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# Subjective Social Class and the Retention Intentions of Teachers from the Publicly Funded Normal Students Program in China: The Dual Mediating Effect of Organizational and Professional Identity

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Abstract: A stable teaching force is an important guarantee for the sustainable development of education. Teacher turnover is one of the reasons for the teacher shortage in rural areas. Although studies have examined the influencing factors of teachers' turnover intention, little is known about the effect of subjective social status on teachers' turnover intention, especially for publicly funded normal students program (PFNSP) teachers who play a vital role in improving the quality of education in less developed regions of central and western China. A questionnaire survey was conducted, which returned a total of 16,731 responses (8141 public recruited teachers and 1498 teachers from PFNSP). The study explores the influence of subjective social class on PFNSP teachers' retention intention and the mediating role of organizational and professional identity on this impact. Except for organizational identity, the subjective social class, professional identity, and retention intentions of PFNSP teachers were significantly lower than those of publicly recruited teachers. There was a significant association between subjective social class and retention intentions of PFNSP teachers. In addition, organizational identity and professional identity had a significant positive relationship to PFNSP teachers' retention intention, and played partial mediating roles in the relationship between subjective social class and retention intentions.

**Keywords:** China; publicly-funded normal students program; subjective social class; retention intentions; organizational identity; professional identity



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#### 1. Introduction

Rural education, as a form of education imparted in rural areas, covering towns and villages below the county level within the administrative structure, is a major strategy to promote sustainable rural development in China [1]. It is an organic part of rural society, which plays an important role in the healthy development of rural children, the inheritance and innovation of rural culture, and the construction of rural society. More than half of school-age children study in rural areas [2]. Therefore, the quality of rural education is related to the overall quality of national education and development level to a great extent. It is undeniable that sustainable development in rural education requires quality resources as a core support, and teacher resources are one of the key elements. Only by attracting and retaining excellent rural teachers and improving the development level of rural teachers can the education quality of rural schools be improved, so as to continuously improve the running level of rural schools, rationally and evenly allocate educational resources, and carry out the construction and development of rural schools in accordance with local conditions. Aiming to realize the sustainable development of rural education, the Chinese government has made great efforts in the cultivation of rural teachers and external guarantee mechanisms, such as the implementation of the publicly funded normal students

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program (PFNSP), the policy of urban and rural teachers' mobility, the salary system of rural teachers, and the special post system of rural teachers.

The PFNSP offers a series of policy incentives to the normal universities directly under the Ministry of Education to enroll students in central and western provinces, such as tuition and accommodation fee waivers, living allowances, exemptions from teacher qualifications, and incentives to study for a master's degree on the job. However, the program does require students to return to their province of origin and work in education for at least six years after graduation. Since the implementation of this program, the six normal universities directly under the Ministry of Education have trained more than 120,000 publicly funded normal students [3], which has significantly improved the quality of teachers working in rural areas. PFNSP has attracted a large number of talented people to pursue teaching careers, especially in the central and western regions, and has had a positive impact on strengthening the teaching workforce in these regions and promoting the balanced development of basic education [4]. PFNSP is a major policy shift in terms of teacher deployment in China, as it breaks the inherent pattern of over-concentrating outstanding talent in economically developed and education-rich regions. It has greatly enabled the students there to enjoy quality education in a fair manner. To complement the national policy, each province has also similarly introduced local policies to train quality teachers for the region by relying on provincial normal colleges [5]. So far, 28 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) have implemented their own PFNSP, and have trained more than 40,000 graduates each year to teach in rural primary and secondary schools, thus further expanding the scale of training and the number of employment opportunities [6].

Nevertheless, existing research has indicated that the willingness of both national and provincial PFNSP graduates to remain in their jobs is generally low, and that it declines gradually as they carry out their contracts [5,7]. In other words, the retention intentions of PFNSP teachers are low. Zhang et al. [8] identified significant differences in the retention intentions of teachers who entered the profession via different selection methods, such as substitute-teacher conversion, the publicly funded normal students program, and the special posting program. While the factors influencing the retention intentions of teachers have drawn scholarly attention, research has mostly focused on the demographic characteristics of teachers (e.g., gender, major, place of residence, and ethnicity) [9] and job characteristics such as salary, career-development prospects, working environment, and social status [10]. In general, the literature examines the factors that influence the retention intentions of PFNSP teachers, albeit these studies are mostly unconnected, in the sense that deeper links and interaction mechanisms between the influencing factors have yet to be explored. Moreover, they emphasize only objective facts rather than PFNSP teachers' subjective perceptions, such as their subjective social class.

Subjective social class reflects the teachers' perception of their own social status based on objective factors such as individual and job characteristics. In particular, the life experiences and educational backgrounds of PFNSP teachers differ significantly from those of regular teachers, as they mostly hail from rural areas and are required to start their career in rural positions after graduation [4], which has a significant impact on their self-positioning in the social structure. Based on the rank-based theory of social class identity [11], social class can shape their identities, which will culminate in distinct behaviors, cognitions, or affective responses [12]. Yuan and Bai [13] reported that the social class identity of primary and secondary school teachers is generally low in China, which is a major reason why teacher retention is difficult. Studies have only briefly examined the subjective social status perceptions of PFNSP teachers, which leaves a gap in the literature that we aim to fill.

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Social class is divided into subjective and objective social class. Subjective social class refers to an individual's perception of their position in the social class structure [14], while objective social class is determined by a combination of factors such as income

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level, education level, and occupation [15]. Subjective social class is typically ascertained by asking individuals to judge their social ranking in comparison to others [11,16]. The formation mechanism of subjective social class has been explained by three common theories [17]. One is the social fact theory, in which Durkheim argues that an individual's class identity is a social fact and a direct reflection of objective socioeconomic status [18]. Subjective social class is influenced not only by income, education, and occupation, but also by lifestyle, in which cultural and economic capital are important aspects in shaping individual perceptions of class [19]. Some studies have also found a gap between subjective social class identity and objective social class, which is described as "identity rupture" [20]. This refers to the difference between individuals' subjective social class and their traditional class affiliation and family background. Second, the "relative deprivation theory" states that the subjective social class is influenced by the environment in which the individual lives and the other members of society with which they are often in close contact. Liu [21] proposed this theory to explain this phenomenon, arguing that if an individual possesses fewer resources compared to other groups in society, the person will experience a sense of relative deprivation that eventually shapes their social class perception. Subsequently, some scholars have also put forward the "change in frame of reference" theory to challenge the specific reference point elaborated in the "relative deprivation" theory, and argue that the entire society should be considered. The change in "frame of reference" should be considered at the level of the whole society [22]. Third, the "mixed fact-reference theory" combines objective socio-economic status with the psychological factor of reference system formation and claims that subjective social class is a subjective judgment of objective social class, which is a psychological and social response based on social material resources [23].

Subjective social class has a significant impact on individuals' attitudes, emotions, cognition, and behavior [24]. A growing body of evidence suggests that social class matters for organizations [25,26]. Individuals' subjective social class affects their workplace attitudes, job satisfaction [27], and organizational commitment. People with lower subjective class identities tend to develop negative interpretations of work and be less competent [28]. Subjective social class also has a significant positive effect on emotional well-being [29,30], such that those with higher subjective social class perceptions are more likely to experience positive emotions [31] and have lower levels of survival anxiety [32]. Individuals with higher subjective social class perceptions focus more on the realization of self-worth rather than materialism in terms of values [33], and also display higher levels of social participation behavior. Individuals with upper middle subjective social class perceptions identify more with a sense of social justice than those in the lower middle classes [34]. The willingness of PFNSP teachers to stay in their jobs is a multidimensional psychological state that integrates values, emotional experiences, social cognition, and work-life patterns. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1: Subjective social class has a significant positive effect on the retention intentions of PFNSP teachers.

The retention intentions of PFNSP teachers are subjective feelings that are generated in a specific organizational environment and career situation. Their willingness to stay in their jobs is significantly correlated with their work identities as well [35–37], including organizational identity and professional identity. Identity refers to the constant process of one's searching for a point of reference through accepting and altering certain identifications while rejecting others [38]. Organizational identification is defined as the "perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organization, where the individual defines him- or herself in terms of the organization(s) in which he or she is a member" [39]. It contributes to individual development in the organization and serves as the reference standard for individual self-positioning in the organization [40]. Organizational identity negatively predicts the willingness of teachers to leave [41,42]. Bruch [41] found that organizational identification influences employees' turnover intention in unique ways depending on their hierarchical level within the organization. Social class identity, which represents social

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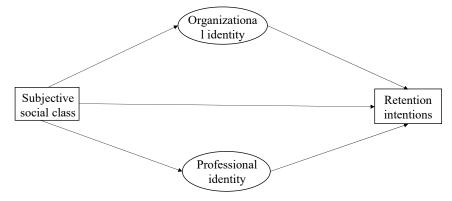
status level, has a significant impact on organizational identity [43]. People use their assessment of their status and position in relation to others to perceive their subordination to the organization, which, in turn, impacts their evaluation of the organization and their choice of whether to cooperate with the organization. Research has established that the higher the level of social class identification, the greater the degree of pro-social behavior of individuals, and the stronger their bond with the organization [44]. Organizational members' augmented positive sense of organizational responsibility, autonomous behaviors, and perceptions of power due to higher levels of social class identification reflect their higher levels of organizational identity.

Professional identity is defined as the extent to which professional employees experience a perceived oneness or bond with their profession [45,46]. Professionals tend to be defined more by "what they do" than the "where they work" of organizational identification [46]. Assuredly, the level of teachers' professional identity is also directly related to their willingness to stay in the teaching profession. In fact, studies have found that the higher the level of professional identity, the lower the willingness to leave the profession [47–49]. That is, the stronger the professional identity of teachers, the lower the turnover intention [48]. Currently, there is a wealth of research in the academic community on the dimensions of professional identity measurement. Wei et al. [50] evaluated teachers' professional identity in terms of four dimensions: professional values, role values, sense of belonging, and professional behavioral tendencies. Others measured professional competence, professional honor, professional loyalty, professional status, and professional development [51]. From the assessment dimension, professional identity is influenced by the value attributes of the profession itself on the one hand, and by comparison with other professions in society on the other [52]. From the "mixed fact-reference theory" perspective [23], the subjective social class perceptions of PFNSP teachers are largely constructed by the relative relationship between the teaching profession and other social occupations. Accordingly, the following two hypotheses are proposed.

**H2:** Subjective social class influences the retention intentions of PFNSP teachers through organizational identity; that is, organizational identity plays a mediating role on the influence of subjective social class on the retention intentions of teachers from PFNSP.

**H3:** Subjective social class influences the retention intentions of PFNSP teachers through professional identity; that is, professional identity plays a mediating role in the influence of subjective social class on the retention intentions of teachers from PFNSP.

Based on the discussion above, the research hypothetical model is constructed in this study, as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Hypothetical model of the dual mediating effect of organizational identity and professional identity.

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#### 2. Method

### 2.1. Participants and Procedures

The data used in this study were obtained from a questionnaire survey conducted by the "China Teacher Development Survey" (CTDS) team at the National Institute of Educational Policy Research, East China Normal University. It was distributed electronically to teachers through local education bureaus or schools in five provinces in China: Inner Mongolia, Henan, Qinghai, Guizhou, and Tibet, from January to November 2019. A total of 16,866 questionnaires were returned. Questionnaires with incomplete information were excluded, thus yielding 16,731 valid questionnaires, with an efficiency rate of 99.2%. The sample comprised 8141 public recruited teachers and 1498 PFNSP teachers.

Table 1 presents the statistics on the characteristics of PFNSP teachers. In terms of gender differences, a majority of teachers (81.9%) in the sample were female. In terms of marital status, 88.6% were married. Regarding household type, 66.5% had urban household registration. As far as age distribution was concerned, 11.0% were under 30 and 89.0% were over 30. In terms of seniority, 54.7% were first-level teachers, followed by 31.2% second-level teachers, and 8.0% senior-level teachers. Concerning titles, the highest percentage of teachers was 54.7% for Level I teachers, followed by 31.2% for Level II teachers, 8.0% for teachers with senior titles, and only 5.0% for teachers without titles.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of the sample.

Variables	Categories	Number	<b>Ratio</b> %
Gender -	Male	271	18.1
	Female	1227	81.9
	Unmarried	105	7.0
-	Married	1327	88.6
Marriage	Bereaved spouse	3	0.2
-	Divorced/separated	49	3.9
·	Others	4	0.3
Household	Rural	502	33.5
	Urban	996	66.5
Age	Under 30 years old	165	11.0
	30 years old and above	1333	89.0
Political background	Communist Party of China	249	16.6
	Democratic Party	3	0.2
	Non-partisan	164	10.9
	Communist Youth League	289	19.3
	The Crowd	793	52.9
Title .	No title	75	5.0
	Title III teacher	17	1.1
	Title II teacher	467	31.2
	Title I teacher	819	54.7
	Senior teacher	120	8.0

#### 2.2. Variable Descriptions

Retention intentions: Retention intentions were measured by the question: "If you were to choose again, would you definitely choose teaching as a career?" (1 = yes; 0 = no) This question was developed by the National Institute of Educational Policy Research, East China Normal University.

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Subjective social class: the classic MacArthur scale was used [16]. This scale presents a 10-step ladder representing the level of social class in our society and asks the following question: "In our society, some groups are at the top and others are at the bottom. On this scale, the highest score is '10', which represents the groups at the top and the lowest score is '1', which represents the bottom of the ladder. Which level do you think you are currently on?"

Organizational Identity: the organizational identity measure was modified from the established organizational identity questionnaire to incorporate 19 questions (5-point Likert scale) across 6 dimensions: organizational belongingness, job burnout, job autonomy, values congruence, organizational power, job growth, and organizational responsibility behavior [53]. Some of the representative statements were: "I feel a sense of belonging to my school", "I am likely to actively look for a new school next year", and "I can decide for myself how to proceed with my work". The organizational identity variable's Cronbach's alpha value was tested at 0.892, thus indicating a high level of internal consistency within the questionnaire.

Professional identity: the professional identity scale questionnaire was developed by the National Institute of Educational Policy Research, East China Normal University. The scale comprised 11 questions across three dimensions: professional honor, professional competitiveness, and career-development prospects. Some of the questions were: "Working as a teacher allows me to gain respect from others", "The salaries within the teaching profession are very competitive in society", and "The job of a teacher gives me the opportunity to learn new things". The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value for professional identity was tested to be 0.792, with good reliability.

Control variables: this study controls for individual characteristics, school characteristics, and objective social class variables that may affect teachers' retention intentions. Individual characteristics were gender (1 = male; 0 = female), age, marriage (1 = married; 0 = unmarried), household type (1 = rural; 0 = urban), political background (1 = CPC member; 0 = non-party member), teaching experience (years of teaching experience), and title (1 = no title; 2 = Title III teacher; 3 = Title II teacher; 4 = Title I teacher; 5 = senior teacher). School characteristics were level of schooling (5 - point scale) and school location (1 = rural: village and township; 0 = town: city and county). Objective social class was measured by income level and education level. Income level was assessed by teachers' annual salary, while education level was measured by whether the undergraduate institution was a 985/211 university (1 = 985/211 institution; 0 = other institutions).

#### 2.3. Data Analysis

The study used STATA 17 for data processing. Specifically, the current situation was elaborated using descriptive statistics and t-tests, and the impact mechanism study was validated using structural equation modelling. As the explanatory variables are dichotomous, the generalized structural equation model (GSEM) was used to test the mediating effect of organizational identity and professional identity.

### 2.4. Common Method Bias Test

As the data were obtained from the respondents' self-administered questionnaires, common method bias may exist. Therefore, Harman's one-way test was conducted for all the questions used in the study, and the results showed that the explained variance of the first factor was 23.914%, which was less than the critical value of 40% [54]. Thus, the data could be considered clear of serious common method bias problems.

#### 3. Results

### 3.1. Descriptive Statistics

In contrast to public recruitment, substitute teacher conversion, publicly funded normal students program, and special posting programs are special programs for teacher appointment. To examine the differences between public recruitment and the teachers from Sustainability **2022**, 14, 16241 7 of 13

PFNSP, we conducted independent sample t-tests on the core variables. Table 2 presents the statistical results.

**Table 2.** T-test for core variables.

Variables	Publicly Funded Normal Students Program		Public Recruitment		
variables	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	— <i>p</i>
Retention intentions	0.371	0.013	0.413	0.006	0.002
Subjective social class	3.475	0.055	4.048	0.023	0.000
Organizational Identity	3.666	0.468	3.608	0.475	0.000
Professional identity	3.524	0.530	3.562	0.519	0.000

In terms of retention intentions, less than half would definitely choose a teaching career. The mean value of willingness to stay in the teaching profession for PFNSP teachers was 0.371, which was significantly lower than that of publicly recruited teachers at 0.413. It indicated that PFNSP teachers were at greater risk of leaving the profession than publicly recruited teachers. In terms of subjective social class, the teachers' subjective social class identity fell at the lower end of the range. We found that the organizational identity of PFNSP teachers was significantly stronger than that of publicly recruited teachers, thus indicating that PFNSP teachers had a stronger sense of association with the organization. Moreover, the professional identity of the teachers from PFNSP was significantly weaker than that of publicly recruited teachers.

## 3.2. Relevant Analysis

Relevant analysis was performed between the dependent and independent variables. Table 3 presents the results.

**Table 3.** Relevant analysis.

Code	Variables	1	2	3	4
1	Retention intentions	1			
2	Subjective social class	0.208 ***	1		
3	Organizational Identity	0.387 ***	0.174 ***	1	
4	Professional identity	0.414 ***	0.281 ***	0.704 ***	1

Note: \*\*\* *p* < 0.001.

There was significant relevance between each pairing of retention intentions, subjective social class, organizational identity, and professional identity. Moreover, none of the relevance coefficients between the variables exceeded 0.8, thereby indicating that none of the variables had a high correlation and there was no significant cointegration problem [55].

## 3.3. GSEM Results Analysis

The dual mediator model was tested using generalized structural equation modelling (GSEM). Table 4 presents the results.

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**Table 4.** GSEM testing results.

	β	S.E.	Z
Retention intentions			
Subjective social class	0.024 ***	0.006	4.066
Organizational Identity	0.114 ***	0.032	3.648
Professional identity	0.238 ***	0.040	5.940
Gender	-0.078 **	0.030	-2.666
Title	-0.039 *	0.017	-2.006
School location	0.138 ***	0.027	5.290
Organizational Identity			
Subjective social class	0.058 ***	0.008	6.808
Professional identity			
Subjective social class	0.088 ***	0.008	11.218

Note: \*\*\* p < 0.001, \*\* p < 0.01, \* p < 0.05.

Table 4 lists all the regression-path coefficients that passed the 95% significance test. Subjective social class had a significant positive effect on the retention intentions of PFNSP teachers ( $\beta = 0.024$ , p < 0.001); that is, the higher the subjective social class identification of the teachers, the higher their willingness to stay in their jobs. Thus, H1 is validated.

Similarly, organizational identity and professional identity also positively predicted the retention intentions of the teachers. If organizational identity was improved by one unit, the retention intentions increased by 11.4%; if career identity was improved by one unit, the retention intentions rose by 23.8%. Thus, professional identity had a greater impact than organizational identity on the retention intentions.

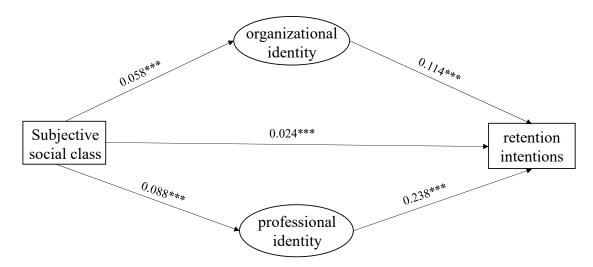
Among the control variables, gender ( $\beta = -0.078$ , p < 0.01), title ( $\beta = -0.039$ , p < 0.05), and school location ( $\beta = 0.138$ , p < 0.001) had a significant effect on the retention intentions of PFNSP teachers, while other variables did not pass the significance test, including teaching experience ( $\beta = 0.036$ , p = 0.285).

The fact that PFNSP teachers taught in rural schools significantly and positively predicted their retention intentions, partly because most of them were trained by local normal colleges and knew that they were going to work in rural areas before they enrolled. In addition, rural teachers enjoyed greater financial income and social status in rural society, so they would have a higher intention to stay in their jobs.

The mediating effects of organizational identity and professional identity in the path of subjective social class on the intentions to stay in the profession were further examined. The empirical results revealed that organizational identity had a significant positive effect on the willingness of the teachers to stay in their jobs ( $\beta = 0.114$ , p < 0.001), and that subjective social class had a significant positive effect on organizational identity ( $\beta = 0.058$ , p < 0.001). The higher the level of subjective social class identity held by teachers, the higher their recognition of the organization. Accordingly, the mediating effect of organizational identity was verified and H2 was validated.

Professional identity also had a significant positive effect on PFNSP teachers' intention to stay in the profession ( $\beta = 0.238$ , p < 0.001), and subjective social class was a significant positive predictor of professional identity ( $\beta = 0.088$ , p < 0.001). Thus, professional identity mediated the effect of subjective social class on retention intentions, which validates H3. It results in a pathway where subjective social class influences organizational and professional identity, which, in turn, influences their willingness to stay in the job, as shown in Figure 2.

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**Figure 2.** A dual mediation model path coefficient diagram. Note: \*\*\* p < 0.001.

#### 4. Discussion

Poverty eradication and rural reform are fundamental aims of education for sustainable development, in which teachers from PFNSP play a key role. Stable, high-quality teachers are the backbone of educational development in less developed regions of central and western China. The policy of PFNSP can be seen as a response in Chinese practice to an important issue raised by UNESCO in sustainable development education [56]. This study analyzed the mechanisms of retention intentions of the teachers from the perspectives of subjective social class, organizational identity, and professional identity.

First, there were significant differences between PFNSP and publicly recruited teachers in terms of retention intentions, subjective social class, organizational identity, and professional identity during their tenure. Except for the organizational identity dimension, the mean values of retention intentions, subjective social class, and professional identity of PFNSP teachers were lower than those of publicly recruited teachers. This finding is consistent with those of current studies of retention intentions [5,57]. We also confirmed that male teachers were less willing to stay in the profession compared to females, which was similar to the findings of Wu [52]. The teaching profession gave more upward identification and relative superiority to females. As the title level increased, the retention intentions of teachers decreased significantly. It might be because teachers with higher title levels have higher recognition of their own abilities, which makes it difficult for them to feel satisfied with their current jobs and a psychological gap of 'yielding', which is consistent with the findings of Li [58]. In recent years, the topic of burnout among teachers with senior titles has been incessantly discussed, and the title-incentive mechanism needs to be further explored and improved. The lower organizational identity and professional identity of PFNSP teachers can be attributed to the design of PFNSP [5,7]. Public recruitment is a two-way choice based on market mechanisms, and teachers mostly choose schools that match their own conditions and provide them the best possible working environment and treatment. PFNSP is actually a compensatory policy that allows graduates with better educational backgrounds and more employment options to teach in less developed regions to improve the quality of education in those regions. This requires dedication and a certain amount of compromise from PFNSP teachers [5]. Therefore, adequately compensating them for their poorer working conditions, lack of professional development opportunities, and psychological disparities is the key to improve teacher retention.

Second, the study found that subjective social class had a significant positive effect on the willingness of PFNSP teachers to stay in their jobs. The higher their subjective social status, the more satisfied the teachers were with their current position in the social structure, and the more willing they were to stay in their current position. This finding was largely consistent with those of existing studies [27,59]. The original purpose of PFNSP was to

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attract more talented people to teach and train frontline teachers and education experts. The second was to send a number of high-quality teachers to less developed regions to promote educational equity [60]. The subjective social class perceptions of publicly funded teacher trainees are not high due to poor financial income and working conditions [5,7], which, in turn, leads to a lower willingness to stay in the profession and affects the stability of the teaching workforce in these regions [60]. Therefore, to achieve the goals of PFNSP, the social status of teachers from the publicly funded normal students program needs to be enhanced through compensatory policy tools.

Third, organizational identity and professional identity had a significant positive influence on their intentions to stay in the job and played partially mediating roles in the influence of subjective social class on their intentions to stay in the job. This is consistent with existing studies [37,61,62]. From the perspective of organizational identity, a higher social class identity can enhance members' perceived identity status in the organization and show more positive responsible behavior [31,33]. Higher organizational identity seems to be beneficial for the organization—the staff member who goes beyond his responsibilities both at co-worker and organization level contributes to better functioning in each of these areas [63]. For PFNSP teachers, it also enhances their willingness to stay in their jobs, either directly or indirectly through job satisfaction or other factors. [27,64]. From the perspective of professional identity, the degree of professional identity was closely related to subjective social class. The teachers' perceptions of their own subjective social class significantly influenced their own professional identity, and their perceptions of professional honor, competitiveness, and development prospects [44]. The stronger the perceived professional identity of the teachers, the more satisfied they were with their teaching careers, and steadier their willingness to stay in their jobs [65]. PFNSP teachers with a lower sense of self-identification with their social class tended to exhibit a negative attitude toward their careers, and it was not uncommon for them to break their contracts and leave early [66]. In general, we have found a logical chain between education for sustainable development, teacher retention, and subjective status. Thus, it is particularly important to improve the social status of publicly funded teacher candidates to promote their identification with the school organization and their career, to enhance their willingness to stay in the profession.

#### 5. Limitations and Further Research

This study had some limitations. First, China is a vast country and the level of economic, social, and educational development varies greatly among different regions, so the representativeness of the survey sample can be further improved. Second, the sample of the teachers from normal institutions or universities directly under the Ministry of Education is small, and the difference between the sample of teachers who graduated from ministerial institutions and local institutions has not been analyzed. These areas require more in-depth research in the future.

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**Data Availability Statement:** The data set analyzed in the current study has not been published yet. Please contact the author if necessary.

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