

# A Study on the Current Situation of Rural Primary School Students' Perception of Teacher Support: An Analysis Based on Professional Knowledge, Affection and Reliability

Yian Zhou<sup>1</sup>, Siyu Liu<sup>1</sup>, Weiyi Zhong<sup>1</sup>, Lulu Zhang<sup>1</sup>, Yuege Lai<sup>1</sup> & Baiyan Du<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> College of Teacher Education, Quzhou University, China

Correspondence: Baiyan Du, College of Teacher Education, Quzhou University, Quzhou, Zhejiang, 324003, China. E-mail: 32076@qzu.edu.cn

Received: January 22, 2025; Accepted: February 25, 2025; Published: February 26, 2025

*Project Funding: This research was funded by the College Students' Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program (Project No.: 202411488027) and the Research Project of Quzhou University (Project No.: BSYJ202225).*

## Abstract

This study investigated the current situation of rural primary school students' perception of teacher support, involving 124 rural primary school students. Based on the results, strategies to improve rural primary school students' perception of teacher support were proposed. The results show that rural primary school students have a higher perception of teacher support from older and more experienced rural teachers than that from younger and less experienced rural teachers. And they have a relatively high perception of the three sub - factors of professional knowledge, affection and reliability, with the highest perception of professional knowledge. The findings of this study provide certain strategies for enhancing rural primary school students' perception of rural teacher support.

**Keywords:** rural education, Teacher Education, teacher support, primary education

## 1. Introduction

With the rapid development of the social economy and the continuous expansion of the gap in urban - rural educational resource allocation, rural education issues have increasingly become an issue that cannot be ignored in China's education field. Especially in the basic education stage, the educational support problems faced by rural primary school students are particularly serious. In 2004, according to the Ministry of Education's monitoring of the dropout situation of junior high school students in 60 counties, the dropout rate in some counties was as high as 7%, and in some individual counties, it even reached about 10%. The national rural junior high school dropout rate reached 3.55%, nearly 1 percentage point higher than the national average. In particular, in the western region, the rural junior high school dropout rate was as high as 4.64% (Du, 2011). These data show that the low quality of rural education, the lack of educational resources, and the poor economic conditions of students' families have caused serious impacts on the learning and life of rural primary school students. In rural areas, the uneven distribution of educational resources has been a long - standing problem, with some regions having redundant construction while others are severely insufficient (Du, 2019).

In addition, rural schools often face the problem of weak teaching staff. Although in recent years the country has increased the training and incentive for rural teachers through various measures (Qu, Long, 2021), it is still difficult to attract and retain excellent teachers due to factors such as remote geographical locations and poor living conditions. A survey in 2018 found that in rural areas, as many as 70% of teachers were passively assigned to work in rural areas, and teachers who actively chose to teach in rural areas were usually attracted by factors such as increased wages and title evaluation. Under such circumstances, the effect is often poor and difficult to sustain, which also brings many negative impacts to school management (Du, 2019). The family background of rural students is also an important factor affecting their educational achievements. In most rural areas, the social and economic development is backward, the quality of rural parents is not high, the time input in family education is insufficient, and the economic conditions are relatively poor. Parents often cannot effectively support their children's learning because they are busy with work or lack the necessary educational awareness (Wang, Yan, 2024). In this case, students rely more on the help and support of teachers. The role of teachers is not only the transmitter of knowledge but also the emotional support and psychological guide. Although most rural teachers

are willing to provide help to students, the actual effect of teacher support is still significantly restricted due to various objective conditions such as insufficient teaching resources and few training opportunities. This situation not only affects the teaching quality of teachers but also affects the learning effect of students.

Effective teacher support has a far - reaching and multi - level impact on students, which includes not only the transmission of knowledge but also emotional care and guidance for the future. In the educational process, teachers are not only knowledge transmitters in the classroom but also important mentors and supporters on the road to students' growth. Their support can not only promote students' academic success but also have a positive impact on their overall development. First of all, teacher support has a significant promoting effect on students' academic achievement. Studies by Tennant, Demaray, Malecki, Terry, and Clary (2015) show that students who receive positive teacher support perform better academically and are more motivated to pursue their goals. Teachers' encouragement and guidance can enhance students' self - confidence, stimulate their interest in learning, and make them more motivated and determined to overcome difficulties. Secondly, teacher support has a positive impact on students' mental health. Students face various pressures and challenges in the process of growth, and teachers, as their psychological pillars, can provide them with emotional support and a sense of security. Teachers' care and understanding can reduce students' anxiety and stress, and help them establish a positive attitude and healthy emotional regulation ability (Mazzer, Rickwood, 2015).

For rural education, the support of rural teachers has a far - reaching impact on students and society. In China, rural teachers are not only transmitters of knowledge but also important promoters of social change and development. First of all, the support of rural teachers has an important impact on the shaping of students' values. Rural schools often have a lack of educational resources and backward educational infrastructure (Barter, 2008). Teachers often need to overcome many difficulties to create opportunities and environments for students to learn. They not only teach subject knowledge but also take on the responsibility of guiding students to establish correct learning attitudes and values. Secondly, rural students face problems such as backward social and economic development in rural areas, low quality of rural parents, insufficient time input in family education, and limited family economic conditions, as well as psychological problems such as learning anxiety, anxiety towards people, tendency to loneliness, tendency to terror, and tendency to impulsiveness (Dong, 2016, Wang, Yan, 2024). Effective teacher support can be their emotional support. Rural teachers not only provide academic guidance but also give them necessary psychological support and comfort, helping them establish self - confidence and a positive attitude. This emotional support has a significant promoting effect on students' mental health and helps them form healthy interpersonal relationships and social adaptation ability. The support of rural teachers not only affects individual students but also has a positive impact on the entire country's educational cause and social progress. Effective support from rural teachers has promoted the development of rural education and made an important contribution to the justice and fairness of education (Zeichner, 2009).

From the above discussion, it can be seen that the research on the current situation of rural primary school students' perception of teacher support has important theoretical and practical significance. In terms of theoretical significance, existing literature mainly focuses on urban students, with less attention to rural primary school students. This study can fill this research gap and enrich the connotation of teacher support theory. Moreover, from the perspective of educational policy, various regions have introduced policy measures to promote the development of rural education (Liang, Chen, 2023), but the actual implementation effect still needs to be improved (Zhong, Cao, Xiao, 2022). Therefore, paying attention to the perception of teacher support by rural primary school students is not only a need for educational equality and rural revitalization but also an important measure to improve the quality of rural education and narrow the urban - rural education gap. This study can provide relevant reference basis for this. In terms of practical significance, although the educational problems of rural students involve many fields, teachers often take on important tasks. In addition to teaching students knowledge, they also assist in solving educational problems in families and communities. Therefore, revealing the multiple roles and functions of rural teachers in the process of student support, and using teacher support as an effective educational intervention measure, can promote the education management of teachers themselves, schools, and families, and also provide empirical basis for promoting the revitalization of rural education. For this reason, this study investigates and analyzes the comprehensive situation and differences of rural teacher support, and proposes strategies to improve rural teacher support based on the research results.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### *2.1 Definition of Teacher Support*

Teacher support has always been an important research topic in the field of education. It refers to the supportive activities provided by teachers to students in terms of emotions, learning, and social aspects, aiming to promote

students' development in various aspects of learning and life. The definition of teacher support shows a certain degree of diversity in various studies. For example, self - determination and social support provide two definitions for teacher support. The self - determination perspective believes that teacher support occurs when students perceive cognitive, emotional, or teacher - directed autonomous support in the learning process (Skinner, Furrer, Marchand, Kindermann, 2008; Skinner, Belmont, 1993). The social support perspective believes that teacher support can be viewed from a broad and narrow perspective. Based on Tardy's (1985) social support framework, the broad view defines teacher support as the provision of information, tools, emotions, or assessment support by teachers to students in any environment (Kerres, Kilpatrick, 2002). Information support refers to the provision of advice or information in a specific content area. Instrumental support refers to the provision of resources such as money or time. Emotional support refers to love, trust, or empathy. Evaluation support refers to the provision of assessment feedback to each student (Malecki, Elliott, 1999). In a narrow sense, teacher support only appears in the form of help, trust, friendship, and interest in the classroom environment (Fraser, 1998).

In summary, the definition of teacher support is actually closely related to the research background and theoretical perspective. Different researchers may have differences in definition and meaning. For example, some researchers define teacher support as high - quality guidance, joint planning of time with students, continuous professional development, teacher - external networks, and standard - based assessment (Wiebke, Bardin, 2009). This definition highlights the abilities of teachers as individuals and those of their fellow professionals. Other researchers focus on the direct guidance and help of teachers to students' learning, believing that the support of teachers in learning and teaching during communication with students is crucial to students' academic performance and development (Hamre, Pianta, 2001). However, all kinds of research reflect the importance of teacher support for school education, especially in rural school education with relatively scarce resources, providing positive teacher support to rural primary school students is more critical and indispensable.

Under the background of rural education, teachers will face the unique problems of rural education, which makes this academic exploration field highly complex and diverse. The rural educational environment bears specific social culture and economic development. Moreover, the educational resources in rural areas are relatively limited, the teaching staff's abilities are uneven, and there are significant differences in educational infrastructure and environment compared with urban areas (Barter, 2008). This actual situation significantly restricts the effectiveness of teacher support. Rural teachers often have to bear heavier responsibilities and greater psychological burdens. The teaching staff in rural areas is relatively scarce, and teachers have heavy teaching and educational work. At the same time, due to the relatively hard living conditions and low economic income, they often feel unable to provide the necessary support (Yin, 2021). Under the background of rural education, there are significant differences in the ways and focuses of teachers' support. The importance of emotional support in the field of rural education is particularly prominent. The family structure in rural areas is often relatively single, and due to geographical and economic limitations, family educational resources are relatively scarce. This leads to a widespread problem faced by many students - the lack of close companionship and emotional care from parents. Teachers are especially needed to provide emotional support and attention (Qian, Liu, Xu, Lu, Zhang, 2021). Therefore, the role of teachers in building students' trust, providing emotional support, and guidance is extremely crucial and indispensable.

## *2.2 Components of Teacher Support*

Looking at the components of teacher support, different studies also have differences. Tennant, Demaray, Malecki, Terry, Clary, and Elzinga (2015) mainly studied the impact of different types of emotional and social support from teachers on students, emphasizing the importance of teacher social support for early adolescents, especially emotional support, and recognizing gender differences in the functions of specific types of teacher support. They analyzed the perception of teacher social support among students of different genders through questionnaires and found that male and female students perceived the frequency of teacher support similarly. As for whether there are gender differences in the concept of teacher support, the current research is still unclear. However, girls rated the importance of emotional support and praise, two types of social support, higher than boys. There was no gender difference in the evaluation of the importance of teacher information or instrumental support. Therefore, in the current research, girls seem to value or evaluate certain types of teacher social support more than boys. Johnson, Buckman, and Richards (1985) believe that teacher support includes academic and emotional support. Ryan and Patrick (2001) believe that teacher support refers to the extent to which students perceive that teachers value and establish personal relationships with them. They believe that teacher support usually involves factors such as care, friendliness, understanding, dedication, and reliability. In general, the components of teacher support are a complex and multi - dimensional system. Although different studies may focus on different aspects and the components of teacher support may vary, we can also see commonalities. The interaction of emotions, learning,

and social aspects together forms a complete teacher support system. Under the background of rural education, teacher support needs to be adjusted according to the background of rural primary education. Due to the limitations of infrastructure construction, production efficiency, modernization, and economic conditions in rural areas, the education in some rural areas is affected by these conditions (Chen, 2010), and the situation of parents working outside is also more common, with an increasing number of left - behind students. Therefore, rural students have a higher demand for emotional care and learning (Fan, Su, Gil, Birmaher, 2010; Dong, 2016). For teacher support, in addition to rural teachers teaching professional knowledge to students, it is also necessary to focus on emotional value and the identity value of teachers themselves. These can be reflected in the aspects of students' perspective on likability, professional knowledge, and reliability. Therefore, this paper will take these three points as the three main factors of teacher support.

### *2.3 The Impact of Teacher Support*

The impact of teacher support on students is an area of great concern in educational research. Teacher support can not only promote students' academic performance but also have a far - reaching impact on students' mental health, self - efficacy, learning motivation, and other aspects. First, the theoretical significance of teacher support for students' academic performance has been studied and verified. Under normal circumstances, teachers' learning - related support, such as clear explanations, positive feedback, and appropriate encouragement, can effectively improve students' academic performance (Tennant, Demaray, Malecki, Terry, Clary, 2015). Second, in terms of students' mental health, good teacher support behaviors will help students establish a positive self - concept and self - esteem, enabling students to have stronger psychological resilience even when facing academic challenges. The research results of Mazzer and Rickwood (2015) also showed that when students establish a good supportive relationship with teachers, it can significantly reduce students' negative emotions such as anxiety and depression, thereby promoting the development of mental health. In addition, teacher support also has a positive effect on students' self - efficacy and learning motivation. Mitchell and DellaMattera (2010) verified that when teachers provide supportive behaviors and feedback such as positive feedback, praise, and encouragement, it can enhance students' self - efficacy, enabling students to maintain good motivation and initiative in learning behaviors, and thus improve academic achievement.

In rural areas, teacher support involves not only the aspects of students' academic performance, psychology, and motivation mentioned earlier but also the family and social levels. The impact of rural teachers' support on rural students is multifaceted. For example, the existence and support of teachers can provide more educational opportunities (An, Yu, 2022). Secondly, teachers' support for rural parents also has a far - reaching impact, especially in improving parents' educational awareness, enhancing family education capabilities, and promoting positive interaction between families and schools. Through interaction with teachers, rural parents can have a better understanding of the importance of education and the specific educational needs of their children. It helps parents understand the trends of modern education and the key stages of children's growth, thereby stimulating parents' investment and attention to their children's education (Wei, 2022). In terms of the social level, effective teacher support not only improves the quality of education but also promotes the overall development of society and social fairness and justice. Therefore, effective teacher support can reduce the gap between rural and urban areas in terms of educational resource allocation and educational level, enhance the stability and cohesion of society, and contribute to the realization of educational equity (Robinson, 2008). On the one hand, it provides quality education, cultivates students' skills and abilities, and lays the foundation for their future entry into a broader labor market. On the other hand, it helps to enhance the economic and cultural vitality of rural areas, strengthen family education capabilities and the stability of rural development, and reinforce the situation of educational equity.

## **3. Method**

### *3.1 Participants*

This study explores and analyzes the current situation of rural primary school students' perception of teacher support. The questionnaires were filled out by students' parents. The data collection method includes the questionnaire survey method. It aims to comprehensively understand the perception of teacher support among rural primary school students. To ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, we referred to existing teacher support scales and student perception questionnaires and made appropriate modifications. The questionnaire content covers three dimensions of teacher support from the students' perspective: likability, professional knowledge, and reliability. A Likert - type five - point scale is used, ranging from "Not at all" to "Very much", to score and quantify the students' perception of teacher support in different dimensions. In August 2024, the questionnaire was distributed online via the Questionnaire Star APP, and data was collected over a two - week period. A total of 124 valid questionnaires were recovered for analysis. The frequency of

male head teachers is 39, accounting for 31.5%, and the frequency of female head teachers is 85, accounting for 68.5%; The frequency of head teachers teaching grades 1 - 3 is 69, accounting for 55.6%, and the frequency of head teachers teaching grades 4 - 6 is 55, accounting for 44.4%; The age range of head teachers is 20 - 35 years old, with a frequency of 75, accounting for 60.5%; The age range is 36 - 50 years old, with a frequency of 37, accounting for 29.8%; The age range is over 50 years old, with a frequency of 12, accounting for 9.7%; The teaching age of head teachers is less than 5 years, with a frequency of 46, accounting for 37.1%; The teaching age is 5 - 10 years, with a frequency of 55, accounting for 44.4%; The teaching age is over 10 years, with a frequency of 23, accounting for 18.5%. The characteristics of the research objects are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Research Object

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Teacher Gender	Male	39	31.5
	Female	85	68.5
Teachers teach grade	Grades 1-3	69	55.6
	Grades 4-6	55	44.4
Teacher Age	20-35 years old	75	60.5
	36-50 years old	37	29.8
	Over 50 years old	12	9.7
Teacher Teaching Age	Less than 5 years	46	37.1
	5-10 years	55	44.4
	Over 10 years	23	18.5
Total		124	100%

### 3.2 Instruments

In this study, the teacher support scale developed by Barak and LaCrosse (1975), and then modified twice by Barak and Del (1977) and LaCrosse (1977), was used. The perception of classroom teacher consultation styles was investigated, with a total of 35 questions. There were 8 questions related to professional knowledge, with a Cronbach  $\alpha$  of 0.97; 16 questions related to likability, with a Cronbach  $\alpha$  of 0.98; and 11 questions related to reliability, with a Cronbach  $\alpha$  of 0.98. It can be seen that in this study, the Cronbach  $\alpha$  values were all above 0.9, indicating good reliability (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, 2009). Each question was measured using a Likert - type 5 - point scale ("Not at all" = 1 point, "No" = 2 points, "Neutral" = 3 points, "Yes" = 4 points, "Very much" = 5 points). The scale can be interpreted as the higher the score, the higher the students' perception of teacher consultation support, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Composition and Reliability of Teacher Support Items

Component	Number of Questions	Cronbach $\alpha$
Professional Knowledge	8	0.97
Likability	16	0.98
Reliability	11	0.98
Total	35	0.99

### 3.3 Procedure

All data collected in this study were processed using the SPSS 26.0 program. First, a reliability analysis of the variables in the study was conducted. Second, a descriptive statistical analysis was used to examine the overall level of the research subjects on each factor. Third, to compare the differences in professional knowledge, likability, and reliability between rural head teachers of different genders and the grades they taught, the independent sample t - test statistical analysis method was used. Fourth, the one - way analysis of variance (ANOVA) method was used to compare the differences in the three variables among head teachers of different ages and teaching ages. Finally, strategies to promote rural teacher support were proposed based on all the analysis results of this study.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Comprehensive Situation Analysis

The goal of the comprehensive situation analysis is to provide a preliminary understanding of the data and to lay the foundation for in - depth statistical analysis or hypothesis testing. This is usually the first step in research, surveys, or data analysis and helps to determine the direction and analytical methods for further research. Before the formal analysis of this study began, we conducted a basic statistical analysis of the collected data. As can be seen from Table 3, the data skewness distribution is between -0.94 and -0.46, and the kurtosis distribution is between 0.14 and 1.26. When the kurtosis and skewness are between -2 and 2, the distribution shape can be considered normal (Nadarajah, 2005), which means that the sample data follows a normal distribution and has a more ideal statistical form for testing and analysis in the next step. It can be seen that the skewness and kurtosis values of the sample data variables in this study are between -2 and 2, basically following a normal distribution and suitable for parameter estimation. The mean value of teachers' professional knowledge is 4.1028. The mean value of likability is 3.92. The mean value of reliability is 4.06.

Table 3. Comprehensive Situation of Teacher Support

Component	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Professional Knowledge	4.10	.84	-.94	1.26
Likability	3.92	.89	-.46	.14
Reliability	4.06	.85	-.72	.68

N=124

### 4.2 Difference Analysis

To further examine the differences in each variable among the samples, the independent sample t-test statistical analysis method was used to compare the differences in professional knowledge, likability, and reliability between rural head teachers of different genders and the grades they taught. To compare the differences in likability, professional knowledge, and reliability among teachers of different ages and teaching ages, the method of one - way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. The specific situation is shown in Table 4.

For teacher gender, there was no statistical significance in professional knowledge ( $t = -0.175$ ), likability ( $t = 0.148$ ), and reliability ( $t = -0.410$ ).

For the grade taught by teachers, there was no statistical significance in professional knowledge ( $t = -1.075$ ), likability ( $t = -1.176$ ), and reliability ( $t = -0.913$ ).

For teacher age, there was statistical significance in professional knowledge, likability, and reliability. The results showed that there was a significant difference in the scores of professional knowledge among teachers of different ages, with the F-value being 4.499 and the significance level  $P < 0.05$ . Specifically, teachers aged over 50 had the highest scores in professional knowledge, followed by those aged 36-50, and then those aged 20-35. The scores of teachers aged over 50 in professional knowledge were significantly higher than those of teachers aged 20 - 35. The results also showed that there was a significant difference in the scores of likability among teachers of different ages, with the F-value being 7.177 and the significance level  $P < 0.001$ . Specifically, teachers aged over 50 had the highest scores in likability, followed by those aged 36-50, and then those aged 20-35. The scores of teachers aged over 50 in likability were significantly higher than those of teachers aged 20-35. In addition, the results showed that there was a significant difference in the scores of reliability among teachers of different ages, with the F-value being 4.926 and the significance level  $P < 0.01$ . Specifically, teachers aged over 50 had the highest scores in reliability, followed by those aged 36 - 50, and then those aged 20-35. The scores of teachers aged over 50 in reliability were significantly higher than those of teachers aged 20-35.

For teacher teaching age, there was statistical significance in professional knowledge, likability, and reliability. The results showed that there was a significant difference in the scores of professional knowledge among teachers with different teaching ages, with the F-value being 7.920 and the significance level  $P < 0.001$ . Specifically, teachers with over 10 years of teaching experience had the highest scores in professional knowledge, followed by those with 5-10 years of teaching experience, and then those with less than 5 years of teaching experience. The scores of teachers with over 10 years of teaching experience in professional knowledge were significantly higher than those of teachers with less than 5 years of teaching experience. The results also showed that there was a significant difference in the scores of likability among teachers with different teaching ages, with the F - value being 6.957

and the significance level  $P < 0.001$ . Specifically, teachers with over 10 years of teaching experience had the highest scores in likability, followed by those with 5 - 10 years of teaching experience, and then those with less than 5 years of teaching experience. The scores of teachers with over 10 years of teaching experience in likability were significantly higher than those of teachers with less than 5 years of teaching experience. In addition, the results showed that there was a significant difference in the scores of reliability among teachers with different teaching ages, with the F - value being 4.709 and the significance level  $P < 0.05$ . Specifically, teachers with over 10 years of teaching experience had the highest scores in reliability, followed by those with 5 - 10 years of teaching experience, and then those with less than 5 years of teaching experience. The scores of teachers with over 10 years of teaching experience in reliability were significantly higher than those of teachers with less than 5 years of teaching experience.

Table 4. Difference Test of Teacher Support Scores in Demographic Variables

Component		Teacher Support			
		Professional (M±SD)	Knowledge	Likability (M±SD)	Reliability (M±SD)
Teacher Gender	Male (N=39)	4.08±0.77		3.93±0.79	4.01±0.76
	Female (N=85)	4.11±0.87		3.91±0.93	4.08±0.89
	t	-0.175		0.148	-0.410
	p	0.861		0.883	0.683
Teacher Taught Grade	Grades 1-3 (N=69)	4.03±0.89		3.83±0.93	3.99±0.91
	Grades 4-6 (N=55)	4.19±0.76		4.02±0.83	4.13±0.77
	t	-1.075		-1.176	-0.913
	p	0.284		0.242	0.363
Teacher Age	20-35 years old (N=75)	3.97±0.78		3.72±0.84	3.92±0.83
	36-50 years old (N=37)	4.19±0.93		4.07±0.94	4.11±0.89
	Over 50 years old (N=12)	4.70±0.57		4.66±0.52	4.72±0.51
	F	4.499		7.177	4.926
	p	0.013*		0.001***	0.009**
Teacher Teaching Age	<5 years (N=46)	3.78±0.74		3.60±0.76	3.81±0.77
	5-10 years (N=55)	4.19±0.90		3.98±0.96	4.10±0.93
	>10 years (N=23)	4.55±0.57		4.39±0.72	4.44±0.64
	F	7.920		6.957	4.709
	p	0.001***		0.001***	0.011*

\* $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\* $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$ , N=124

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to investigate the current situation of rural primary school students' perception of teacher support, and to analyze it based on three dimensions: professional knowledge, likability, and reliability. Strategies to enhance rural primary school students' perception of teacher support are proposed based on the research results. A total of 124 questionnaires on rural primary school students' perception of teacher support were collected, and both comprehensive situation analysis and difference analysis were conducted.

Firstly, the descriptive statistical analysis of this study shows that rural primary school students have a certain perception of rural teachers' professional knowledge, likability, and reliability. Among them, the perception of professional knowledge is the highest, followed by reliability and likability. This result means that there are many types of teacher support perceived by rural primary school students, and the overall perception is relatively high. However, compared with professional knowledge, the perception of likability and reliability is somewhat lower. Rural teachers should pay attention to strengthening teacher support in terms of likability and reliability in the daily teaching process, and enhance communication with students in the daily life process.

In the difference analysis, there is no significant difference in the perception of teacher support among rural primary school students in terms of teacher gender and the grade taught by teachers, but there is a significant difference in terms of teacher age and teaching age. This situation may be related to the fact that as teachers'

teaching age and age increase, students' perception of teachers' professional knowledge, reliability, and likability also increases. Teachers with longer teaching experience may be more aware of how to establish effective communication and interaction with students, and know how to adjust teaching methods to meet the learning needs and psychological development stages of different students. This in - depth teaching understanding and practical ability can make students feel more support and guidance. On the contrary, younger or less - experienced teachers may still be developing and improving their teaching skills, so they may not perform as well as more experienced teachers in terms of students' perception of teacher support. Higher teacher age and teaching age usually also mean a more stable and mature teaching attitude. These teachers show higher reliability and consistency in dealing with student problems and classroom management, thereby increasing students' perception of their support. The authority and trust they build in the minds of students help to form a positive teacher - student relationship. Reliability is also related to teachers' ability to deal with emergencies. Older and more experienced teachers may be more able to remain calm and respond effectively in the face of various teaching challenges, providing students with a safe and supportive learning environment. Older and more experienced teachers, due to their rich experience, are better at using different strategies to meet students' emotional and academic needs, so they may gain higher likability among students. In addition, these teachers can often show more patience and understanding, which can enhance students' likability and make students feel understood and supported.

This study reveals the multi - faceted impact of teacher support on students by conducting an empirical analysis of the current situation of rural primary school students' perception of teacher support. The data analysis results show that rural primary school students have a considerable perception of their teachers' professional ability, likability, and reliability. In these aspects, their perception of teachers' professional knowledge is the strongest, followed by reliability, and then likability. This means that the types of teacher support perceived by rural primary school students are mainly concentrated on the support of teachers' professional knowledge. There is also a considerable perception of support in terms of likability and reliability, but the perception in the aspect of professional knowledge is higher. In response to this situation, rural teachers should pay attention to strengthening interaction and communication with rural students in the daily teaching process. Teachers can enhance communication with students through more classroom interaction, group discussions, and extracurricular activities. Through daily interaction, teachers can better understand students' needs and feelings, and also let students feel the teachers' care and support. Schools can organize regular teacher professional development training, which should not only focus on subject knowledge but also include strategies on how to establish effective relationships with students. The training can help teachers learn more about students' psychology, communication skills, and emotional support. Schools can establish an effective feedback mechanism, allowing students and parents to safely express their opinions and suggestions about teachers. Teachers and schools should maintain an open attitude towards these feedbacks and make necessary adjustments and improvements accordingly. For rural students, teachers can play a greater role as psychological supporters, paying attention to students' emotions and mental health. Enhancing students' sense of trust through regular mental health education and counseling, thereby enhancing rural students' perception of support from rural teachers in terms of reliability and likability.

As for the significant difference in the perception of teacher support among rural primary school students in terms of teacher age and teaching age, and the fact that teachers with higher teaching age and age are significantly higher than those with lower teaching age and age, for young teachers, more interactive and participatory teaching methods can be adopted, such as project - based learning, role - playing, and team cooperation. These methods can promote positive interaction between students and teachers, and increase students' likability and trust in teachers. For schools, a platform or mechanism can be established to enable experienced teachers to share their experience and skills with young or newly - appointed teachers. This communication can not only help young teachers grow quickly, but also enhance their reliability and authority in the eyes of students. A peer mentoring program can also be established, allowing experienced teachers to regularly observe the classrooms of young teachers and provide feedback and suggestions. This support is not limited to teaching methods, but also includes how to establish effective communication and relationships with students. Schools can provide customized training for new teachers, focusing on improving their teaching skills, classroom management abilities, and student communication skills. The training content should cover the latest educational concepts and technologies, enabling young teachers to be more competitive in educational practice. A feedback mechanism can also be established to enable students to regularly evaluate teachers' performance and provide anonymous feedback to teachers. This can not only help teachers with lower teaching age and age to understand their strengths and areas for improvement, but also enable them to adjust teaching methods according to students' needs.

Finally, this study also has many shortcomings. The sample size collected may not be sufficient to reflect the actual situation of all rural primary school students. During the questionnaire filling process, some questionnaires may



be filled out by students' parents or guardians, which may introduce some bias and thus affect the accuracy of the analysis results. In addition, data collection was mainly carried out through questionnaires, and descriptive statistics and variance analysis were applied to discuss the data. However, some details and deep - level factors may still be ignored, and the potential connections between different variables have not been fully explored. Therefore, future research can consider expanding the sample scope to include students from different regions and schools, in order to enhance the representativeness and generalizability of the research results. At the same time, other data collection methods, such as in - depth interviews or case studies, can be used to more detailedly understand rural primary school students' perception of teachers' professional knowledge, likability, and reliability, to provide more abundant references for subsequent related research.

## References

- An, F., Yu, J., & Xi, L. (2022). Relationship between perceived teacher support and learning engagement among adolescents: Mediation role of technology acceptance and learning motivation. *Frontiers in Psychology, 13*, 992464. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.992464>
- Barak, A., & Dell, D. M. (1977). Differential perceptions of counselor behavior: Replication and extension. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 24*(4), 288. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.24.4.288>
- Barak, A., & LaCrosse, M. B. (1975). Multidimensional perception of counselor behavior. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 22*(6), 471. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.22.6.471>
- Barter, B. (2008). Rural education: Learning to be rural teachers. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 20*(7/8), 468-479. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13665620810900292>
- Chen, X. (2010). Issues of China's rural development and policies. *China Agricultural Economic Review, 2*(3), 233-239. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17561371011078390>
- Dong, Y. (2016). Investigation and analysis of mental health status and coping strategies of rural primary school students. *The Guide of Science & Education, (28)*, 189-190.
- Du, L. (2011). On rural dropout and social equality: A sociological analysis of primary and middle school dropouts in rural China. *Renmin University of China Education Journal, (03)*, 142-154.
- Du, Q. M. (2019). On the balanced development of rural educational resources under the background of new urbanization. *Journal of Yangtze University (Social Sciences), (06)*, 76-79.
- Fan, F., Su, L., Gill, M. K., & Birmaher, B. (2010). Emotional and behavioral problems of Chinese left-behind children: A preliminary study. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology, 45*, 655-664. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-009-0107-4>
- Fraser, B. J. (1998). Classroom environment instruments: Development, validity and applications. *Learning Environments Research, 1*, 7-34. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1009932514731>
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2009). *Multivariate data analysis* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2001). Early teacher-child relationships and the trajectory of children's school outcomes through eighth grade. *Child Development, 72*(2), 625-638. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.00301>
- Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., Buckman, L. A., & Richards, P. S. (1985). The effect of prolonged implementation of cooperative learning on social support within the classroom. *The Journal of Psychology, 119*(5), 405-411. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.1985.10542911>
- Kerres, M. C., & Kilpatrick, D. M. (2002). Measuring perceived social support: Development of the Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale (CASSS). *Psychology in the Schools, 39*(1), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.10004>
- Liang, J., & Chen, X. (2023). The logic and development trend of rural basic education policy change in China. *Journal of Xinzhou Normal University, (02)*, 101-105.
- Malecki, C. K., & Elliott, S. N. (1999). Adolescents' ratings of perceived social support and its importance: Validation of the Student Social Support Scale. *Psychology in the Schools, 36*(6), 473-483. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1520-6807\(199911\)36:6<473::AID-PITS3>3.0.CO;2-0](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1520-6807(199911)36:6<473::AID-PITS3>3.0.CO;2-0)
- Mazzer, K. R., & Rickwood, D. J. (2015). Teachers' role breadth and perceived efficacy in supporting student mental health. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion, 8*(1), 29-41.

- <https://doi.org/10.1080/1754730X.2014.978119>
- Mitchell, S., & DellaMattera, J. (2010). Teacher support and students' self-efficacy beliefs. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.20355/C5X30Q>
- Nadarajah, S. (2005). A generalized normal distribution. *Journal of Applied Statistics*, 32(7), 685-694. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02664760500079464>
- Qian, J., Liu, T. T., Xu, J. Y., Lu, Y., & Zhang, H. X. (2021). On the psychological counseling and emotional care for rural left-behind children: A case study of Yizheng Longhe Central Primary School and Chenji Central Primary School. *Journal of Yangzhou College of Education*, (03), 52-56.
- Qu, T. H., & Long, Y. F. (2021). The evolution and logical thinking of the Party's rural teacher policy since the founding of New China. *Teacher Development Research*, (02), 8-18.
- Robinson, B. (2008). Using distance education and ICT to improve access, equity, and the quality in rural teachers' professional development in western China. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 9(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v9i1.486>
- Ryan, A. M., & Patrick, H. (2001). The classroom social environment and changes in adolescents' motivation and engagement during middle school. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(2), 437-460. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312038002437>
- Skinner, E. A., & Belmont, M. J. (1993). Motivation in the classroom: Reciprocal effects of teacher behavior and student engagement across the school year. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 85(4), 571. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.85.4.571>
- Skinner, E., Furrer, C., Marchand, G., & Kindermann, T. (2008). Engagement and disaffection in the classroom: Part of a larger motivational dynamic? *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 100(4), 765. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012840>
- Tardy, C. H. (1985). Social support measurement. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 13(2), 187. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00905728>
- Tennant, J. E., Demaray, M. K., Malecki, C. K., Terry, M. N., Clary, M., & Elzinga, N. (2015). Students' ratings of teacher support and academic and social-emotional well-being. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 30(4), 494. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000106>
- Wang, M., & Yan, Q. (2024). Research on rural family education: Current situation, hot issues and prospects. *Journal of Shaoxing University*, (06), 34-43.
- Wei, F. (2022). A historical investigation of the changes in the relationship between family and school in China's rural areas in the past century. *Journal of Central China Normal University (Humanities and Social Sciences)*, (02), 173-180.
- Wiebke, K., & Bardin, J. (2009). New teacher support. *Journal of Staff Development*, 30(1), 34-36.
- Yin, H. (2021). The influencing factors of rural primary school teachers-being in rural primary schools and its promotion strategies. *Modern Agriculture Research*, (09), 60-62.
- Zeichner, K. M. (2009). *Teacher education and the struggle for social justice*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203878767>
- Zhong, X. H., Cao, Y. L., & Xiao, B. C. (2022). From targeted poverty alleviation to rural revitalization: Effectiveness, problems and optimization of rural education assistance policies: Case study of Y city in mountainous area of northern Guangdong. *Journal of Guangzhou Open University*, (04), 78-84, 90, 111.

### Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).