THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF TEACHERS'

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY OF YUNNAN NORMAL

UNIVERSITY

Wang Xianjun
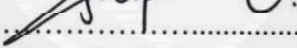**6617195731**

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
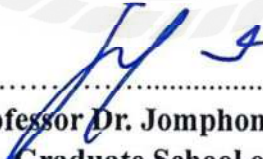**SIAM UNIVERSITY**
2025

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This Independent Study has been Approved as a Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Business Administration

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Title: The Influencing Factors of Teachers' Professional Identity of Yunnan Normal University

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Degree: Master of Business Administration

Major: International Business Management

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the influencing factors and theoretical mechanisms of teachers' professional identity at Yunnan Normal University, construct a structural model of these determinants, validate research hypotheses, and propose targeted enhancement strategies. Through literature review, we systematically synthesized existing research on teachers' professional identity, conducted an in-depth analysis of its impact mechanisms, with particular focus on examining the pathways of influence of three dimensions: existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs on professional identity.

The research employed a quantitative analytical approach, collecting data through a questionnaire survey. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed, with 369 valid responses collected, yielding a valid response rate of 92.25%. Empirical findings demonstrate that existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs all exert significant positive effects on the professional identity of faculty members at Yunnan Normal University. Based on these conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed: (1) Optimizing the compensation and benefits system; (2) Cultivating a harmonious interpersonal atmosphere; (3) Providing abundant opportunities for growth and development.
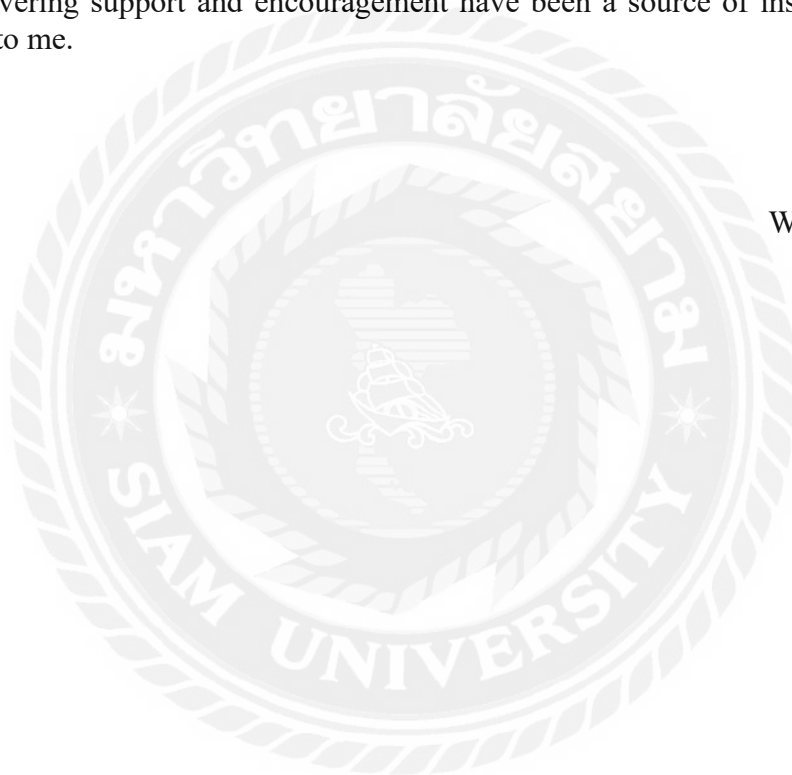
Keywords: Yunnan Normal University, teachers' professional identity, influencing factors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DECLARATION

I, Wang Xianjun, hereby certify that the work embodied in this independent study entitled *" The Influencing Factors of Teachers' Professional Identity of Yunnan Normal University"* is result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.
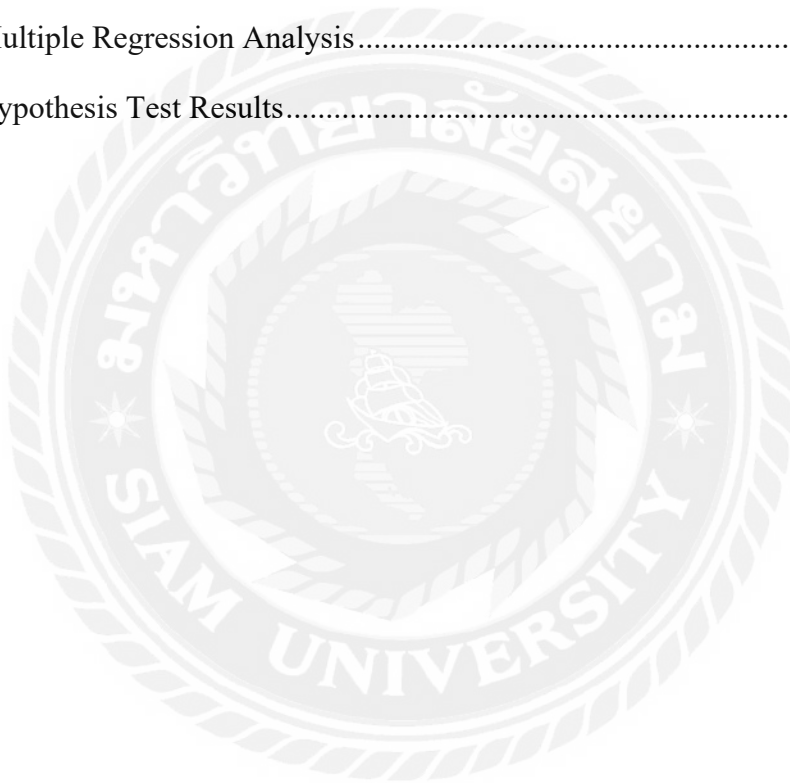
Wang Xianjun
March 3, 2025

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Teacher professional identity refers to how teachers recognize and affirm their occupational roles, values, and missions, directly influencing their work engagement, teaching efficacy, and career stability. It serves as a fundamental foundation for enhancing educational quality and fostering the development of the teaching workforce. With the deepening of higher education reforms in China and the advancement of the "Double First-Class" construction goals, university teachers are facing multiple pressures in teaching, research, and community service, which challenge their professional identity from both external environmental and internal psychological factors (Deng & Lan, 2020), as a cradle for cultivating basic education teachers in Yunnan Province, Yunnan Normal University shoulders the crucial mission of serving the educational development of border regions. The professional identity of its teaching staff not only concerns the university's development but also has a profound impact on the quality of basic education and educational equity in ethnic minority areas in Yunnan Province.

Existing research predominantly focuses on the professional identity of primary and secondary school teachers, with relatively scarce empirical analyses on university teachers, especially those in local normal universities. Given Yunnan Province's geographical location in the southwest border regions, characterized by uneven distribution of educational resources, lagging economic development, and diverse ethnic cultures, teachers at Yunnan Normal University face unique challenges in their career development environments, social support systems, and cultural adaptations (Liu & Zhao, 2019). Disparities in teacher remuneration between border regions and developed provinces lead to difficulties in attracting and retaining high-level talents. The educational needs of multi-ethnic student groups pose higher requirements for teachers' cross-cultural teaching abilities. Concurrently, limited research resources and assessment pressures may undermine teachers' sense of professional value. Collectively, these factors constitute a complex influencing mechanism for the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University, necessitating systematic exploration.

Based on this context, this study takes Yunnan Normal University as the research subject to deeply analyze the influencing factors of its teachers' professional identity. It aims to reveal the practical dilemmas and intrinsic needs of teachers' career development in normal universities in border regions, providing empirical evidence for optimizing teacher management policies and improving professional support systems. Additionally, it offers reference pathways for similar institutions to enhance the stability of their teaching staff and promote high-quality educational development in ethnic minority regions.

1.2 Questions of the Study

This study aims to explore the factors influencing the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University, with a particular focus on how existence needs, relatedness needs and growth needs impact teachers' professional identity.

(1) Do existence needs influence the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University?

(2) Do relatedness needs influence the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University?

(3) Do growth needs influence the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

While there has been extensive research on "professional identity," there has been relatively little exploration of the factors influencing the professional identity of university teachers, especially those in local normal universities. Taking Yunnan Normal University as a case study, this study attempts to transcend the limitations of traditional research by integrating the educational ecological characteristics of border regions and constructing a multi-dimensional analytical framework.

(1) To explore the impact of existence needs on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University.

(2) To explore the impact of relatedness needs on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University.

(3) To explore the impact of growth needs on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University.

1.4 Scope of the Study

A questionnaire survey targeted all full-time faculty members at Yunnan Normal University, with a total of 2,502 full-time teachers. The study employed a random sampling method to ensure the diversity and representativeness of the sample. To ensure the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the research data, a sample size of 400 was determined. The sample included teachers with varying demographic characteristics including gender, age, educational background, teaching experience, and average monthly income. Data collection was conducted through the online

questionnaire platform Wenjuanxing from March to April 2025. The study utilized SPSS statistical analysis software, employing correlation analysis and multiple linear regression methods to explore the mechanisms by which various influencing factors interacted with professional identity. Based on these findings, measures to enhance teachers' professional identity were proposed.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

Existing research predominantly focuses on primary and secondary school teachers, with insufficient attention given to university teachers, particularly those in normal universities in border regions. This study constructs a model of factors influencing teachers' professional identity in border regions based on ERG theory, examining the impact of existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs on professional identity from three dimensions. It designs specific measurement indicators to form a survey questionnaire and, through questionnaire surveys and statistical analysis, confirms the scientific validity and effectiveness of the model. This research not only enriches the literature on teacher motivation strategies but also provides theoretical references for the application of ERG theory in enhancing teachers' professional identity.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

This study took teachers at Yunnan Normal University as the specific research subject, designed a survey questionnaire related to teachers' professional identity in border regions based on ERG theory, and conducted a survey to collect relevant data for empirical analysis. Combining the results of empirical analysis, it proposes strategies to enhance teachers' professional identity in border regions from the dimensions of existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs. The research provides references for effectively improving teachers' professional identity and promoting the continuous improvement and growth of the teaching faculty in border regions. Enhancing teachers' professional identity indirectly improves the quality of talent cultivation in normal universities in border regions, alleviates the shortage of basic education teachers in multi-ethnic regions, and supports the strategy of educational equilibrium and revitalization. The conclusions of this study also provide practical references for other provinces or regions to continuously enhance teachers' professional identity and promote the sustainable development of education.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Existence Needs: In the context of a professional setting, existence needs refer to teachers' material security requirements for maintaining basic living and working conditions, including salary levels, benefits, safety, and stability of the work environment.

Relatedness Needs: Relatedness needs refer to teachers' pursuit of interpersonal connections, a sense of belonging, and social support in their professional activities, encompassing collaborative relationships with colleagues, the quality of teacher-student interactions, a sense of school belonging, and the level of social respect for the teaching profession.

Growth Needs: Growth needs refer to teachers' aspirations for professional development, professional autonomy, and achievement realization, including opportunities for academic promotion, access to training resources, support for research and innovation, and the attainment of career goals.

Professional Identity: Professional identity is teachers' internal acceptance and emotional attachment to their professional roles, values, and social functions, manifested through role cognition, value identification, recognition of the social contributions and personal significance of the profession, emotional commitment, and behavioral alignment.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to review the literature related to teachers' professional identity and provide a theoretical foundation for the variable relationships and research hypotheses in this study. The literature review covers key factors influencing teachers' professional identity, including existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs. Through a systematic review of existing literature, this chapter provides theoretical support for each variable in the research model, helps determine the relationships between these variables, and lays the groundwork for subsequent hypothesis testing.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Review of Research on Teachers' Professional Identity

2.2.1.1 Connotations of Professional Identity

There is no single definition of professional identity, as different scholars have provided various interpretations based on different perspectives. However, the overall meanings are generally similar. Relevant studies are summarized as follows:

Yin (2009) argued that professional identity refers to an individual's internal cognitive awareness and degree of recognition regarding the profession they are engaged in. The higher the professional identity, the more the individual recognizes the value of the profession. Professional identity is considered a psychological state. Che (2001), from a sociological perspective, defines professional identity as an individual's views on the social value, social impact, and artistry of the profession they are engaged in. The formation of professional identity is related to teachers' career goals, the evaluations of their profession, and societal recognition of the profession.

In summary, professional identity can be understood from two perspectives: First, from a social identity perspective, it refers to society's evaluation, expectations, perceptions, and status assessment of the profession. Second, it refers to an individual's cognitive understanding and degree of recognition of the profession, i.e., whether they fully recognize and endorse the profession.

2.2.1.2 Related Research on Teachers' Professional Identity

(1) Connotations and Measurement of Teachers' Professional Identity

The essence of teachers' professional identity is an internal cognitive state, reflecting teachers' internal recognition of the profession they are engaged in. The higher the professional identity, the more willing teachers are to engage in long-term educational and teaching work, contributing their lifelong efforts to the cause of education. They will fully commit themselves to their work, align their personal career development goals with the overall development goals of the school and even the broader educational sector, and maintain a deep love for the teaching profession. They will genuinely enjoy educational work and continuously tap into their inner potential to effectively realize their professional value in educational and teaching activities.

Van et al. (2016), focusing on medical educators, conducted in-depth interviews and found that teachers' social status is a key factor influencing professional identity. Zeng and Wang (2016) conducted an in-depth analysis of the professional identity of university teachers and found that teachers' characteristics significantly affect their professional identity. There are significant differences in professional identity among teachers of different genders, as well as among teachers from different types of schools. Teachers' teaching experience, educational background, average monthly income, and self-innovation ability all have a significant impact on their professional identity. Li and Yan (2018) designed specific measurement items to assess teachers' professional identity and constructed a model of professional identity and its influencing factors. They conducted a questionnaire survey among frontline teaching staff, and empirical analysis showed that teachers' professional values, sense of belonging, and sense of efficacy collectively constitute their professional identity. Professional identity significantly influences teachers' professional behavior. The empirical data analysis confirmed that the developed measurement scale has good reliability and validity.

(2) Research on Strategies for Enhancing Teachers' Professional Identity

Mallah (2019) pointed out that teachers' incentives can be determined from three aspects. Firstly, in terms of material incentives, competitive salaries, and a comprehensive welfare structure should be provided. Secondly, social incentives should be implemented to foster a positive atmosphere of respecting teachers and valuing education within society, thereby enhancing teachers' social status. Thirdly, expectation incentives should be provided by offering teachers promising career development prospects and assisting them in better realizing their values. Wang et al. (2014) drew extensively from organizational commitment theory in their survey and analysis of university teachers, suggesting that effective incentives for university teachers could be achieved by improving the salary structure and system, while also emphasizing the importance of career planning for teachers to promote personal growth. Tian et al. (2015) also conducted research on the incentive mechanisms for university teachers and proposed specific optimization plans:

Prioritize teachers' needs by adhering to a people-centered approach, conducting timely surveys on teachers' needs, and proposing targeted measures to effectively meet their personalized requirements.

Improve the evaluation mechanism for teachers by implementing diversified evaluations, shifting from a primarily reward-and-punishment-based approach to a developmental evaluation approach, while appropriately applying certain rewards or penalties to effectively stimulate teachers' work enthusiasm..

Enhance communication between universities and teachers by actively constructing a personal information database for university teachers, meticulously recording their information, monitoring their dynamics, and strengthening information exchange through seminars and teacher exchange meetings to promptly grasp teachers' latest developments, better understand their needs, optimize incentive plans, and enhance teachers' satisfaction with incentives.

Li et al. (2016) explored, through empirical analysis, the awareness levels of primary and secondary school teachers regarding teacher exchange policies, finding that rural teachers had significantly lower awareness of these policies compared to urban teachers but exhibited higher satisfaction with them. Shi et al. (2017) summarized current incentive strategies for university teachers and discovered that they mainly include performance-based incentives, salary and welfare incentives, and position and title incentives. Cheng et al. (2017) focused on university teachers as their research subjects to investigate how effective measures could be adopted to encourage their active participation in collaborative innovation. They first studied the participation and main issues of university teachers in collaborative innovation, analyzed the specific causes from both internal and external perspectives, and finally proposed specific countermeasures from the government, university, and enterprise levels to optimize teacher incentive measures. Kang and Yu (2018) used minority bilingual teachers as an example to propose that teachers, especially some outstanding ones, should be actively guided to assume responsibilities in bilingual teaching. They encouraged teachers to learn from exemplary peers, increase communication and exchanges among teachers, effectively enhance teaching skills, and actively implement relevant measures to strengthen the construction of the bilingual teaching faculty. This involved both raising awareness of the importance of bilingual teaching and improving teachers' various benefits by providing competitive salaries and welfare, as well as optimizing their teaching environment.

2.2.1.3 Research on the Influencing Factors of Teachers' Professional Identity

Research into the factors that influence teachers' professional identity has produced a range of findings. Liu et al. (2022) discovered that social environmental factors, campus cultural factors, and teachers' factors all significantly influence their

professional identity. Guo and Li (2021), taking special education schools as an example, researched the influencing factors of teachers' professional identity and found that teachers' personality traits, professional skill levels, salary and benefits received, and social status were all key factors affecting their professional identity. Xie (2021), focusing on private college teachers, pointed out through research that personal characteristics such as teachers' gender, age, and marital status significantly influence their sense of identity. Liu (2021), using kindergarten teachers as an example, found that teachers' professional outlook, psychological state, and work-life balance significantly impact their professional identity as kindergarten teachers. Gu and Zhang (2020) investigated the factors influencing professional identity among university teachers. They found that effectively meeting teachers' personal needs contributes to a higher level of professional identity.

Zhang (2020) specifically researched the sense of identity among novice university teachers and confirmed that professional image, school environment, work autonomy, and student quality all significantly influence teachers' professional identity. Li (2020), focusing on teacher education students in universities, confirmed through research that teachers' willpower, expectations, values, and efficacy towards their profession influence their sense of occupational identity. Xia and Yang (2020) found that teachers' professional identity is closely related to their characteristics, with factors such as gender and age significantly influencing their professional identity. Liu (2020), in a study on kindergarten teachers' professional identity, also found that teachers' gender, age, and educational background were key factors affecting their professional identity. Du et al. (2020) discovered that the support from educational management departments, the recognition private schools give to teachers, teachers' professional competence, and professional quality are all key factors influencing teachers' professional identity. Chen (2019), researching the professional identity of primary school teachers, found that factors such as gender, school affiliation, teacher title, grade taught, and work performance significantly impact teachers' professional identity.

2.2.2 ERG Theory

In the 1960s and 1970s, Professor Clayton Alderfer of Yale University, while utilizing Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory to study the needs of bank employees, proposed the ERG Theory. This theory effectively addressed the limitation of the excessive layers in the Hierarchy of Needs Theory by simplifying and combining the five levels into three core needs: existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs. The specific contents are as follows:

Firstly, existence needs refer to the basic requirements for individual survival and development, typically encompassing material needs, which can be understood as

physiological needs and basic safety needs. Generally, existence needs and safety needs are closely intertwined and inseparable (Yue & Wei, 2016).

Secondly, relatedness needs pertain to an individual's needs within organizational, social, and familial environments. This includes the need for recognition from leaders and colleagues in an organization, acknowledgment from various sectors of society, and understanding and care from family members. Relatedness needs represent an individual's requirements for all significant interpersonal relationships. These needs are fulfilled through communication and interaction with others, corresponding to the aspects of belongingness, esteem, and love in the Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Liang, 2019).

Thirdly, growth needs involve an individual's pursuit of respect, self-actualization, and continuous self-improvement. Growth needs are about fully realizing one's potential and value, thereby promoting personal fulfillment in life. For teachers, growth needs entail enhancing teaching skills and levels through their educational and teaching work, achieving professional value, and fostering continuous growth and progress in their careers (Huang & Li, 2021).

ERG Theory is a type of needs theory rooted in humanism, which not only optimizes and streamlines the Hierarchy of Needs Theory but also incorporates the interrelationships and interactions among different needs, enriching the content of each dimension. There is a certain correlation among these three levels, which generally progress in a layered manner, with higher-level needs emerging after lower-level needs are satisfied. ERG Theory delves deeper into these three levels of needs:

It posits that an individual's needs can be categorized into different levels, with the pursuit of higher-level needs typically beginning after lower-level needs are effectively met. However, multiple levels of needs can coexist, and when higher-level needs are not adequately fulfilled, an individual's desire for lower-level needs may intensify.

While the three needs in ERG Theory generally exhibit a progressive relationship, it is not strictly hierarchical. For instance, an individual may simultaneously have needs for existence, relatedness, and growth. Furthermore, after fulfilling lower-level needs, an individual may not necessarily pursue higher-level needs and might continue to seek lower-level needs due to various factors.

The theory emphasizes the concept of "frustration-regression," meaning that an individual's needs are diverse and coexist. When higher-level needs are not effectively met, individuals may revert to fulfilling lower-level needs as a substitute for higher-level needs due to frustration (Jin & Luo, 2019).

ERG Theory holds significant guiding implications for researching teacher motivation strategies. Zuo and Liu (2016) formulated effective incentive measures to

enhance the attractiveness of the teaching profession based on ERG Theory. Similarly, Li (2017) proposed specific incentive measures, such as improving remuneration, enriching the welfare system, emphasizing teacher growth and development, and actively providing training opportunities, to effectively motivate young teachers in rural areas from multiple perspectives, based on ERG Theory.

The content of ERG Theory primarily stems from the core elements of the Hierarchy of Needs Theory, with relatively minimal limitations. Existing research indicates that ERG Theory can better analyze individual motivation issues.

2.2.3 Existence Needs

Incentive factors related to "existence needs" refer to measures aimed at fulfilling teachers' fundamental existence needs, primarily centered around material rewards. These measures encompass various forms of economic compensation, including salaries, performance-based pay, bonuses, housing subsidies, and social security and housing provident fund contributions. These material conditions are essential for teachers to maintain a basic standard of living and ensure job stability. Additionally, the adequacy of the teaching environment and facilities is also considered a vital component of teachers' basic existence needs, directly influencing their work experience and teaching quality.

Scholars have conducted in-depth research on incentives addressing teachers' existence needs from various perspectives. Zuo and Liu (2016), based on ERG theory, conducted a comprehensive analysis of the attractiveness of the teaching profession, highlighting the crucial roles of salary, teacher training, and self-development opportunities in motivating teachers, and proposed specific incentive strategies. This research provides valuable insights into the underlying mechanisms of the attractiveness of the teaching profession. Li (2017) further emphasized that remuneration, as a core element in attracting and retaining teachers, significantly influences the career decisions of young teachers. With socio-economic development, salary levels have become one of the key indicators of career attractiveness, particularly for young professionals entering the workforce. A reasonable salary structure can effectively stimulate their work enthusiasm and professional loyalty (Liu & Zhao 2019). Wang (2019) focused on the incentive mechanisms for primary school teachers in rural areas, noting that the relatively harsh teaching environments and inadequate facilities in these regions hinder teachers' work motivation and teaching effectiveness. Therefore, improving the teaching environment and enriching teaching facilities not only enhances teachers' job satisfaction but also increases the attractiveness of the profession, thereby achieving effective incentive outcomes.

Meeting teachers' existing needs, particularly by optimizing material rewards and improving teaching conditions, is a critical approach to enhancing the attractiveness

of the teaching profession and stimulating teachers' work enthusiasm. Future research and practice should continue to deepen the understanding and application of these incentive factors to establish a more comprehensive and effective teacher incentive mechanism.

2.2.4 Relatedness Needs

Drawing from the specific content of ERG theory, it is evident that relatedness needs are analogous to the social and esteem needs in Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, representing an intrinsic form of emotional motivation. For teachers, these needs manifest in various aspects, including interactions with colleagues, the quality of interpersonal relationships at work, the level of respect received from students, and recognition and feedback from parents. Collectively, these factors form a crucial foundation for teachers' job satisfaction and work engagement.

Research by Luo and Zhang (2020) further elucidates the profound connotations of teachers' relatedness needs. They argue that the core of teachers' need for relatedness lies in effective communication and interaction with students and colleagues, and the subsequent support and respect gained. Teachers tend to prefer teaching in schools with harmonious interpersonal relationships and a positive atmosphere, as such environments, not only enhance their work happiness but also inspire them to engage more actively in educational and teaching activities. Additionally, teachers exhibit a higher preference for schools with democratic management, as this management style often fosters a more egalitarian and open communication environment, further satisfying their relatedness needs. When teachers feel respected and recognized by students, parents, colleagues, and school leaders, they are more inclined to contribute their wisdom and energy to the development of education.

As a vital component of the teacher professional incentive system, the fulfillment of relatedness needs directly influences teachers' work attitudes and occupational well-being. Schools and educational administrative departments should prioritize communication and interaction among teachers, striving to create a harmonious and democratic work environment to meet teachers' relatedness needs, thereby unlocking their greater work potential and creativity.

2.2.5 Growth Needs

Growth needs represent a higher-level demand, namely, the realization of self-fulfillment and personal life value. Compared to other groups, teachers generally possess a richer knowledge base and a stronger intrinsic drive for self-actualization, yearning for success in their work, and a high sense of accomplishment. The

motivating factors related to growth and development are multifaceted, encompassing the challenging nature of work, transparency and fairness in career advancement, provision of innovation space, and opportunities for self-realization.

Research by Deng and Lan (2020) on teacher motivation revealed that deficiencies in promotion and recognition mechanisms are significant factors constraining teachers' work enthusiasm. Consequently, they recommend optimizing the professional title evaluation and appointment system while improving the teacher honor system as an effective means to stimulate teachers' work passion. Wang (2015), in a study on the incentive mechanisms for young university teachers, emphasized that young teachers particularly value career development paths, and providing them with opportunities and conditions to achieve their career goals can significantly enhance their work motivation. Yang's (2020) research on incentive mechanisms for young teachers in primary and secondary schools further pointed out that focusing on teachers' personal growth trajectories and stimulating their intrinsic potential is key to effective motivation.

Growth needs are an indispensable component of the teacher professional incentive system, influencing teachers' job satisfaction, work enthusiasm, and long-term retention intentions. Educational administrators should strive to create an environment that supports teachers' continuous growth and development by offering diversified career development paths, encouraging innovative practices, and establishing fair and transparent evaluation mechanisms to meet teachers' growth needs, thereby promoting the overall optimization of the teaching workforce and enhancing educational quality.

2.2.6 Summary of Literature Review

By reviewing the literature on the application of ERG theory and studies on teachers' professional identity and its influencing factors, it is evident that existing research has achieved certain results. Firstly, ERG theory has been applied to research on teacher motivation. Secondly, while there are studies on teachers' professional identity and its improvement strategies, there is a scarcity of research specifically targeting strategies for enhancing the professional identity of frontier teachers. Most literature proposes specific countermeasures from four aspects: teachers' salaries, work environments, title promotion, and honor systems, but further research is still needed. Research on the factors influencing teachers' professional identity mainly centers around university and kindergarten educators. Key influencing factors include personal characteristics such as gender, age, and education level, as well as considerations like salary and career development opportunities. In summary, despite the abundance of research on teachers' professional identity and countermeasures, there are relatively few studies utilizing ERG theory to analyze and explore strategies for enhancing teachers' professional identity. This study innovatively applies ERG

Theory to research strategies for enhancing teachers' professional identity, enriching the literature on teachers' professional identity and its influencing factors, and broadening the application scope of ERG Theory.

2.3 Introduction to Yunnan Normal University

Yunnan Normal University (YNU) was founded as the Normal College of National Southwest Associated University in 1938. It was renamed Kunming Normal College in 1950 and adopted its current name, Yunnan Normal University, in 1984. In 1998, YNU underwent a reorganization by merging with Yunnan Institute of Education and Yunnan Institute of Physical Education.

Since its establishment, YNU has cultivated over 400,000 talents at various levels and fields, becoming a university jointly supported by the Ministry of Education and the People's Government of Yunnan Province, as well as a key construction university under the National Mid-Western Basic Capacity Enhancement Project. The university offers 12 major academic disciplines, including Philosophy, Economics, Law, and Education. It boasts 8 first-level doctoral degree authorization disciplines, 2 professional doctoral degree authorization categories, and 6 postdoctoral research stations. Additionally, YNU has 26 first-level master's degree authorization disciplines, 24 professional master's degree authorization categories, and 3 disciplines (Engineering, Chemistry, Botany, and Zoology) ranked in the top 1% globally in the ESI subject rankings. Furthermore, 32 disciplines have been listed as first-class construction disciplines in Yunnan Province. YNU is also one of the first 24 pilot universities in China to cultivate master's degree candidates in Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages.

Currently, YNU offers 71 undergraduate enrollment programs, including 20 national-level first-class undergraduate program construction sites, 27 provincial-level first-class undergraduate program construction sites, 25 outstanding talent training program majors, and 4 majors approved for provincial-level first-class (emerging) professional construction. Notably, 91% of its normal education majors have been selected as national or provincial first-class undergraduate program construction sites.

YNU has a total of 2,502 full-time faculty members, including 1 individual under the National High-Level Talent Special Support Program for Philosophy and Social Sciences Leading Talents, 2 national-level distinguished teaching masters, 2 distinguished professors under the Ministry of Education's "Changjiang Scholars Program," 1 young scholar under the same program, 4 individuals under the "Hundred, Thousand, and Ten Thousand Talent Project" of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, 5 national outstanding teachers, 2 national model teachers, 1 national advanced worker, 1 recipient of the National May 1st Labor Medal, 1 national March 8th Red-Banner Pacesetter, 2 national young and middle-aged experts with

outstanding contributions, and 11 individuals enjoying special government allowances from the State Council.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Based on the analysis of relevant research findings and in conjunction with ERG Theory, this study proposes an influencing factor model for teachers' professional identity. The model categorizes the influencing factors of teachers' professional identity into three dimensions: existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs. The model is illustrated in Figure 2.3.
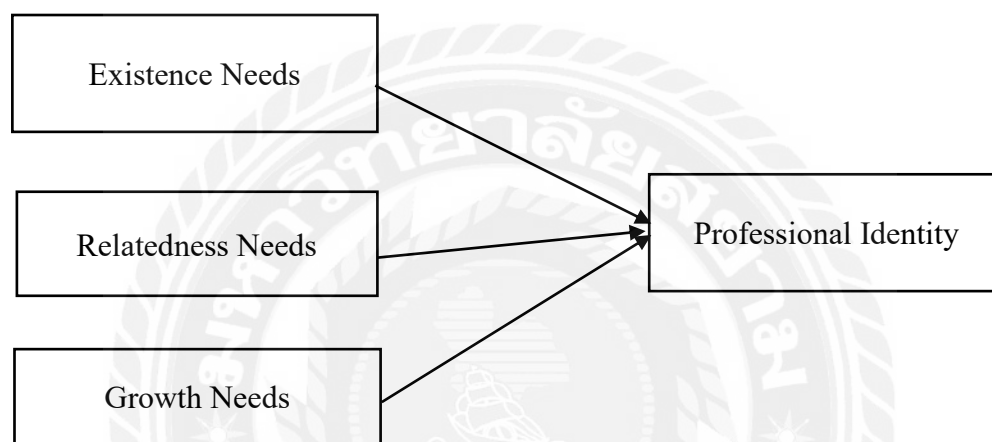

Figure 2.3 Conceptual Framework

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research approach to explore the factors influencing teachers' professional identity at Yunnan Normal University. Based on a questionnaire survey method, the study examined the relationships between existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs with professional identity. Data collection utilized a structured questionnaire employing a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

Descriptive statistics were employed to present the demographic characteristics of the sample and the data distribution patterns of the core variables by calculating means, standard deviations, and other indicators. Correlation analysis used Pearson correlation coefficients to test the strength of associations between variables. Multiple regression analysis constructed regression models to assess the predictive effects of existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs on professional identity. To ensure the scientific rigor of the research methods, SPSS software was used to conduct reliability and validity tests on the questionnaire before data analysis to ensure the reliability of the measurement tools. The research design emphasized systematic validation to reveal the influencing mechanisms of teachers' professional identity.

3.2 Population and Sample

This study targeted all full-time teachers at Yunnan Normal University as the research population and employed a random sampling method to select 400 teachers as the research sample. The sampling process focused on key demographic factors including gender, age, educational background, teaching experience, and average monthly income to ensure the sample is representative.

To enhance the reliability and generalizability of the research findings, the sampling followed the principle of randomness, avoiding subjective selection bias through random sampling and ensuring that the sample objectively reflected the characteristics of the population. The random sampling strategy balances scientific rigor with operational feasibility, providing a solid data foundation for subsequent analyses of the influencing factors of teachers' professional identity.

3.3 Hypothesis

This study aims to validate the specific impacts of existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs on teachers' professional identity at Yunnan Normal

University through factor analysis, providing theoretical support and practical guidance for enhancing professional identity. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Existence needs have a significant impact on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University.

H2: Relatedness needs have a significant impact on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University.

H3: Growth needs have a significant impact on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University.
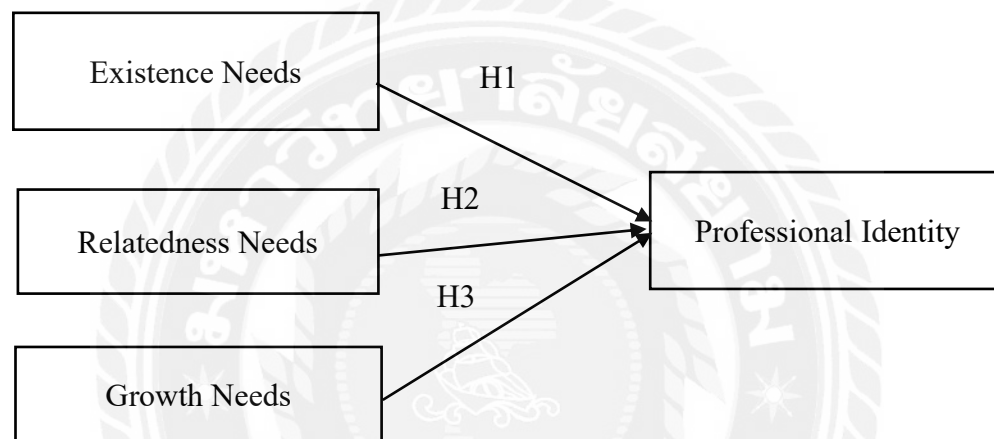
Figure 3.1 Hypotheses

3.4 Research Instrument

Table 3.1 Measurement Items

Influencing Factor	Measurement Item	References
Existence Needs	1. The current salary adequately meets my needs, fueling my work enthusiasm.	Deng & Lan; Liu & Zhao (2019)
	2. The current internal salary equity among teachers here makes me highly proactive in my job.	
	3. The school provides me with transportation subsidies and housing allowances, which adequately meet my needs for commuting and accommodation.	

	4. The teaching environment and facilities provided by the school are comprehensive, satisfying my requirements for teaching infrastructure.	
Relatedness Needs	5. The harmonious interpersonal relationships at work make it easy for me to advance in my tasks.	Luo & Zhang, (2020)
	6. I deeply identify with the school's organizational culture and values.	
	7. Being appreciated by my leaders and recognized by my colleagues is of great importance to me.	
	8. Feeling respected by my students gives me a lot of motivation.	
Growth Needs	9. In my current job, I frequently encounter new problems and solve them promptly, a process that brings me joy.	Deng & Lan (2020); Yang (2020); Wang (2015)
	10. My work possesses a certain degree of complexity and challenge.	
	11. I have access to opportunities for promotion in terms of titles, ranks, and positions, and these opportunities are fairly distributed.	
	12. I believe the current assessment and promotion criteria are very fair.	
	13. Currently, I have the opportunity and authority to participate in important school decision-making processes and teacher management.	
	14. I can manage my work schedule in a highly autonomous and flexible manner.	
	15. In my work, I am very willing to proactively explore new areas.	
	16. The school offers opportunities to enhance innovative thinking.	
	17. I believe my work contributes significantly to social progress.	
	18. I derive a sense of honor and accomplishment from my teaching profession.	
Professional Identity	19. Engaging in the teaching profession allows me to contribute to social development.	Li & Yan (2018)

	20. Engaging in the teaching profession promotes the physical and mental health of students.	
	21. Engaging in the teaching profession fills me with pride.	
	22. My personal development is intertwined with the development of the entire teaching community.	
	23. I feel happy when I hear others praise the teaching profession.	
	24. I feel sad when I hear others slander the teaching community.	
	25. My personal development is closely linked to the school's development.	
	26. I am very concerned about how others perceive my school.	
	27. I am highly competent in my teaching role.	
	28. I always complete various educational and teaching tasks diligently and on time.	

The questionnaire design of this study is based on the ERG Theory framework and constructs a measurement system around the influencing factors of teachers' professional identity. The questionnaire adopts a structured design, with all items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree), and is revised based on mature scales to ensure the scientific rigor and applicability of the tool.

The existence needs scale design focuses on teachers' perceptions of material security, job stability, and occupational safety. The theoretical basis and item design reference the studies of Zuo et al. (2016) and Liu & Zhao (2019). For example, specific items include "The current salary fairness within the teaching profession makes me very proactive in my work," with a total of 4 items designed.

The relatedness needs section focuses on the quality of interactions and social support between teachers, students, and school management. This dimension's scale references the studies of Luo & Zhang, (2020), forming 4 items. Typical items such as "I strongly identify with the organizational culture and values of the school" aim to reflect teachers' sense of belonging and collaborative experiences within the organization.

The growth needs section covers teachers' aspirations for professional ability enhancement, career advancement opportunities, and self-actualization. The scale design references the studies of Deng & Lan (2020), Yang (2020) and Wang (2015),

ultimately forming 10 items. For example, items such as "My work has a certain level of complexity and challenge" systematically assess teachers' professional development environments and personal growth spaces.

Professional identity references the research of Li and Yan (2018), with a total of 10 items designed. Items such as "Engaging in the teaching profession can contribute to social development" aim to reflect teachers' levels of professional identity.

The questionnaire survey includes a total of 33 items, divided into two main sections:

The first section contains 5 questions primarily focusing on the respondents' personal basic information, including gender, age, educational background, teaching experience, and average monthly income.

The second section contains 28 questions focusing on the influencing factors of teachers' professional identity at Yunnan Normal University, with corresponding items set from the perspectives of existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs. Specific items are shown in Table 3.1.

3.5 Reliability and Validity Analysis of the Scale

3.5.1 Questionnaire Reliability Analysis

Table 3.2 Variable Reliability Test

Influencing Factor	Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
Existence Needs	Q1	0.745	0.875	0.852
	Q2	0.741	0.836	
	Q3	0.721	0.865	
	Q4	0.758	0.856	
Relatedness Needs	Q5	0.773	0.842	0.835
	Q6	0.692	0.844	
	Q7	0.765	0.885	
	Q8	0.762	0.887	
Growth Needs	Q9	0.757	0.863	0.854
	Q10	0.778	0.865	
	Q11	0.742	0.827	
	Q12	0.781	0.838	
	Q13	0.742	0.886	
	Q14	0.781	0.872	

	Q15	0.757	0.871	
	Q16	0.778	0.895	
	Q17	0.762	0.887	
	Q18	0.749	0.825	
Professional Identity	Q19	0.758	0.837	0.845
	Q20	0.774	0.845	
	Q21	0.732	0.871	
	Q22	0.725	0.835	
	Q23	0.733	0.827	
	Q24	0.754	0.875	
	Q25	0.764	0.838	
	Q26	0.778	0.898	
	Q27	0.781	0.836	
	Q28	0.798	0.854	

Reliability analysis is a statistical process that evaluates the consistency or stability of test results to reflect the degree to which the measured characteristics are captured. The more uniform the test results are, the stronger the representativeness of the data for the overall population, and the higher the reliability. Through reliability analysis, the rationality of questionnaire design can be assessed and refined to avoid categorization errors. Cronbach's alpha is used to evaluate the internal consistency of test items. A higher Cronbach's alpha value indicates a higher degree of consistency among the items. When the reliability coefficient of a subscale exceeds 0.7, the questionnaire is considered to have good reliability; coefficients between 0.6 and 0.7 are also acceptable. For the overall scale, a reliability coefficient above 0.8 is required to demonstrate satisfactory overall reliability.

Table 3.2 presents the pretest reliability results of the questionnaire in this study. Cronbach's Alpha was employed as the internal consistency metric to assess the reliability of items within each dimension. Based on Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, all variables exhibited values above 0.8, indicating the high reliability of the questionnaire.

The overall Cronbach's Alpha value for existence needs is 0.852, which exceeds 0.8, demonstrating a high degree of internal consistency within the scale. All item coefficients are above 0.7, well above the minimum threshold of 0.4, indicating strong correlations between individual items and the total score for existence needs.

The overall Cronbach's Alpha value for relatedness needs is 0.835, greater than 0.8, suggesting good reliability and high internal consistency within the scale. All item coefficients are above 0.6, meeting the required standards.

The overall Cronbach's Alpha value for growth needs is 0.854, exceeding 0.8, indicating high internal consistency within the scale. All item coefficients are above

0.7, demonstrating strong alignment between individual items and the total score for growth needs.

The overall Cronbach's Alpha value for professional identity is 0.845, above 0.8, indicating high internal consistency within the scale. All item coefficients are above 0.7, meeting statistical requirements.

3.5.2 Questionnaire Validity Analysis

Table 3.3 KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.852
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approximate Chi-Square	2252.5
	df	35
	P	$P<0.001$

Factor analysis was determined to be appropriate based on the results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's test of sphericity. Factor analysis is only valid when the KMO value exceeds 0.7. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was conducted on the questionnaire to identify common factor indicators and the cumulative total variance explained by each factor, which was used to assess the questionnaire's discriminant validity and convergent validity. Bartlett's test of sphericity indicates that a KMO value above 0.9 is highly suitable for factor analysis, between 0.8 and 0.9 is suitable, between 0.7 and 0.8 is adequate, between 0.6 and 0.7 is unsuitable, and below 0.5 is not recommended. As shown in the table, the KMO value for the scale is 0.852, which is greater than 0.7. The chi-square approximation value is 2252.5, with $P < 0.001$, suggesting that the scale is suitable for factor analysis.

Factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted, and these factors collectively explained 67.761% of the total variance. We also considered the rotated factor analysis results using the Varimax rotation method. The rotated component matrix calculations revealed good discriminant validity among the factor items. Therefore, the validity of the questionnaire scale is deemed acceptable.

3.6 Data Collection

This study selected full-time faculty members from Yunnan Normal University as the research subjects, with data collection conducted from March to April 2025. Questionnaires were distributed and collected primarily through the online platform Wenjuanxing, and responses were retrieved digitally. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed. During the questionnaire retrieval process, the research team

conducted rigorous screening to eliminate invalid responses, including those that were incomplete or exhibited obvious inconsistencies. A total of 369 valid responses were collected, resulting in a response rate of 92.25%. Through this process, the research team successfully obtained a substantial amount of valuable data to conduct an in-depth analysis of the factors influencing the professional identity of faculty members at Yunnan Normal University.

3.7 Data Analysis

3.7.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistical analysis was performed using software such as Excel and SPSS to calculate means, standard deviations, percentages, normality tests, kurtosis values, and skewness values for the demographic characteristics of the sample. Descriptive statistics provided foundational support for further data analysis.

3.7.2 Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on the survey data using SPSS to extract common factors and identify the shared dimensions influencing faculty members' professional identity. The reliability and validity of the constructed model were confirmed, providing a theoretical basis for enhancing faculty members' professional identity.

3.7.3 Multiple Regression

Multiple regression analysis served as a comprehensive and in-depth exploratory method in this study, significantly enriching its dimensionality and accuracy. By employing multiple regression, this research overcame the limitations of univariate model analysis, enhancing both the content and depth of the study while improving its accuracy and practicality. This approach provided robust support and guidance for enhancing faculty members' professional identity.

Chapter 4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Participants

Variable	Option	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	198	53.7
	Female	171	46.3
Age	Under 30 years old	86	23.3
	31-40 years old	110	29.8
	41-50 years old	121	32.8
	51-60 years old	51	13.8
	Over 60 years old	1	0.3
Education Level	Associate Degree	25	6.8
	Bachelor's Degree	98	26.6
	Master's Degree	194	52.6
	Doctoral Degree	52	14.0
Teaching Experience	Less than 3 years	64	17.3
	3-5 years	72	19.5
	5-10 years	115	31.2
	Over 10 years	118	32.0
Monthly Income	Below 4,000 yuan	41	11.1
	4,000-8,000 yuan	256	69.4
	Above 8,000 yuan	72	19.5
Total		369	100.0

This study conducted a demographic analysis of the sample from Yunnan Normal University, revealing that the sample exhibits good representativeness and balance.

The gender distribution shows that 198 male faculty members (53.7%) and 171 female faculty members (46.3%) participated, indicating a relatively balanced male-to-female ratio. In terms of age distribution, 86 faculty members (23.3%) were under 30 years old; 110 (29.8%) were 31-40 years old; 121 (32.8%) were 41-50 years old (the largest subgroup); 51 (13.8%) were 51-60 years old; and only 1 faculty member (0.3%) was over 60 years old. This indicates a concentration of faculty members in the middle-age brackets.

In terms of education level, there are 25 teachers with an associate degree, accounting for 6.8%; 98 teachers with a bachelor's degree, accounting for 26.6%; 194 teachers with a master's degree, accounting for 52.6% (which is the highest proportion among all education levels); and 52 teachers with a doctoral degree, accounting for

14.0%. Regarding teaching experience, there are 64 teachers with less than 3 years of teaching experience, accounting for 17.3%; 72 teachers with 3-5 years of teaching experience, accounting for 19.5%; 115 teachers with 5-10 years of teaching experience, accounting for 31.2%; and 118 teachers with over 10 years of teaching experience, accounting for 32.0%, indicating a relatively balanced distribution of teaching experience. In terms of monthly income, 41 teachers earn below 4000 yuan, accounting for 11.1%; 256 teachers earn between 4000 and 8000 yuan, accounting for 69.4% (which is the highest proportion among all income brackets), and 72 teachers earn above 8000 yuan, accounting for 19.5%. Overall, this group of teachers exhibits diverse characteristics in terms of gender, age, education level, teaching experience, and income, as shown in Table 4.1.

4.1.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 4.2 Correlation between Variables

	Existence Needs	Relatedness Needs	Growth Needs	Professional Identity
Existence Needs	1			
Relatedness Needs	0.274	1		
Growth Needs	0.280	0.239	1	
Professional Identity	0.475	0.354	0.426	1

This study utilized correlation analysis to examine the relationships between various factors influencing faculty members' professional identity at Yunnan Normal University and their professional identity. The results revealed significant correlations among the variables.

The data indicated varying degrees of correlation among the variables. Specifically, the correlation coefficient between existence needs and professional identity was 0.475, suggesting a moderate positive correlation. The correlation between relatedness needs and professional identity was 0.354, indicating a positive relationship. Similarly, the correlation between growth needs and professional identity was 0.426, demonstrating a positive association.

These findings suggest that existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs all exhibit positive correlations with professional identity, albeit with varying strengths.

4.1.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 4.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Item	Unstd. B	Std. Beta	t	Sig.	VIF	F
C	0.742		7.163	0.000		
Existence Needs	0.736	0.702	6.240	0.000	1.327	
Relatedness Needs	0.625	0.666	6.635	0.000	1.231	44.84 ***
Growth Needs	0.741	0.647	6.787	0.000	1.254	
Professional Identity	0.646	0.671	6.763	0.000	1.241	
R Square	0.742					
Adjusted R Square	0.736					

NOTE：*P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001

Based on the data analysis, the regression model demonstrates a high degree of explanatory power overall. The t-value for the constant term (C) is 7.163, with a significance level (Sig.) of 0.000, significantly below the conventional threshold of 0.05, indicating statistical significance for the constant term. Additionally, the F-value is 44.84, with a p-value less than 0.05, confirming the overall significance of the model.

Regarding the explanatory variables, the unstandardized regression coefficients (Unstd. B) for existence needs, relatedness needs, growth needs, and professional identity are 0.736, 0.625, 0.741, and 0.646, respectively. The standardized regression coefficients (Std. Beta) are 0.702, 0.666, 0.647, and 0.671, all greater than 0, suggesting that these variables exert a positive influence on the dependent variable. The t-values are 6.240, 6.635, 6.787, and 6.763, respectively, with significance levels all at 0.000, indicating statistical significance for these variables.

In terms of variance inflation factors (VIF), the VIF values for existence needs, relatedness needs, growth needs, and professional identity are 1.327, 1.231, 1.254, and 1.241, respectively, all below the commonly used threshold of 10 for multicollinearity diagnosis. This suggests that no severe multicollinearity issues exist among these variables.

The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.742, and the adjusted R Square is 0.736, indicating that the model explains 74.2% (73.6% after adjustment) of the variance in the dependent variable. This demonstrates a good fit of the model to the data and its ability to explain changes in the dependent variable.

In summary, the regression model is overall significant, with all explanatory

variables exhibiting significant positive effects on the dependent variable. Furthermore, no severe multicollinearity issues exist among the variables, and the model demonstrates a good fit for the data.

Therefore, based on the data analysis results, existence needs have a significant impact on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University, supporting Hypothesis 1; Relatedness needs have a significant impact on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University, supporting Hypothesis 2; Growth needs have a significant impact on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University, supporting Hypothesis 3.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Existence Needs Have a Significant Impact on the Professional Identity of Teachers at Yunnan Normal University

From the perspective of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, existence needs, as the most fundamental level of needs, exert a profound influence on individual behavior and attitudes. For teachers at Yunnan Normal University, existence needs primarily encompass stable income, a favorable working environment, and basic living guarantees. When these needs are met, teachers can devote themselves more wholeheartedly to teaching and research activities, reducing occupational anxiety stemming from life pressures. If teachers' salaries suffice to cover daily household expenses, they are less likely to be distracted by financial concerns, allowing them to allocate more energy to enhancing teaching quality and participating in professional development activities, strengthening their sense of professional identity. Conversely, if existing needs are not adequately satisfied, teachers may frequently contemplate changing careers or taking on part-time jobs to supplement their income, which inevitably weakens their commitment to the teaching profession.

Through a questionnaire survey of some teachers at Yunnan Normal University, it was found that existence needs have a relatively pronounced effect on teachers' professional identity. Benefits such as housing subsidies and meal allowances provided by the university have, to a certain extent, alleviated teachers' survival pressures and contributed to the enhancement of their professional identity. However, existence needs do not influence teachers' professional identity in isolation; they are interconnected with factors such as the working environment and opportunities for career advancement. When existing needs are fulfilled, teachers are more inclined to focus on whether the working environment is comfortable and whether there are promising prospects for career development. If teachers are financially secure, they may be more willing to participate in training and learning activities organized by the school, thereby improving their teaching abilities and professional competencies and gaining more

opportunities for career advancement. This positive experience of professional development further reinforces their sense of identification with the teaching profession.

4.2.2 Relatedness Needs Have a Significant Impact on the Professional Identity of Teachers at Yunnan Normal University

Relatedness needs emphasize the individual's desire to establish meaningful connections with others, foster a sense of belonging, and gain recognition. For teachers at Yunnan Normal University, relationships with colleagues, students, and school administration are pivotal. Positive collegial relationships facilitate communication and collaboration among educators, enabling them to share teaching experiences and resources, ultimately enhancing instructional quality. For instance, teachers may engage in regular teaching seminars to learn from and inspire one another, fostering an interactive environment where they feel valued as integral members of the academic community, thereby strengthening their professional identity. Building strong relationships with students is equally crucial for teachers' professional identity. When teachers earn students' respect, trust, and affection, they perceive their work as meaningful, which deepens their commitment to the teaching profession.

School administration plays a vital role in addressing teachers' relatedness needs. By organizing team-building activities, faculty social gatherings, and events such as teacher sports meets or cultural galas, schools provide platforms for interaction, fostering camaraderie among educators. Moreover, cultivating a fair, equitable, and harmonious work environment ensures teachers feel respected and valued. When teachers experience positive interpersonal dynamics within the institution, they are more likely to align with the school's culture and values, reinforcing their professional identity. Beyond internal relationships, teachers' connections with the broader society also influence their professional identity. As members of society, teachers at Yunnan Normal University seek external recognition and support. When their contributions are acknowledged and praised by the community, they derive pride and satisfaction, further solidifying their identification with the teaching profession.

4.2.3 Growth Needs Have a Significant Impact on The Professional Identity of Teachers at Yunnan Normal University

Growth needs serve as a crucial driving force for teachers' professional development. Teachers at Yunnan Normal University, aspire to continuously enhance themselves in teaching, scientific research, and other aspects, achieving greater professional accomplishments. The training opportunities, academic exchange activities, and research project support provided by the university can all meet

teachers' growth needs. When teachers can improve their teaching skills through participation in training, broaden their academic horizons through academic exchanges, and achieve research outcomes through involvement in research projects, they will feel a sense of continuous progress and growth. This growth experience will make them more passionate about the teaching profession.

Career advancement is an important manifestation of teachers' growth and development, as well as a key factor influencing their professional identity. Yunnan Normal University has established a reasonable system for evaluating and promoting academic titles, providing teachers with a clear career development path. When teachers obtain title promotions through their efforts, they will feel that their work has been recognized and affirmed by the university. This recognition will further stimulate their work enthusiasm and enhance their professional identity.

Growth needs are also closely related to teachers' self-actualization needs. As intellectuals, teachers have a strong desire for self-actualization, hoping to achieve certain accomplishments in their professional fields and contribute to society. When teachers can cultivate outstanding students in teaching and achieve innovative research outcomes, they will feel that their value has been realized. This sense of self-actualization satisfaction will greatly enhance their identification with the teaching profession.

Table 4.4 Hypothesis Test Results

NO.	Hypothesis	Result
H1	Existence needs have a significant impact on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University	Supported
H2	Relatedness needs have a significant impact on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University.	Supported
H3	Growth needs have a significant impact on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University.	Supported

Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

This study focuses on the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University, delving into the impact of existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs on their professional identity. The following conclusions are drawn:

Existence needs serve as a cornerstone for teachers' professional identity. As fundamental safeguards for teachers' career development, existence needs to exert a non-negligible influence on professional identity. When teachers' basic living requirements-such as stable income, appropriate work environments, and necessary living security-are met, they can concentrate more on teaching and research, reducing burnout stemming from economic pressures and thereby strengthening their identification with the teaching profession. Research indicates that younger teachers often exhibit lower professional identity during their initial career stages due to significant economic pressures; however, as their tenure and income increase, their professional identity notably strengthens. By providing welfare measures such as housing and meal subsidies, universities effectively alleviate teachers' survival stress, laying a solid foundation for enhancing professional identity. Satisfying existence needs also enables teachers to pursue higher-level career development, further promoting their professional identity.

Relatedness needs to act as an emotional anchor for teachers' professional identity. Positive interpersonal relationships, including harmonious interactions with colleagues, students, and school administration, enhance teachers' sense of belonging and recognition. Through participation in teaching seminars, team-building activities, and collaborative efforts, teachers forge deep friendships with colleagues and collectively improve teaching quality. Establishing nurturing relationships with students fosters respect and trust, allowing teachers to experience the value and significance of their profession. School administration plays a pivotal role in cultivating a fair, equitable, and harmonious work environment by organizing various events to facilitate communication and cooperation among teachers, thereby strengthening team cohesion and professional identity.

Growth needs to provide sustained motivation for teachers' professional identity. As intellectuals, teachers possess a strong desire for self-actualization, aspiring to achieve success in teaching, research, and career advancement. University-provided training opportunities, academic exchange platforms, and research project support fulfill teachers' growth needs, driving continuous progress in their professional domains. When teachers enhance teaching skills through training, broaden academic horizons via exchanges, and attain research outcomes through projects, they profoundly sense their growth and advancement. This growth experience significantly reinforces their identification with the teaching profession. Reasonable title evaluation

and promotion mechanisms offer clear career pathways, instilling teachers with a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment during professional development, thereby solidifying their commitment to the teaching profession.

Collectively, existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs constitute critical factors influencing the professional identity of teachers at Yunnan Normal University. Universities should recognize the significance of these needs and comprehensively enhance teachers' professional identity by optimizing compensation and welfare systems, fostering harmonious interpersonal relationships, and providing abundant growth opportunities, thereby laying a robust talent foundation for sustainable institutional development.

5.2 Recommendation

(1) Optimizing the Compensation and Benefits System

To effectively enhance teachers' professional identity at Yunnan Normal University, the primary task is to focus on addressing teachers' existing needs and establishing a scientific, reasonable, and competitive compensation and benefits system. As the foundational guarantee for teachers' career development, existence needs to play a decisive role in shaping professional identity. When teachers' basic living requirements are adequately met, they can devote themselves fully to teaching and research activities, reducing occupational burnout caused by economic stress and thereby strengthening their recognition of the teaching profession.

The university should conduct in-depth market research to comprehensively understand the compensation levels of teachers in similar institutions within the same region. Combining this with the university's financial situation and development strategy, it should formulate competitive salary standards. For newly recruited young teachers, the university could appropriately increase their base salaries and offer special subsidies such as settling-in allowances and research start-up funds to alleviate their initial financial burdens and enable them to focus on their work. A scientific and reasonable salary growth mechanism should also be established, with regular adjustments to teachers' salaries based on factors such as years of service, teaching performance, and research achievements, ensuring that teachers' income increases in line with their enhanced capabilities and contributions.

The university should further enrich its benefits offerings to provide comprehensive life support for teachers. In addition to existing housing subsidy policies, the university could consider constructing teacher apartments or collaborating with local real estate developers to offer housing purchase discounts, thereby resolving teachers' housing challenges. Regarding dining, the university should improve the

quality and variety of food options in campus canteens and provide teachers with dining subsidies. Additional benefits, such as transportation allowances, children's education subsidies, and medical coverage, should also be provided to make teachers feel the university's care and warmth, thereby enhancing their sense of belonging and identification with the institution. Finally, the university should establish a robust compensation and benefits oversight mechanism to ensure the fair and equitable implementation of these policies. Regular surveys and evaluations of teachers' compensation and benefits should be conducted to promptly understand their needs and feedback, allowing for adjustments and improvements to any areas found to be inadequate.

(2) Cultivating a Harmonious Interpersonal Atmosphere

Relatedness needs serve as the emotional bond for teachers' professional identity, and positive interpersonal relationships are crucial for enhancing teachers' sense of belonging and identification with their profession. Yunnan Normal University should prioritize fostering harmonious relationships among teachers, between teachers and students, and between teachers and school administration, actively cultivating an atmosphere of harmony and rapport.

For teacher-teacher relationships, the university should establish diverse platforms for communication and collaboration. It should organize regular teaching seminars to encourage teachers to share teaching experiences, discuss methodologies, and collectively improve teaching quality. Team-building initiatives, such as outdoor expeditions and cultural/sports activities, should be implemented to deepen mutual understanding and trust among teachers, fostering a collaborative spirit. Additionally, teacher mutual-aid groups should be formed to enable teachers to support and assist each other in teaching and research endeavors, creating a positive academic and collaborative environment.

In teacher-student relationships, the university should advocate an equal, respectful, and trusting dynamic. It should reinforce teacher ethics and professionalism education, guiding teachers to care for students, respect their differences, and focus on their growth and development. Teachers should be encouraged to actively participate in students' extracurricular activities, engage in in-depth communication to understand students' needs and perspectives and provide necessary guidance and support. By fostering positive teacher-student relationships, teachers will feel respected and trusted by students, experience the value and significance of their profession, and thereby strengthen their identification with the teaching role.

For teacher-school administration relationships, the university should establish effective communication mechanisms to safeguard teachers' rights to information, participation, and oversight. Regular teacher forums should be held to gather teachers' opinions and suggestions on school development, involving them in school

management and decision-making processes. School administration should adopt a service-oriented mindset, showing concern for teachers' work and lives, and actively addressing their practical challenges.

(3) Providing Abundant Opportunities for Growth and Development

Growth needs serve as the sustained driving force for teachers' professional identity. As intellectuals, teachers possess a strong desire for self-actualization, aspiring to achieve success in teaching, research, and other areas to attain career growth. Yunnan Normal University should focus on teachers' growth needs by offering them abundant opportunities for growth and development, fostering continuous progress in their professional fields.

The university should increase investment in training and establish a comprehensive teacher training system. It should develop personalized training programs based on teachers' different developmental stages and professional needs. Newly hired teachers should receive orientation training to help them adapt to the school's teaching and research environment promptly. Mid-career and younger teachers should be provided with training in teaching skills and research methodologies to enhance their teaching and research capabilities. Core teachers should be offered opportunities for academic exchanges domestically and internationally, as well as advanced study programs, to broaden their academic horizons. The university should encourage teachers to participate in various professional training and academic conferences, supporting them in obtaining relevant professional certifications and providing more choices and opportunities for their career development.

The university should actively build academic exchange platforms to promote academic exchanges and collaborations among teachers. It should organize academic lectures, seminars, and other activities, inviting renowned experts and scholars from home and abroad to give lectures, enabling teachers to stay updated on the latest research trends and findings in their disciplines. The university should encourage teachers to engage in interdisciplinary and cross-domain academic research, facilitating cross-disciplinary integration.

The university should improve the title evaluation and promotion mechanism to provide teachers with clear career development paths. It should establish scientific and reasonable title evaluation standards, emphasizing comprehensive evaluations of teachers' teaching performance, research achievements, and social services to ensure fairness and justice in title evaluations. The university should establish diversified promotion channels, offering promotion opportunities for different types and developmental stages of teachers, in addition to traditional title promotions, by setting up honorary titles such as "Outstanding Teaching Expert" and "Research Backbone."

5.3 Further Study

This study, guided by ERG Theory, investigated teachers' professional identity and its influencing factors through a questionnaire survey and statistical analysis. The research confirmed that existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs all significantly and positively promote teachers' professional identity. However, the study has three limitations:

(1) The analysis of factors influencing teachers' professional identity is not comprehensive enough. Professional identity is shaped by multiple factors, and the optimization of teacher incentive mechanisms is not only closely related to teachers themselves but also to society, schools, and students.

(2) The research on influencing factors of teachers' professional identity is not in-depth enough. This study primarily used a questionnaire survey and data analysis to summarize the existing issues of various factors affecting teachers' professional identity. However, due to time constraints, the collected data were not sufficiently rich.

Based on the above limitations, the following suggestions are proposed for future research on teachers' professional identity:

(1) Enriching Research Dimensions for Multilateral Win-Win

Future research should further enrich the dimensions of teachers' professional identity studies, extending beyond teachers themselves to include schools, teachers, students, and society. From the school perspective, factors such as management models, campus culture, and teaching resource allocation all influence teachers' professional identity. From the student perspective, factors like students' learning attitudes, achievements, and feedback also play a role in shaping teachers' professional experiences. From the societal perspective, the level of societal emphasis on education, recognition of teachers, and relevant policy support are all crucial factors affecting teachers' professional identity. By comprehensively considering these factors, a win-win development can be achieved for schools, teachers, students, and society, creating a favorable educational ecosystem.

(2) In-Depth Research and Information Acquisition

Future research should strengthen in-depth investigations and analyses of various factors influencing teachers' professional identity. In addition to using questionnaire surveys and data analysis, in-depth interviews or consultations with experts should also be included. Through face-to-face exchanges with teachers, their practical issues, inner needs, and expectations regarding incentive mechanisms can be understood; experts in the education field should be invited to provide professional insights and

forward-looking suggestions on the influencing factors of teachers' professional identity.

The study of teachers' professional identity is a complex and systematic endeavor, requiring continuous expansion of research horizons and deepening of content, to propose more targeted and effective strategies and suggestions.

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Appendix

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for your participation in this questionnaire survey. The survey will be conducted anonymously, and your relevant information will be kept confidential. Thank you again for your cooperation.

Part Ⅰ:

Please fill in the following basic information:

1.Your gender:

A. Male

B. Female

2.Your age:

A. Under 30 years old

B. 31-40 years old

C. 41-50 years old

D. 51-60 years old

E Over 60 years old

3. Education level:

A. Associate Degree

B. Bachelor's Degree

C. Master's Degree

D. Doctoral Degree

4. Teaching experience:

A. Less than 3 years

B. 3-5 years

C. 5-10 years

D. Over 10 years

4. Monthly Income:

A. Below 4,000 yuan

B. 4,000-8,000 yuan

C. Above 8,000 yuan

Part Ⅱ:

Please judge to what extent you agree with the following statement; choose the most appropriate option, and mark the corresponding number " √. " The questionnaire used a Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5 in which one indicates strongly disagree, two indicates relatively disagree, three indicates neutral, four indicates relatively agree, and five indicates strongly agree

Measuring Item	Strongly Disagree	Relatively Disagree	Neutral	Relatively Agree	Strongly Agree
Existence Needs					
The current salary adequately meets my needs, fueling my work enthusiasm.					
The current internal salary equity among teachers here makes me highly proactive in my job.					
The school provides me with transportation subsidies and housing allowances, which adequately meet my needs for commuting and accommodation.					
The teaching environment and facilities provided by the school are comprehensive, satisfying my requirements for teaching infrastructure.					
Relatedness Needs					
The harmonious interpersonal relationships at work make it easy for me to advance in my tasks.					
I deeply identify with the school's organizational culture and values.					
Being appreciated by my leaders and recognized by my colleagues is of great importance to me.					

Feeling respected by my students gives me a lot of motivation.					
Growth Needs					
In my current job, I frequently encounter new problems and solve them promptly, a process that brings me joy.					
My work possesses a certain degree of complexity and challenge.					
I have access to opportunities for promotion in terms of titles, ranks, and positions, and these opportunities are fairly distributed.					
I believe the current assessment and promotion criteria are very fair.					
Currently, I have the opportunity and authority to participate in important school decision-making processes and teacher management.					
I can manage my work schedule in a highly autonomous and flexible manner.					
In my work, I am very willing to proactively explore new areas.					
The school offers opportunities to enhance innovative thinking.					
I believe my work contributes significantly to social progress.					
I derive a sense of honor and accomplishment from my teaching profession.					
Professional Identity					

Engaging in the teaching profession allows me to contribute to social development.		41			
Engaging in the teaching profession promotes the physical and mental health of students.					
Engaging in the teaching profession fills me with pride.					
My personal development is intertwined with the development of the entire teaching community.					
I feel happy when I hear others praise the teaching profession.					
I feel sad when I hear others slander the teaching community.					
My personal development is closely linked to the school's development.					
I am very concerned about how others perceive my school.					
I am highly competent in my teaching role.					
I always complete various educational and teaching tasks diligently and on time.					