Preschool Education College prioritizes the improvement of teachers' teaching skills and pedagogical research as a teacher training institution. Teachers in the school setting may refrain from participating in school administration and community outreach due to factors such as the school's hierarchical structure, institutional policies, and personal attributes. These activities do not yield tangible benefits for teachers. If teachers perceive that involvement in school management or other activities does not contribute to their professional growth or provide rewards, they will opt to abstain from such engagements. Naturally, there are additional variables to consider, including the cost in terms of time. In addition to their instructional duties, professional teachers also engage in several unseen tasks such as curriculum development, classroom organization, and scholarly research, which consume a significant

amount of their time and effort. The study revealed that teachers' self-efficacy in the school was moderately rated overall. There was minimal variation in the performance of the three dimensions: Student Engagement, Instructional Strategies, and Classroom Management.

However, when considering all dimensions collectively, a majority of the study sample demonstrated a low level of self-efficacy. This indicates a lack of confidence in the effectiveness of student engagement and classroom instructional strategies. In contrast to the conclusions drawn by many non-Chinese scholars, such as Julaihi et. al (2019), a survey conducted in Sarawak, Malaysia, revealed that Mathematics teachers in the region exhibited a remarkably high level of self-efficacy beliefs. These teachers expressed strong agreement that their Mathematics teaching was effective. Additional examinations indicated that female teachers had marginally higher average scores for self-confidence levels and self-efficacy beliefs compared to male teachers (Johari et al., 2022). In Peninsular North, Malaysia, Johari, et. al.'s research demonstrated that secondary school teachers possessed elevated self-efficacy views (Lazarides & Warner, 2020). Nevertheless, I maintain the opinion that this occurrence is typical, and the level of teachers' self-efficacy might fluctuate based on several reasons. Previous research has indicated that educators who possess a strong sense of self-efficacy experience reduced levels of stress and burnout, while also reporting higher levels of job satisfaction and personal accomplishment. Furthermore, educators who possess strong self-efficacy beliefs are better equipped to handle demanding teaching and learning scenarios, establish ambitious objectives, devise successful plans, address difficulties, seek assistance, and adjust teaching methods. The school environment significantly impacts teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. Factors such as school size, school type, headmaster's work experience, instructional leadership style, and social support all influence instructors' self-efficacy (Wang & Zhu, 2020). Thus, the moderate level of teacher self-efficacy in this school is strongly correlated with the school's shift from secondary to post-secondary education, the absence of academic leaders, and the challenges in attracting skilled individuals due to the geographical location, as previously discussed. Furthermore, most students at this educational institution are mostly enrolled in higher education programs, specifically at the college level. Consequently, there exists a significant issue about the absence of both academic self-control and classroom discipline when compared to students at the undergraduate level.

Furthermore, this study found a significant association between the school's leadership and teachers' self-efficacy. There is also a strong correlation between the eight dimensions of facilitating professional learning, which include focusing on the learning process, encouraging collaboration among colleagues, participating in decision-making, establishing external relationships, promoting effective student engagement, implementing effective teaching strategies, and maintaining effective classroom management. This aligns with the study conducted by other researchers, including (Akman, 2021; Gümüş et al., 2022). Hence, the researcher proposes that to enhance the leadership abilities and self-confidence of teachers in this school, school administrators should acquire knowledge and comprehension of sophisticated management techniques. Additionally, administrators should engage in meticulous career planning and development path mapping for teachers, taking into consideration their educational background, personality traits, and personal aspirations. These measures will assist teachers in enhancing their leadership skills and fostering their assurance of professional growth.

Regarding the duration of their professional experience, the school has a greater number of seasoned teachers compared to newly hired teachers. The implementation of a

rotation system in the school would offer mature teachers the chance to rotate, so preventing burnout and mitigating the occurrence of subpar classroom performance. Undoubtedly, classroom assessment and supervision are necessary. In order to address the challenges faced by both young and experienced teachers, schools should enhance classroom supervision. This will assist teachers in identifying any shortcomings in their teaching methods and enable them to improve and gain confidence. This can be achieved through the implementation of teaching and research meetings, as well as by incorporating new ideas while still valuing the wisdom of more seasoned educators. Cooperation and communication are strongly correlated with teacher leadership and self-efficacy. The insufficient quantity of educators in this educational institution is indicative of underlying issues in the cooperation between colleagues and the community. Hence, outside the usual teaching exchanges, this institution can organize workshops and motivate instructors from different disciplines to participate in these workshops. The aim is to foster discussions on specific teaching strategies, ways for designing courses, and collaborative teaching competitions. Simultaneously, it establishes a platform for exchanging community practices, particularly fostering collaboration between academic disciplines and businesses, thus strengthening the partnership between educational institutions and firms, and enabling teachers to develop within practical settings. Teachers' personal development will contribute to school development, resulting in a mutually beneficial outcome. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research in this regard. Gümüş et. al. (2022) found that teacher self-efficacy is positively and significantly influenced by effective leadership. The inclusion of teacher leaders can considerably enhance school reform strategies and research on educational leadership and management.

### **Conclusion**

To summarize, this research has established a statistical correlation between teacher leadership and teacher self-efficacy at Chongqing Preschool Education College. This association could potentially influence the perceptions of boards of education, colleges, and teachers in the area regarding leadership and self-efficacy. Additional investigation into this subject will be advantageous for districts and schools in locating highly skilled and efficient teachers in all domains.

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