

# Analysis of Teacher Anxiety Phenomenon from the Perspective of Uncertainty

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**Abstract:** *Teacher anxiety is a common psychological phenomenon that has a significant impact on the personal mental health and teaching quality of teachers. Starting from the perspective of uncertainty, this article analyzes that uncertainty is one of the main causes of teacher anxiety, and proposes strategies and suggestions to alleviate anxiety, including improving teachers' ability and predictive ability, seeking support and help, and actively dealing with uncertainty. Finally, the article explores the essence and significance of teacher anxiety, as well as the inspiration and application value of the uncertainty perspective.*

**Keywords:** *teacher anxiety, uncertainty, psychological health, teaching quality*

## 1. Introduction

In the field of education, teachers are important guides and supporters of student growth and development. However, teachers are facing an increasingly complex and changing educational environment, which brings a lot of uncertainty to their work. Teacher anxiety, as a common psychological state, is widely present in the teacher community and has a negative impact on education quality and teacher job satisfaction.

Teacher anxiety refers to the psychological state in which teachers feel nervous, worried, and uneasy in teaching, evaluation, and career development. This anxiety may manifest as symptoms such as stress, self doubt, emotional fluctuations, and physical discomfort, and in severe cases may even lead to teacher burnout and intention to resign. Therefore, understanding and responding to teacher anxiety is of great significance for improving education quality, ensuring teacher health, and promoting educational reform.

In previous studies, teacher anxiety has been widely studied, and researchers have sought to reveal its mechanisms and influencing factors [1]. However, existing research still has certain shortcomings in explaining teacher anxiety. Traditional research often views anxiety as an internal psychological issue within individuals, emphasizing the impact of individual traits, work pressure, and educational policies on anxiety. However, these explanations overlook the uncertainty factors in the educational environment, which is precisely an important factor leading to teacher anxiety.

The uncertainty perspective emphasizes the uncertain characteristics of the educational environment faced by teachers and their impact on individual emotions and mental health. The uncertainty in the field of education can come from the needs and differences of students, changes in educational policies, and unclear evaluation standards. This uncertainty brings unpredictable and uncontrollable challenges to teachers, leading to anxiety. Therefore, analyzing the phenomenon of teacher anxiety from the perspective of uncertainty helps to have a more comprehensive understanding and explanation of the formation process of teacher anxiety.

This paper aims to explore the phenomenon of teacher anxiety and its influencing factors in depth through an analysis based on the perspective of uncertainty. Specifically, this study will focus on the role of uncertainty factors in teacher anxiety and explore other factors that may affect teacher anxiety. Through in-depth analysis of teacher anxiety, this study aims to provide theoretical support and practical suggestions for improving education quality, ensuring teacher health, and enhancing the job satisfaction of educators.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1 Definition and manifestations of teacher anxiety**

Teacher anxiety refers to the psychological state in which teachers feel nervous, worried, and uneasy in teaching, evaluation, and career development [2]. Teacher anxiety usually manifests as various symptoms, including but not limited to stress, self doubt, emotional fluctuations, and physical discomfort. The manifestations of teacher anxiety vary from person to person. Some teachers may be more prone to symptoms of emotional excitement, irritability, or depression, while others may be more inclined to internalize problems, showing self blame, inferiority, or self doubt.

### **2.2 Reasons and influencing factors of teacher anxiety**

The emergence of teacher anxiety is related to various reasons and influencing factors. Traditional research mainly focuses on the impact of individual traits and work pressure on teacher anxiety, however, new research increasingly views anxiety as a result of uncertainty in the educational environment. The following are some common causes and influencing factors of teacher anxiety:

#### **2.2.1 Work pressure**

The work pressure faced by teachers is one of the important factors leading to anxiety. Teachers need to fulfill multiple roles, such as teaching scholars, counselors, evaluators, etc., while also dealing with many challenges and pressures [3]. Teachers need to meet the needs and differences of students at different levels, from classroom teaching to extracurricular tutoring, and also pay attention to the comprehensive improvement of students' overall quality. The frequent changes in educational policies have also brought enormous challenges and pressure to teachers. Teachers need to constantly understand and adapt to new policies and requirements, while maintaining updated and innovative teaching content and methods. In addition, teachers also need to face the expectations and pressures of students and parents, as well as interactive relationships with colleagues, superiors, and society. All of these pressures will increase the workload and psychological pressure of teachers, leading to the emergence and intensification of teacher anxiety. Therefore, reducing the work pressure of teachers, improving their work efficiency and satisfaction, is one of the important measures to alleviate teacher anxiety.

#### **2.2.2 Individual traits**

Individual traits also have a certain impact on teacher anxiety. Different individuals may exhibit different psychological responses when facing the same educational challenges and uncertainties due to their different individual traits. For example, an individual's tolerance for uncertainty is one of the important factors affecting anxiety. Some teachers may be more adaptable to uncertain environments, have a higher tolerance, and be better able to cope with various changes and challenges, thereby reducing anxiety. However, some teachers may have a lower tolerance for uncertainty and are more prone to developing anxiety. In addition, teachers' self-efficacy can also affect their anxiety. If teachers believe that they can control the uncertainty in the educational environment and believe that they can effectively handle any educational issues, they may be more confident and less likely to experience anxiety. On the contrary, if teachers lack self-efficacy and believe that they cannot cope with educational challenges, they may develop more anxiety. Finally, emotional regulation ability is also one of the factors that affect anxiety. Teachers need to effectively regulate their emotions in various emotional states to maintain balance and stability. If teachers lack emotional regulation ability, they may be more prone to developing anxiety. Therefore, understanding and considering the impact of individual traits on teacher anxiety is one of the important measures to effectively prevent and treat teacher anxiety.

#### **2.2.3 Changes in education policies**

The frequent changes in educational policies may bring uncertainty to teachers, which may increase their anxiety. The adjustment and change of educational policies are aimed at better adapting to social development and educational needs, but for teachers, these new policies often require them to learn and adapt multiple times, which may make them feel uneasy and confused. Changes in evaluation criteria, adjustments to curriculum requirements, and other factors can all trigger teacher anxiety. When teachers face new evaluation standards or curriculum requirements, they need to redesign their teaching plans, design new teaching strategies, and adapt to new teaching methods and techniques. This may consume a lot of time and energy, increase the workload of teachers, and lead to their anxiety. In addition, changes in education policies may also make teachers feel uncertain about the future, such as concerns about the stability of their job positions, the need to relearn new teaching skills, etc. These concerns may also cause

teachers to feel anxious and stressed. Therefore, policy makers need to pay more attention to the feasibility and implementation of education policies, reduce the frequency and magnitude of policy changes, and thus reduce the work pressure and anxiety of teachers.

#### ***2.2.4 Student needs and differences***

Teachers need to address the needs and differences of different students, which may increase their work pressure and anxiety. The diversity of student problems and challenges faced by teachers makes them feel confused and powerless in the teaching process. Each student has a unique learning style, ability level, and background experience, so teachers need to develop personalized teaching plans and strategies based on the needs of each student. This requires teachers to have flexibility and adaptability, constantly adjusting their teaching methods and content to meet the learning needs of students. However, facing the individual differences and learning problems of numerous students, teachers may feel frustrated and at a loss. They may worry about whether they can effectively meet the needs of each student and whether they have enough time and resources to pay attention to each student. This increase in uncertainty and sense of responsibility often brings additional work pressure and anxiety to teachers. In order to alleviate the anxiety of teachers, it is necessary to provide more support and resources, such as professional training and guidance, establishing cooperation platforms and communication mechanisms, so that teachers can share and learn from each other's experiences and teaching methods, and better respond to the needs and differences of students. At the same time, it is also necessary to establish a supportive educational environment that makes teachers feel respected and valued, encourages them to actively explore and try new teaching methods, and provides better educational services for students. Through these measures, teachers can reduce work pressure, enhance self-confidence, improve teaching quality, and thus reduce anxiety.

#### ***2.2.5 Social recognition and evaluation***

The social recognition and evaluation of the teaching profession have a profound impact on the inner state of teachers. In contemporary society, the role and responsibility of teachers have been widely recognized and regarded as key factors for social progress and development. However, this recognition also brings some pressure and anxiety. Teachers may feel anxious due to concerns about the evaluation of themselves by students and parents. Teachers are student-centered and committed to providing students with a good educational and developmental environment. However, educational goals and teaching methods vary among individuals, and students and parents have different expectations for teachers. This requires teachers to constantly adapt and adjust their teaching methods to meet the needs of students and parents. At the same time, teachers must also bear the pressure of evaluation from students and parents, worrying about whether their performance can be recognized and appreciated. This worry and anxiety may have a negative impact on the self-confidence and teaching effectiveness of teachers. Teachers may also feel uneasy due to pressure from superiors and colleagues. In educational institutions, teachers need to abide by the teaching syllabus, implement the school's rules and regulations, and accept guidance and supervision from superiors. At the same time, teachers also need to collaborate and communicate with colleagues to jointly achieve educational goals. These pressures from superiors and colleagues may include demands for task volume, pressure to evaluate results, and expectations for work quality. Teachers may feel worried and uneasy, worried about not being able to meet these requirements and expectations, and even worried about their career prospects and development.

#### ***2.3 Theoretical basis of uncertainty perspective***

The uncertainty perspective emphasizes the uncertainty characteristics in the educational environment and their impact on individual emotions and mental health. According to the uncertainty management theory, uncertainty refers to the sense of uncertainty that individuals feel when facing situations that are unpredictable and uncontrollable. In the field of education, this uncertainty can arise from the needs and differences of students, changes in educational policies, and unclear evaluation standards. The uncertainty perspective believes that the uncertainty faced by teachers can trigger their anxiety. Teachers need to make many decisions and tackle various challenges in the teaching process. However, due to the uncertainty of the educational environment, they are unable to accurately predict and control future situations, which can increase their anxiety. In addition, the uncertainty perspective also emphasizes individuals' cognition and coping strategies towards uncertainty. The cognitive style and coping strategies of individuals towards uncertainty may affect their emotional responses to uncertainty. For example, some teachers may be more inclined to view uncertainty as a threat and challenge, thus adopting positive coping strategies, while others may be more likely to view uncertainty as pressure and burden, thus adopting negative coping strategies.

In summary, the perspective of uncertainty provides a new theoretical framework to explain the phenomenon of teacher anxiety and emphasizes the impact of uncertain factors in the educational environment on individual emotions and mental health. This perspective helps to gain a deeper understanding of the formation process of teacher anxiety and provides corresponding coping strategies and suggestions for decision-makers and practitioners in the field of education.

### **3. Methods**

#### ***3.1 Research design and samples***

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design to explore the relationship between teacher anxiety and uncertainty. The research sample includes teachers from different schools and grades. To ensure the representativeness and diversity of the sample, researchers used a stratified sampling method, dividing the sample into several subgroups based on factors such as teacher titles, teaching experience, and location. Then, a certain number of teachers were randomly selected from each subgroup as the research subjects. In the end, a total of 350 teachers participated in this study.

#### ***3.2 Research tools and data analysis methods***

This study used two main research tools: the Teacher Anxiety Questionnaire and the Uncertainty Questionnaire.

The teacher anxiety questionnaire is constructed based on the definition and manifestation of teacher anxiety, including multiple dimensions of measurement items, such as stress, self doubt, emotional fluctuations, etc. The researchers conducted expert review and trial testing on the questionnaire to ensure its reliability and validity. Teachers are required to rate each measurement item based on their recent teaching experience and emotional state.

The uncertainty questionnaire is constructed based on the perspective of uncertainty management theory, aiming to measure teachers' perception and cognition of uncertainty in the educational environment. The questionnaire includes multiple dimensions of measurement items, such as predictive ability, sense of control, and coping strategies. Similarly, the researchers conducted expert review and trial testing on the questionnaire to ensure its reliability and validity. Teachers are required to rate each measurement item based on their own experience and feelings towards the educational environment.

After the data collection is completed, the researchers use statistical software for data analysis. Firstly, the researchers calculated the overall scores of teacher anxiety and uncertainty, and separately calculated scores for each dimension. Then, the researchers used relevant analysis methods to explore the relationship between teacher anxiety and uncertainty. In addition, the researchers conducted multiple regression analysis to determine the predictive effect of uncertainty on teacher anxiety, and further explored the moderating effects of individual traits and work pressure factors.

Finally, the researchers explained and discussed the research results, and proposed relevant suggestions and coping strategies to help decision-makers and practitioners in the education field alleviate teacher anxiety and improve teaching quality.

### **4. Result analysis**

#### ***4.1 Description and manifestation of teacher anxiety phenomenon***

Through statistical analysis of the teacher anxiety questionnaire scores of the survey samples, we obtained a description and manifestation of the phenomenon of teacher anxiety. The results show that teacher anxiety is quite common in the field of education, and many teachers have experienced varying degrees of anxiety emotions. Teacher anxiety exhibits diversity in different dimensions, mainly including the following aspects:

Firstly, one of the main manifestations of teacher anxiety is a sense of pressure. Many teachers feel a lot of pressure in their teaching work, and the pressure from students, parents, school management, and other aspects makes them feel overwhelmed. This sense of pressure often leads to emotional tension, fatigue, and anxiety among teachers.

Secondly, teacher anxiety also manifests as instability in self doubt and self-evaluation. Teachers

often question their teaching ability and professional level, fearing that they may not be competent in teaching tasks. This kind of self doubt and unstable self-evaluation will further exacerbate the anxiety of teachers.

In addition, teacher anxiety is often accompanied by emotional fluctuations and distress. Many teachers experience emotional fluctuations when facing teaching challenges and pressure, such as anxiety, depression, anger, etc. These negative emotions can have adverse effects on the work effectiveness and mental health of teachers.

#### ***4.2 The degree and ways in which uncertainty factors affect teacher anxiety***

The research results show that uncertainty factors have a significant impact on teacher anxiety. Uncertainty is widely present in the educational environment, such as adjustments to teaching content, changes in student needs, and unclear evaluation standards, all of which bring great uncertainty to teachers. One of the main reasons why uncertainty can cause teacher anxiety is the lack of predictive ability. Teachers need to predict and judge the learning progress and teaching effectiveness of students during the teaching process. However, due to the uncertainty of the educational environment, teachers often cannot accurately predict student reactions and teaching outcomes, which can increase their anxiety. In addition, uncertainty can also reduce teachers' sense of control. Teachers often hope to have high control over their teaching process and results, but in situations of high uncertainty, they often feel unable to control the direction and results of teaching. This lack of control can further exacerbate their anxiety.

#### ***4.3 Other factors that affect teacher anxiety***

In addition to uncertainty factors, the study also found that multiple other factors have an impact on teacher anxiety. Firstly, individual traits are one of the important factors affecting teacher anxiety. Research has found that teachers with introverted personalities, low self-esteem, and poor emotional stability are more likely to experience anxiety. These individual traits will make teachers more sensitive and susceptible to external pressure, thereby increasing the occurrence of anxiety. Secondly, work pressure is also an important factor leading to teacher anxiety. The work pressure of teachers mainly comes from the heavy workload of teaching tasks, time pressure, and the improvement of student needs. Excessive work pressure can make teachers feel overwhelmed, leading to the generation of anxiety. In addition, educational policies and management can also have an impact on teacher anxiety. Research has found that overly emphasizing educational policies and management measures such as assessment results and unreasonable evaluation systems can bring significant pressure and anxiety to teachers.

Overall, teacher anxiety is a complex psychological phenomenon that is influenced by multiple factors. Uncertainty factors play an important role in teacher anxiety, while individual traits, work pressure, educational policies and management also have a significant impact on teacher anxiety. Understanding these influencing factors is of great significance for reducing teacher anxiety and improving teaching quality.

### **5. Discussion and conclusion**

#### ***5.1 The essence and significance of teacher anxiety phenomenon***

Teacher anxiety is a common psychological phenomenon, manifested as negative emotions such as feeling heavy pressure, self doubt, and emotional fluctuations in educational work. The essence of teacher anxiety is the challenges and uncertainties brought about by educational work. Teachers need to face factors such as different levels of student needs, varying degrees of learning difficulties, and complex teaching environments, all of which can bring enormous pressure and uncertainty to teachers. The emergence of teacher anxiety not only affects the personal psychological health of teachers, but also has a negative impact on teaching quality and student development.

The existence and severity of teacher anxiety are of great significance to the field of education. Firstly, the existence of teacher anxiety indicates that there are enormous challenges and pressures in educational work itself, and it is necessary to pay attention to and support the psychological health of teachers. Secondly, teacher anxiety can have an impact on the quality of teaching, such as emotional fluctuations leading to a decrease in teaching effectiveness and negative teaching attitudes, all of which can affect students' learning outcomes and development. Therefore, the research and response to teacher anxiety have important theoretical and practical significance.

### **5.2 Inspiration and application value of uncertainty perspective**

Uncertainty is one of the main causes of teacher anxiety, therefore, analyzing the phenomenon of teacher anxiety from the perspective of uncertainty has great inspiration and application value. In response to the existence of uncertainty, teachers can alleviate anxiety through the following aspects:

(1) Improve one's own ability level and predictive ability. Teachers can continuously improve their professional abilities, enhance their ability to predict teaching processes and outcomes, and better cope with the uncertainty in the educational environment through educational training, self-learning, and other means.

(2) Seeking support and assistance. Teachers can seek support and assistance from colleagues, family, or professional psychological counselors. Sharing experiences and feelings with others can alleviate teachers' anxiety and improve their ability to cope with uncertainty.

(3) Actively respond to uncertainty. Teachers can alleviate anxiety by actively dealing with uncertainty, such as adopting flexible teaching strategies, adjusting teaching objectives and methods, etc. These measures can enhance teachers' sense of control and self-efficacy, thereby reducing anxiety.

### **5.3 Strategies and suggestions for dealing with teacher anxiety**

In response to the phenomenon of teacher anxiety, the following strategies and suggestions are proposed:

(1) Strengthen psychological health education for teachers. The education department and schools should attach importance to the mental health issues of teachers, strengthen mental health education in education, training, and career development, and improve the psychological quality and coping ability of teachers.

(2) Improve the evaluation system and educational management. Education policies and management should pay more attention to the actual needs and professional characteristics of teachers, establish a reasonable evaluation system and management mechanism, reduce the pressure and workload of teacher evaluation, and improve their job satisfaction and confidence.

(3) Establish support and assistance mechanisms. Schools should establish a professional team of psychological counselors to provide psychological counseling and support to teachers, establish a teacher ethics support mechanism, and strengthen mutual assistance and support among teachers.

Overall, addressing teacher anxiety requires multiple approaches, including improving teacher psychological quality, improving educational policies and management, and establishing support and assistance mechanisms. These measures can effectively alleviate the anxiety of teachers, improve teaching effectiveness and educational quality.

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