

Chinese Teachers Build Growth Mindset to Foster Student Achievement in the Disadvantaged Private Secondary High Schools

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Abstract

This qualitative case study explores the teachers' experiences of their professional performance from novice to expert for student achievement in the exam-oriented disadvantaged school context in China. Using semi-structural interview protocol collected the primary data from teachers (N=12) to understand how they become an expert teacher from novice in the disadvantaged school contexts. Specifically, this study aims to answer the three questions: (1) What are the challenges for teachers becoming from novice to expert in the disadvantaged private secondary school? (2) What are the strategies for teachers to develop their skills from novice to expert in the disadvantaged private secondary school? (3) How do the teachers improve their capacity from novice to expert teachers or leaders in the disadvantaged private secondary school? Findings show that teachers face three major challenges: self-awareness in need but less supported; self-learning with self-control, but limited resources; and social interaction in challenges, but less engagement between members in school. This study also found three major strategies for teachers: communication with efficacy; discipline for performance; and self-improvement with positive attitude. Findings show that teachers become an expert from novice through three major ways: attending an academic and professional conference; self-engagement; and self-learning with a goal setting. Therefore, the future study would explore the teachers' experiences in building a mindfulness framework for secondary high school sustainable growth and student achievement using a comparative mixed research design in the United States and China.

Keywords: secondary school students, intelligence, academic achievement, disadvantaged schools, teacher empowerment

Introduction

Growth mindset has been increasingly promoting in primary, secondary, and tertiary educational settings and providing support to school leaders and teachers who develop students learning motivation and achieve their learning goal in education (Han & Stieha, 2020; Hoyt & Burnette, 2020). Education is to cultivate students to enhance their 21st-century skills, including technical information, communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving (Van Laar et al., 2020), facing the challenges in the use of technological industry 4.0 (Janis et al., 2020). Coutts (2019) said that growth mindset could help teachers to transform their knowledge, values, and beliefs in influencing students' learning outcomes. Meerts-Brandsma and Sibthorp (2020) additionally emphasize how growth mindsets transform their experiences, conceptualize, and interact with the world to young students (Meerts-Brandsma & Sibthorp, 2020). Capozzi (2018) also indicated that using the growth mindsets could help teachers to create a positive classroom learning cultures for student achievement. Brock and Hundley (2020) further emphasized how teachers could use the growth mindset to create a learning community as well as Allen, Williams, and Wallace (2021) said that growth mindsets could help students to reach their learning success by getting things done timely. Therefore, growth mindset is an effective approach for teachers to help students to reach their learning goals and cultivate their educational core values, such as honesty, responsibility, and contribution to the society.

Within a growth mindset setting, teachers could improve their quality of teaching and help students to develop their learning skills in the exam-oriented educational context. The Ministry of Education in China had issued academic guidelines 2035 project and advocated suzhi education in 2019 (Zhang & Koshmanova, 2021).

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Although educational policy generates 21st-century skills, sometimes called deep learning, is accelerating, China education still generates traditional teaching methods such as memorizing, test-based instructional practice (Nehring et al., 2019). Zhou, Liu, Tian, and Li (2018) said that Chinese teachers face the challenges of helping student to build their growth mindset in learning if they could not help the students to pass the exam with a perfect score. Thus, the penetration of 21st-century skills into secondary schools internationally remains weak (Voogt & Roblin, 2012). Specifically, the Gaokao-oriented school environment causes teachers to spend a lot of time focusing on how they could help students increase their test results but neglect the students' 21st-century skills such as problem-solving, creativity, growth mindset, and emotional intelligence growth. Only if the teachers could help the students pass the exam with a high score could they receive respect from students, parents, and school leaders, increase their self-reputation, receive a higher salary as a reward, and vice versa.

In addition, the test score, as a significant variable, causes teachers to face pressure. Under this pressure, teachers cultivate students to pass the exam with a high score as a priority in teaching (Zhang & Koshmanova, 2020). These high stakes cause teachers to disincentivize deeper learning and narrow students' success. Thus, teachers need to help students develop their learning skills, creative ability, and problem-solving ability and improve growth mindset to face future challenges in the competitive job market. With growth mindset settings, teachers could help students to develop their ability to identify areas of intelligence in others such as self-knowledge, problem-solving skills, verbal fluency, the ability to think actively and flexibly, and the capacity to make healthy personal decisions in Confucian Chinese cultural setting (Pang, Esping, & Plucker, 2017). Hourani, Litz, and Parkman (2020) also pointed out that teachers' growth mindsets could help them to develop their emotional intelligence. The emotional intelligence includes five dimensions, including self-awareness, managing emotion, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These skills could help students to find opportunities in achieving their learning goals. In the traditional exam-oriented teaching contexts, some teachers may lose their ability to innovate new skills to develop students' 21st-century skills. Simultaneously, it is also necessary to use transformative learning strategy, instructional leadership, and emotional intelligence with a growth mindset to help students develop comprehensive abilities and skills, especially the formation of values. Teachers need to develop their ability to improve students' academic intelligence, emotional intelligence, and social intelligence, helping students face their learning challenges and achieving their learning goals in 21st-century society (Zhang & Koshmanova, 2021).

The previous scholars emphasize the importance of growth mindset effectively guide teachers to help students to reach their learning goals. Teachers should also generate a growth mindset as a teaching philosophy to help students face learning challenges. No matter how challenges the students face, teachers believe all their students could achieve their learning goal because teachers feel that they have to assist students in discovering who they are, where they are, and how they accomplish the objectives for contribution to society (Tyack, 2003; Shulman, 1987). The growth mindset allows teachers to achieve their goals smoothly and effectively in delivering a high quality of education in the disadvantaged learning community for student academic success.

However, there is a limited resource to emphasize the importance in the exam-oriented disadvantaged school contexts in China. Therefore, this qualitative case study aims to explore the teachers' experiences of their professional performance from novice to expert by building a growth mindset in the exam-oriented disadvantaged private school in China. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following three research questions:

- 1) What are the challenges for teachers to become an expert from novice in the disadvantaged private secondary school?
- 2) What are the strategies for teachers to develop their skills from novice to expert in the disadvantaged private secondary school?
- 3) How do the teachers improve their capacity from novice to expert teachers or leaders in the disadvantaged private secondary school?

Literature Review

This literature review explained the crucial elements: expertise and expert performance, mindset and expertise, growth mindset, and student academic success. This literature indicates how growth mindsets and expertise concepts transform a teacher from novice to expert, thus guiding students to achieve their learning goals with an outstanding performance.

Expertise and expert performance

Ericsson et al. (1993) and Ericsson (2009) stated that human attainment from novice to expertise could change from intervention to individual differences in innate talents throughout the ages. This viewing pointed out that teachers could develop their expertise performance through a practicum in teaching. Ericsson et al. (1993) also claimed that deliberate practice could help teachers or leaders become experts in the expert-performance framework. The expert-performance framework remains the best way to understand how teachers or leaders could become expert performance through systematic and regular practices (Ericsson et al., 2007; Kramaley & Wishart, 2020). For example, a pre-service teacher with limited teaching experiences might not guide students to achieve their learning goals. However, if teachers with over 2,000 hours of teaching experience with different students' levels, they might teach students to learn knowledge effectively (Zhang & Koshmanova, 2020). Krampe and Ericsson (1996) stated that the best musicians spent more than 10,000 hours practicing, 2,500 to 5,000 hours more than the two less accomplished groups of expert musicians, and 8,000 hours more than amateur pianists the same age of 20. With deliberate practices in teaching and educational research, teachers with a positive teaching motivation could develop their teaching ability from novice to expert (Ericsson, 1996, 2002, 2003b; Ericsson & Charness, 1994; Kramaley & Wishart, 2020).

Mindsets and Expertise

Mindsets play a significant role for teachers to improve their teaching ability from novice to expert and guide students to achieve their learning goals with outstanding performance. Dweck (1996) built on social-cognitive research on motivation to describe a motivational framework as well-known the implicit theories and stated that mindsets influence people's thinking, behavior, emotion, and performance. Philosophically, this mindset has applied across many areas, ranging from intelligence to athletic ability and many others (Dweck, 1986, 1995; Kramaley & Wishart, 2020). Dweck (1995) believes that a person could achieve their learning goal as positive results by holding a growth mindset (Kramaley & Wishart, 2020). With deliberate practice, teachers could enhance their teaching skills and guide students to develop problem-solving and creative skills (Dweck et al., 1995; Dweck, 1999; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Scott & Ghinea, 2014). With deliberate practice, teachers could improve their teaching skills and enhance their knowledge from novice to expert and predict an outcome than a general one with less training (Kramaley & Wishart, 2020; Scott & Ghinea, 2014).

Hughes (2015) found a correlation between the specific measures of mindsets and learning outcomes. All students could achieve their learning goals if they could maintain a positive attitude and never abandon their learning progress (Kramaley & Wishart, 2020; Zhang & Koshmanova, 2021). Individual characteristics could cultivate over time (Derr & Morrow, 2020; Dweck, 2000; Dweck, Chiu, & Hong, 1995). A growth mindset of personality could motivate teachers to transform their values to their students and influence their mindset setting and build their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Derr & Morrow, 2020). The growth mindset not only promotes persistence and resilience but also impact students' learning achievement in the exam-oriented educational environment influenced by the Confucian culture in China (Bai & Wang, 2020).

Mindsets correlated with outstanding performance for both teachers and students from novice to expert through teaching and learning. Once teachers have a positive attitude, they could positively encourage their students to face learning challenges to achieve their academic learning performance (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Han & Stieha, 2020). The mindset theory, clinically defined as implicit personal theory, motivates teachers to conceptualize their beliefs in developing their teaching skills from novice to expert with a strong impression as I can do (Dweck, 2006; Han & Stieha, 2020).

Dweck et al. (1995) believed that human attributes could change with experience, education, maturation, and actions. This viewing falls along a continuum of distinct features from the intellectual ability to dispositional optimism. Suppose teachers could hold a positive mindset and intelligence, they could transform from novice teacher to expert professional in teaching. They could also guide students to achieve their learning goals through goal setting strategy (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), process-focused judgment, and trait-focused assessments (Hoyt & Burnette, 2020). Hoyt and Burnette (2020) said that growth mindsets predict stronger offset self-efficacy attributions, reducing internalized stigma and increasing well-being. Offset self-efficacy beliefs are directly linked to social essentialism (Hoyt & Burnette, 2020). If teachers could maintain growth mindsets and self-efficacy, they could diminish internalized stigma and create a positive learning environment for outstanding performance (Hoyt & Burnette, 2020).

Mindsets and Students Academic Success

Mindsets with emotional intelligence and deliberate practices predict student academic success in grade point average (GPA), skills and competencies, and learning satisfaction (Goegan & Daniel, 2019). Academic success is the new measurement for students' success, such as degree completion, credits obtained, and grades (Burnette, Hoyt, Russell, Lawson, Dweck, & Finkel, 2020). Academic success has six components: academic achievement, acquisition of skills, attainment of learning outcomes, satisfaction, persistence, and career success (Goegan & Daniels, 2019). Therefore, this following describe how growth mindset impacts grade point average, skills and competencies, and satisfaction.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

Growth mindsets statistically predict students' learning outcomes ($B=.35$, $P=.0001$) and have positive striving perfectionism (Mofield & Peters, 2019). A growth mindset raised math achievement by 0.05 standard deviations and higher grades with higher confidence and vice versa (Ganimian, 2020). With an increasing growth mindset, students improve their self-efficacy, which refers to individuals' belief in their capacity to act in ways that achieve their desired outcomes (Derr & Morrow, 2020; Bai & Wang, 2020). Thus, growth mindsets increase students' grade point average (Hoyt & Burnette, 2020) because students with a positive attitude could reduce their pressure and learn from their teachers with a positive engagement (Zhang & Koshmanova, 2020).

Skills and Competencies

Growth mindsets transform teachers from novice to expert and foster students in building their learning skills. Teachers with a positive attitude could easily influence students' learning behavior, thus motivating them to set up their learning target fully involved in education (Hoyt & Burnette, 2020). In general, students with higher mobility via growth mindsets could less likely endorse aggression and work with peers to face their learning challenges and enhance their self-efficacy toward learning success (Derr & Morrow, 2020). With a growth mindset, students could recognize their opportunities, overcome, and learn from their setbacks, and apply growth mindset skills to future careers, such as starting their own business. Even teachers could quickly help students overcome their learning challenges toward their life goals (Rodriguez & Lieber, 2020). Growth mindsets could help students reduce their anxiety, discovering potential ability, and developing a mindset intervention targeting beliefs about the origin of knowledge and statistics anxiety (Smith & Capuzzi, 2019; Zhang & Koshmanova, 2020). Therefore, a growth mindset helps students develop their learning skills and competencies in the disadvantaged school contexts.

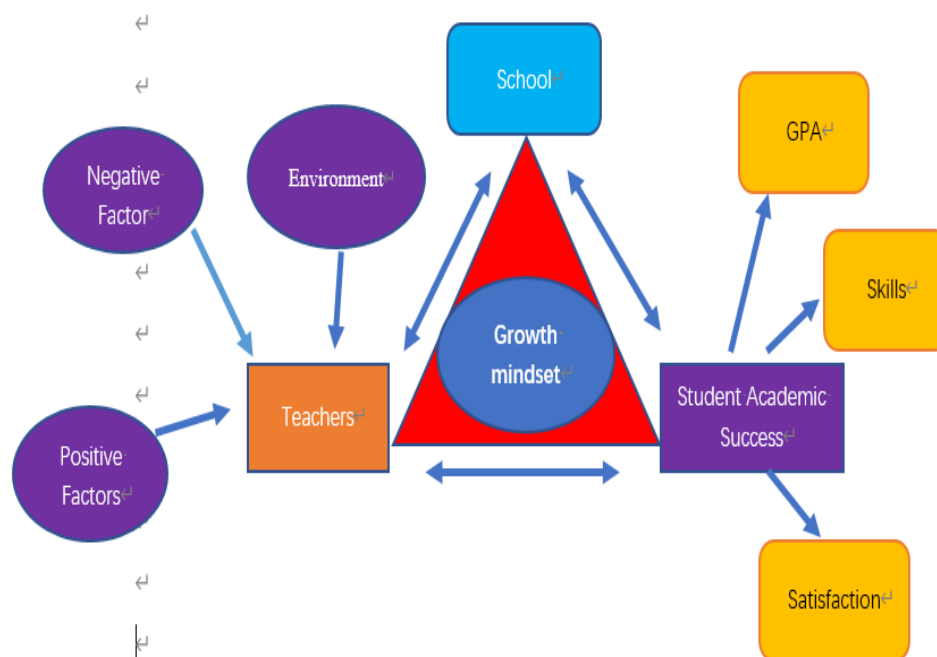
Satisfactions

Teachers help students develop their growth mindsets in facing all the challenges they face in learning, thus increasing students' happiness (Derr & Morrow, 2020). The growth mindset with deliberate practice influences students' personality and self-satisfaction and builds interest, self-efficacy, and determines their ability to make a future decent work toward their academic success as from a novice to an expert with a full satisfaction in the disadvantaged school environment (Bai & Guo, 2019).

Methodology

Research Design

For this research, a qualitative case study design is to navigate the teacher's experiences to become an expert teacher and leader from novice in the disadvantaged school context in China (Stake, 2005). The purpose of an instrumental case study was to analyze the effects of a person on others (Stake, 2005). In this case, I gathered comprehensive data about the rationale for teachers from novice to expert in developing their teaching performance and helping students achieve their learning goals. Ultimately, this case study aims to provide a detailed analysis and description of insights to inspire further research and help teachers develop a similar performance (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 2005). I have used the qualitative case study across numerous disciplines to contribute to the knowledge of individuals, groups, processes, and relationships (Yin, 2003, 2009). As stake (1995, 2005), Merriam (1988), and Yin (2009) have contented, the case study approach allows for a holistic understanding of a phenomenon within real-life contexts from the perspective of those involved. Case studies have been described as best suited to research that asks how and why questions (Stake, 2005; Yin, 2003) and explores a real-life context (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, the following theoretical and conceptual framework, namely, growth mindset for teachers to foster student academic success, guided in this study.

Figure 1: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Ericsson et al. (1993) described the expert-performance framework for teachers to transform their performance from novice to expert through deliberate practice. With intentional practices, teachers could become an expert in developing self-knowledge, awareness, and self-efficacy and guiding students to achieve their learning expectation in the exam-oriented educational contexts.

Teachers could build their growth mindsets, which could impact learning, motivation, resilience, innovation, and performance (Dweck, 2009, 2010, 2012; Dweck & Yeager, 2019). With growth mindsets, teachers tend to be more interested in learning and more willing to take on challenges to achieve more (Dweck, 2016; Foster, 2020). Although teachers might impact by hostile learning environment such as testing score pressure, social contextual forces, they could embrace a growth mindset to empower and commit their contribution in teaching for collaboration and innovation contextually (Foster, 2020; Hofstede, 1980, 2001; Han & Stieha, 2020; Hoyt & Burnette, 2020). They could guide the students to achieve their learning goals through self-regulated learning and goal setting with a positive teaching and learning context from novice to expertise (Bai & Wang, 2020).

Growth mindsets has a relationship with the emotional intelligence (EI), which has its origin in the idea of social intelligence in building a positive social connection in human relation (Baba, 2020; Mullen, Gutierrez, & Newhart, 2018; Tohme & Joseph, 2020). It has five dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Baba, 2020; Bandura, 1986; Hourani, Litz, & Parkman, 2020; Mullen, Gutierrez, & Newhart, 2018; Pathak & Muralidharan, 2020). Therefore, teachers could help students to raise their GPA; to develop their learning skills; and to ensure their learning satisfaction through transformational leadership, instructional leadership, and emotional intelligence within a growth mindset setting (Hallinger & Wang, 2015; Hallinger, 2003) in the high-power distance exam-oriented disadvantaged school contexts in China (Liu & Hallinger, 2020).

Case description, School Contexts, case selection, and participants

I selected the participants from one of the international high schools in Beijing, China. The schools have eighty students and ten full-time teachers, twenty part-time teachers, and a school principal. The school has no library, and no space for sport beside two classrooms, and one faculty office in the public school. It is the school has no independent campus and cooperate with one of the public schools to run the international school program. Although the students are in the public schools, they have limited space for them because the school owners tend to save cost for profit. Specifically, the international private school's primary purpose is to cultivate students to have an opportunity to pursue their college studies in the elite university after three years of training.

Due to the college entrance requirements, teachers tend to pay full attention to improve students' standardized testing scores. Only if the school could train students to pass the exam with a higher score and enter the esteem colleges, the school could raise its social reputation and increase its enrollment rate in the competitive school market in China. However, the school lacks the enough educational resources, and the high schools has a high teacher turnover rate. Therefore, this case study selects the participants who were male teachers (N=6) and female teachers (N=6) within the teaching experiences from one year to twenty years' teaching experiences in the exam-oriented disadvantaged school contexts shown in the table 1. The disadvantaged school means that the school has limited educational resources such as high-qualified experienced full-time teachers, library, and poor learning environment. The age of the participants ranges from twenty-four to fifty-eight. According to the participant's abundant experiences, the study could capture how a novice teacher becomes an expert in teaching and administration in the exam-oriented educational context in China.

Table 1The Demographic of Participants

Participant Code	Gender	Age	Teaching Experiences (Years)	Subject Areas	Qualification
T1	F	24	1	Math	BS+Teacher Certificate-Full-time
T2	M	26	2	Chinese	BA-Full-time
T3	M	27	1	English	BA+TESOL certificate-part-time
T4	F	32	3	Physics	BS-part-time
T5	F	42	10	English	BA+Part-time
T6	F	25	2	Chemistry	BS-Full-time
T7	M	58	25	Chinese	BA-Part-time
T8	F	28	2	History	BA-Part-time
T9	M	50	21	Geography	BA-Teacher Certificate-Full-time
T10	M	29	6	Chinese	BA-Full-time
T11	F	35	8	Academic Writing	BA- TESOL certificate-Part-time
T12	M	46	10	Physics	BS-Teacher certificate-part-time

Data Collection, Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

The primary data were collected through a one-on-one Zoom interview with Chinese teachers (N=12) through a semi-structural protocol within 30 to 60 minutes in October 2020, December 2020, and January 2021. The average interview time is about 40 minutes with a recording. The semi-structural interview questions include (1) what are the challenges in your teaching in the schools? (2) what have you received from school for you to face the challenges? (3) how do you face the challenges in your teaching for student achievement? (4) what are the specific challenges for you to become an expert in teaching? (5) how could you develop your skills from novice teacher to expert teacher for delivering a high-quality teaching for student achievement? (6) what are your viewings in developing the school capacity for teachers to become an expert teachers and leaders from novice? (7) Are there any things you would like to share with me that I have not asked, or you consider the important thoughts in your opinion? Besides, I used the open-ended interview questions to get in-depth resources from participants in this study.

During the interview, I recorded the conversation with the participants' permission and then transcribed the recordings verbatim for data analysis. I aimed to investigate the participant's personal experiences, perceptions, and opinions from novice to expert teachers in China's exam-oriented disadvantaged educational context (Zhang &Koshmanova, 2021). The experiences, perceptions, and personal reflections from the interview could help me to understand how a novice teacher becomes an expert teacher and leader in leading high-performance for students in the disadvantaged school contexts. The transcribed data were uploaded into the N-Vivo 12 to code, analyze, and synthesize the significant themes (Adu, 2019; Saldana &Omasta, 2018; Saldana, 2013). Specifically, the data analysis follows the process from coding to sorting, synthesizing, theorizing, codes, categories, theme, and subtheme.

This study incorporates into the research process to deepen self-reflexivity and enhance trustworthiness (Lemon, 2017) through member checks and audit trail for validity and reliability (Nespor&Groenke, 2009).

Results

Findings show that teachers develop their professional skills from novice to expert in delivering a high quality of education for students' academic achievement. In this study, results responded per research question accordingly.

(1). What are the challenges for teachers to become an expert from novice in the disadvantaged private secondary school?

Since the high score is the critical indicator for teachers' evaluation, teachers need to figure out how they could increase students' standardized testing scores. Suppose the teachers could guide the students to pass the exam with a high college entrance rate. In that case, teachers could receive a welcome and respect from students, parents, school leaders, and other school stakeholders in the power distance educational context. Traditionally, students must follow what the teachers expect; however, with the burgeoning of economic development, teachers face many internal and external challenges, such as self-knowledge, teaching skills, and high-sky expectations from the school principal, parents, and students. In these competitive educational markets, the teacher needs to enhance their professional knowledge and integrated ability to guide students to achieve their learning outcomes. This study finds that teachers from novice to expert need to strengthen their three major challenges referring to the participant's thoughts shown in table 2. The three major challenges are self-awareness in need but less supported; self-learning with self-control, but limited resources; and social interaction in challenges, but less engagement between members in school.

Table 2

Three Major Challenges of Teachers from Novice to Expert with Quotes selected from Participants

Major Theme	Quotes selected from participants
Self-awareness in need, but less supported	<p>After I taught several years in school, I want to upgrade my skills and expect to have a higher position. But I have no resources supported from the school (T10).</p> <p>With my job expectation, I realized that I need to talk with students, parents, and other teachers to enhance my knowledge. However, I am afraid of opening my heart to share what are my real thoughts with other colleague (T1).</p> <p>I realized that I need to read more professional books to improve my knowledge and teaching skills. However, I spent too much time on mock test and less time to cultivate students' core values in teaching and learning (T2).</p> <p>I understand practicing is the best way for me to face challenges in teaching and administration in schools. Yet, I sometimes forget or neglect what I want to do in reality (T9).</p> <p>I want to let students to read more books, but the school has no library (T12).</p>
Self-learning with self-control, but limited resources	<p>I borrowed books from national library and bought some books for my self-learning. However, I cannot receive the reimbursement from the school. So, I cannot buy more (T3).</p> <p>I developed my skills through reflection based on the conversation with other school stakeholders such as students, parents, and other teachers. However, sometimes, I cannot make a progress because of no support from others (T11).</p> <p>I usually take notes while I read books, however, I mostly feel that I could not share what the knowledge I think it is right for the students such as equity, trust, efficacy (T8).</p> <p>I usually read books by myself and also practice but I could not receive a good support from other members in school (T4).</p>
Social interaction in challenges, but less engagement between members	<p>Sometimes I can chat with my school stakeholders such as colleague, but I less have the chance to have an interaction with principals, and other school board members (T5).</p> <p>I want to share teaching thoughts with other teachers, but I have no chance, or I am afraid of talking with them. It means that in the competitive school contexts, I could not share my real feelings with others because it might make me in trouble (T7).</p> <p>I want to share one of my experiences of sharing my thoughts with other school members. After I shared my thoughts or documents with one of my workmates, I realized that the one just used my thoughts to receive a good reputation in school. It is because the one has a good relationship with the school owners (T6).</p>

Table 2 shows that teachers use the skills to improve their professional skills and integrate their knowledge in China's competitive school context. The teachers could face high-sky testing score pressure using the instructional and transformational leadership skills and enhancing emotional intelligence within a growth mindset setting. With skillful practices, teachers improve their self-efficacy and empower their professional

performance from deliberate practices (Ericsson et al. 1993; Hourani, Litz, & Parkman, 2020; Leithwood & Beatty, 2009) in facing their challenges for student achievement.

(2). What are the strategies for teachers to develop their skills from novice to expert in the disadvantaged private secondary school?

Teachers develop their professional capacity that could guide the students to achieve their learning goals. Once the teachers could communicate their thoughts with other school stakeholders, significantly, students, school principals, and parents, the teachers could enhance their knowledge. With self-efficacy, teachers could confidently guide the students to develop their learning skills, driving toward high score performance. Since learning is unique, teachers could use different teaching strategies to sharpen their knowledge, such as coaching, feedback, and interaction approaches. Coaching guided by teachers could develop an effective plan, improve techniques, skills, and tactics for teachers to enhance all their mental and physical preparation in competitions (Nash & Sproule, 2011). In this study, three significant strategies guide the teachers from novice to expert in the workplace shown in table 3. The three major strategies are communication with efficacy, discipline for performance, and self-improvement with positive attitude.

Table 3 Three Major Strategies for Teachers from Novice and Expert Performance with Quotes Selected from Participants

Major Theme	Quotes selected from participants
Communication with efficacy	With self-efficacy through reading books, I chat with other teachers, principals, students, and other stakeholders in sharpening my skills (T7). I communicate with parents to become a good welcoming teacher from them (T2). I think communication is an effective way for me to receive a support from school stakeholders (T1).
Disciplines for Performance	I believe all students can learn as a vision, principle, and my teaching philosophy (T 11). I think collaboration between students, parents, teachers, and principals could effectively guide the students to achieve their learning goals (T 5). I believe self-reading is a good way to enhance theoretical knowledge, pedagogical skill, and classroom management ability (T10).
Self-improvement With positive attitude	I think a positive attitude is a key for me to face my burden and also to have a good conversation with other school stakeholders (T12). I always write my self-reflection journal which could help me to analyze my teaching strengths and weaknesses. By doing so, I can enhance my own knowledge and also help my students to achieve their learning goals (T9). I think I need to always record what my teaching experiences in the classroom are and how I could effectively help my students by designing a teaching unit, lesson plan, and also writing my reflective teaching journal (T7). I believe always maintaining a positive attitude is a key for me to face all the issues in my teaching in the schools (T5).

Table 3 shows that teachers play various roles in developing their professional knowledge and skills (Mullen, Guitierrez & Newhart, 2018) to motivate students toward higher performance. Importantly, teachers become an expert from novice through self-improvement, communication, and innovation, which help teachers know themselves and know what the students need from their inner experience to outer expression (Tohme & Joseph, 2020). With self-improvement, teachers believe that they can guide students to improve their GPA, skills, and learning satisfaction through counseling strategies (ASCA, 2012). Therefore, teachers need to build their positive mindfulness and empower their leadership skills with growth mindset setting to become an expert from novice in their teaching (Ericsson et al., 1993; Tohme & Joseph, 2020).

(3). How do the teachers improve their capacity from novice to expert teachers or leaders in the disadvantaged private secondary school?

This study found that teachers need to become an expert from novice through three major ways, which are: attending an academic and professional conference, self-engagement, and self-learning with a goal setting as shown in table 4.

Table 4 Three Major Ways of Building Capacity for Teacher Leader within Organization in School with Quotes Selected from Participants

Major Theme	Quotes selected from participants
Attending academic and professional conferences	I think I could develop my teaching skills, and leadership skills by attending national and international conferences in my field of education (T12). I believe the international conferences such as AERA, CIES, and others in education (T11). I think attending conferences could help me to catch the newest educational trends in research, theory, and study topic (T4).
Self-engagement with all tasks in teaching	I often write my teaching reflective journal which could help me to record how I teach in the classroom, and what I can improve in my teaching next time (T6). I think I need to always think what my students need and how I can help them to achieve their learning goals (T7). I believe I can improve my teaching skills and develop my skills from a new teacher to a professional teacher by writing reflective teaching journal and teaching notes (T1).
Self-learning with a goal setting	I often go the bookstore to read books in my fields (T2). I think I need to develop my teaching skills through communicating with other teachers in the schools. Besides, I could share my thoughts with others in the conferences, workshop, and meeting. Also, I can learn from others in teaching and in life (T4). I believe I can help my student by self-learning and guide student to make a plan for their progress (T6).

Table 4 indicates that teachers need to develop their knowledge through self-leadership, self-control, and social learning with a growth mindset toward an expertise performance in the school context (Bandura, 1986; Gutierrez & Newhart, 2018).

Self-leadership derived from the ideas of self-regulation, self-management, and self-control could enhance work performance and goal attainment (Mullen, Gutierrez & Newhart, 2018). If teachers could develop their self-leadership ability and teaching capacity through growth mindset setting, they could improve their job satisfaction, psychological empowerment, and creativity (Mullen, Gutierrez & Newhart, 2018). This viewing is compatible with Confucius's view of human intelligence and teaching pedagogical philosophy with a positive mindset, which encompasses the qualities such as identifying areas of intelligence in others, such as, problem-solving skills and of capacities to make healthy personal decisions in helping student achievement (Pang, Esping & Plucker, 2017; Zhang & Koshmanova, 2021).

In the Chinese educational context, teachers' performance relied on extensive study, inquiry, reflection, and transfer of knowledge and intelligence concepts into the present-day study of intelligence within China. Self-control could keep teachers and students away from anger, anxiety, and gloom and become active in life (Baba, 2020). Social learning theory states that teachers could develop an effective way to transform their knowledge in creating a supportive learning environment (Bandura, 1977; Young, Haffejee, & Corsun, 2018; Zhang & Koshmanova, 2020). Therefore, the three major approaches could guide the teachers in developing their professional skills and creating a positive learning school environment from novice to expert for student achievement in China.

Conclusion, Implication and Recommendation

Findings showed that teachers could become an expert from novice through deliberate practice (Ericsson et al., 1993) in the power distance exam-oriented disadvantaged school context in China (Hallinger & Heck, 2020; Zhang & Koshmanova, 2021). This study found that teachers could become experts from novice overcoming the challenges through self-awareness in need, self-learning with self-controlling, and social interaction (Ericsson, 1993, 2002; Ericsson et al., 1993; Kramaley & Wishart, 2020; Scott & Ghinea, 2014; Zhang & Koshmanova, 2021).

Teachers could also use the strategies to develop expertise skills through communication with efficacy, new methods for performance, and self-improvement (Bai & Wang, 2020; Bai & Guo, 2019; Dweck, 1986, 1995; Dweck & Finkel, 2020; Derr & Morrow, 2020; Goegan & Daniel, 2019; Zhang & Koshmanova, 2020). This study finally found that teachers playing the role of leaders could effectively develop their expertise skills and create a supportive learning community through attending the conference, self-engagement, and self-learning with a target setting (Hallinger, 2003; Liu & Hallinger, 2020; Mullen, Gutierrez & Newhart, 2018; Pang, Esping, & Plucker, 2017; Tome & Joseph, 2020; Zhang & Koshmanova, 2020).

Therefore, the study suggested that teachers could develop their teaching skills from novice to expertise through building leadership skills, improving self-efficacy, and enhancing emotional intelligence in three steps. One is to recall all the next plans; another is to read the recent educational and professional resources. The other is to communicate with all community members in the field with an open-minded setting.

Once teachers could openly accept various voices in the community, they could nurture human capital, develop social and emotional skills, and lead school academic success virtually (Bush, 2011; Goleman, 2007; Hallinger & Heck, 2020; Zhang & Koshmanova, 2020) for student achievement.

Besides, this study concluded that teachers need to empower emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and social skills for school performance as an expert through deliberate practices (Dweck, 2000, 2006; Ericsson et al., 1993; Goleman, 2007; Hourani, Litz, & Parkman, 2020; Zhang & Koshmanova, 2021) with self-efficacy in positive mindset (Bandura, 1997; Zhang & Koshmanova, 2020). Therefore, I suggest that the future study would explore the teachers' experiences in building a mindfulness framework for secondary high school sustainable growth and student achievement using a comparative mixed research design in the United States and China.

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