



Designing a Model for Career Path Adaptability of Teachers: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

Applying grounded theory (GT) as a systematic methodology, this study was to present a model for the career path adaptability (CPA) of teachers. The statistical population consisted of the experts and teachers affiliated to the Department of Education (DoE) in Iran, in the 2018-19 academic year calendar, and the samples (n=17) were selected based on snowball sampling, as a purposeful method. For this purpose, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were used as the data collection tool, and the data were then analyzed via content analysis with coding. In this line, the central phenomenon, accompanied by the main categories and subcategories, was extracted. To code the given data, 198 codes were initially identified, and 41 subcategories were subsequently formed. To validate the interviews, triangulation, member checking, and peer review were further practiced. Besides, the test-retest and inter-rater reliability techniques were exploited for the reliability purposes. In accordance with the GT outcomes, CPA as the central phenomenon was realized with respect to causal conditions, viz., organizational, career-related, personal conditions, through the strategies of career advancement, learning and training, human resources (HR) attraction/selection/recruitment, and motivation, by taking account of effective underlying conditions, namely, HR development requirements, motivational conditions, organizational culture, and leadership style. However, this phenomenon, not protected from economic, political, organizational, and personal contexts, as the intervening factors, had induced a number of outcomes, e.g., a descending trend in leaving one's job, increased job satisfaction, higher levels of organizational commitment, delegation of authority, and cost reduction for the DOE and teachers. Ultimately, the study results gave rise to designing a CPA model for teachers, containing a central phenomenon, along with causal conditions, underlying conditions, intervening factors, strategies, and outcomes.

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Introduction

To find success and be satisfied at work, employees need to have high levels of adaptability. Here, these individuals can cope with stress by developing their adaptability skills, and perform well even with no person-job fit. As evidenced, career path adaptability (CPA) can foster competence and confidence in employees while facing workplace challenges, and then improve their job satisfaction and lower intentions and motivations to quit. As an example of human capital, CPA refers to someone's capacity to adapt to emerging work needs, group conflicts, and different kinds of work environments (Liu & Yu, 2019). In other words, it represents an individual's willingness to handle unexpected responsibilities, manage role ambiguity, and adapt quickly and appropriately to the changes at work. Besides, it denotes the ability to face, pursue, and accept the changes in work life (Hlad et al., 2020). Therefore, CPA accelerates the coherence between a person and their working environment, and then results in a successful transition, raising some positive career-related outcomes, such as career compromise, satisfaction, and success (Haibo, Xiaoyu, Xiaoming, & Zhijin, 2018). Being acknowledged as a psychological construct, CPA also incorporates four sources of concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. At this point, concern shows a person's orientation toward the future and planning for some forthcoming tasks and challenges; control is the extent of personal responsibility for career growth and development, manifested in someone's effort, perseverance, and inner discipline;

curiosity also conveys the discovery of career options and opportunities and the desire to understand the way an employee can shape one's roles and working environment; and confidence stands for self-efficacy, i.e., an individual's belief about one's potential to meet the best career goals, get to the bottom of problems, and rise above challenges (Zhu, Cai, Buchtel, & Guan, 2019). These sources are created over time, but are likely to change through training and work-related experience. On the word of Chen et al. (2019), investigating CPA and job involvement among online teachers, CPA was positively correlated with job involvement and negatively associated with job insecurity. As a result, teaching as one of the key careers and the executive dimension of education programs deserves much more attention (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). Teachers are also the heart of the efforts for school improvement, and they further play a leading role in promoting quality education and boosting the effectiveness of education systems (Rezaai, 2019). The teaching career is also in consort with endless variations, and teachers are expected to act in response to the changing needs of students in a constructive manner, integrate their own emerging professional learning with curricula, and then apply it to their educational practices. The capacity to respond properly and effectively to such changes and varying conditions, or CPA, has been accordingly introduced as an unquestionable need for teachers (Collie, Grazier, & Martin, 2018). Being known as a fundamental concept, CPA can thus stop wanting to leave one's job by some individuals, provide job stability, enhance

employee retention, and pave the ground for job satisfaction (Zhu, Cai, Buchtel, & Guan, 2019).

CPA, as a set of resources, can further have significant effects on positive career outcomes, such as work-life satisfaction, delegation of authority, and lower intentions to quit (Li, 2016). As reported in the related literature, job satisfaction, motivation, and attachment have hit the lowest among teachers. Additionally, a strong negative relationship has been observed between organizational commitment and the desire to leave one's job in teachers at a high level. Given that the inconsistency between someone's abilities and the teaching career can give rise to inevitable negative outcomes, such as quitting as well as job burnout, stress, dissatisfaction, and incompatibility, there is a dire need to reflect on these issues. Since augmenting CPA in teachers can help them reach the aforementioned outcomes, reduce their intentions to leave, provide job stability, boost employee retention, and create the conditions to feel satisfied at work, this study aimed to design a CPA model for teachers in a qualitative study by addressing the following questions:

1. *What are the main categories and subcategories of CPA as the central phenomenon in this study?*
2. *What are the causal conditions affecting CPA?*
3. *What are the intervening factors shaping CPA?*
4. *What are the underlying conditions concerning CPA?*
5. *What are the strategies influencing CPA?*
6. *What are the outcomes of CPA?*

7. *What is the CPA model proposed for teachers?*

Theoretical Foundations and Background

Being adaptable at work has been a vital part of human life for all ages. The right and conscious choice of career path also begins from the earliest days when human consciousness develops, much more attention is devoted to some issues, and someone's talents are gradually revealed to their surroundings. In today's world, overwhelmed with economic problems, unemployment, and job dissatisfaction, CPA has been recognized as a practical concept based on the changes occurring at work, so employees have to adapt themselves to such variations and work transitions (van den Heuvel, Demerouti, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2013). In fact, CPA is a psychological construct that portrays individual readiness for change and the available resources to fulfill some common tasks and cope with career-related constructs and personal injury. It also refers to the abilities and positive behaviors to reach resilience, particularly in work environments (Atitsogbe, Mama, Sovet, Pari, & Rossier, 2019). Moreover, CPA manipulates people's attitudes, capabilities, and behaviors to optimally attain person-job fit (Jiang, 2016). Accordingly, individuals with high levels of adaptability have more capacity in their personal and professional life to manage many activities (Ginevra, Di Maggio, Santilli, Sgaramella, Nota, & Soresi, 2018). On the other hand, CPA minimizes the intentions to leave one's job (Karatepe & Olugbade, 2017) in employees. Upon improving adaptability, most negative outcomes, such as job

dissatisfaction, quitting, stress, and burnout can be further prevented or decreased, and the related heavy financial burdens are no longer imposed on organizations, from economic, motivational, and organizational perspectives.

Currently, even with digitalization and technological breakthroughs as well as the modernization of organizations into the collections of software and hardware, the role of humans as a vital and strategic factor in the survival of organizations is clearly evident (Pordelan, Sadeghi, Abedi, & Kaedi, 2018, 2020). Today, competent, committed, and motivated teachers are the key to the delivery of high-quality services in education systems. Therefore, the human resources (HR) attraction, selection, recruitment, and retention for education and training are assumed as a sustainable competitive advantage. Teachers are the senior groups in charge of HR education in all societies, viz., the factor contributing to growth and development in each nation. They have always been high up right the way through history and their services have been almost matchless. However, the challenges facing teachers across the world have been an important factor threatening the quality of effective education (Collie et al., 2017). Unquestionably, being capable of doing some affairs and reacting effectively to these changes is a significant capacity for proper performance in teaching, which is known as CPA, implying a person's capacity to adapt one's thoughts, actions, and feelings in response to the emerging, ever-changing, and uncertain conditions in the present day (Zhu et al., 2019). In such circumstances, teachers have a duty to be regularly involved in their

own learning, and expected to continuously apply new knowledge to their professional activities and teaching. That is, teachers encounter recurrent changes (Collie et al., 2016).

As an example, Montazeri and Pourhoseinali (2019), assessing the relationship between transformational leadership at schools and teacher performance, found that the leadership style adopted by school directors could have a significant positive effect on teacher performance and public service motivation. Besides, Majedi, Naderi, and Seifnaraghi (2019), reflecting on the best qualifications for a teacher, fitting global characteristics, and their validation from the perspectives of school directors and teachers, also revealed that the professional qualifications of teachers could be reduced to five major dimensions, i.e., professional knowledge (namely, pedagogical knowledge, communication, specialized/organizational knowledge, and self-awareness), professional skills (viz., teaching skills, effective communication, teamwork, technological knowledge, and evaluation), professional aptitudes (that is, creative thinking, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, analytical reasoning ability, and leadership), professional attitudes (here, lifelong learning, attitudes, positive self/other-belief, attitude projection, views of democracy, and student-centered approach), and professional qualities (to be exact, ethical, behavioral, emotional, and communication-based characteristics).

In their survey on the relationship between CPA and intentions to leave one's job based on the structural theories of career among the

employees working for the organizations in China, Zhu et al. (2019) further suggested the relationship between CPA and reduction in the desire to quit in employees. As well, Yen, Cheng, Hsu, and Yen (2019), investigating the way CPA could bolster job satisfaction among the employees in China, showed that the individuals with stronger CPA had experienced higher levels of job satisfaction. Simultaneously, CPA could give a boost to the person-job fit, thereby resulting in more job satisfaction.

Exploring perceived support and CPA, Collie et al. (2018) correspondingly examined the relationship between perceived support, autonomy, and adaptability in Australian lower secondary education teachers, using the structural equation modeling (SEM). They established a significant positive relationship between perceived support provided by school directors to teachers and the CPA of teachers. Moreover, a significant positive relationship was observed between both constructs, i.e., perceived support and CPA, and organizational well-being and commitment among teachers. There was also a significant

positive relationship between teachers' perceptions of support for their autonomy and CPA by school directors. Likewise, Collie and Martin (2017), exploring the relationship between perceived support and CPA in Australian teachers, showed that the teachers' perceptions of support for their autonomy and adaptability were positively associated. At the same time, a positive relationship was detected between the perceptions related to support for autonomy and CPA, and teachers' well-being and organizational commitment. As well, Karatepe and Olugbade (2017) reflected on the effects of workplace social support and CPA on job satisfaction and intentions to leave one's job among Nigerian employees, and reported that the workplace social support by colleagues and supervisors had strengthened CPA. In this respect, those with high adaptability were feeling more satisfied with their job, and had little desire to leave it.

To design the CPA model for teachers, its main categories and subcategories were initially identified. The conceptual model extracted from the research background is depicted in Figure 1.

Perceived support	Teacher's professional qualifications	School director's leadership style
CPA		
Increased job satisfaction	Higher levels of organizational commitment	Reduction in leaving one's job

Figure 1. Conceptual model of the present study

Methods

This applied developmental study in nature, using a qualitative approach in terms of data collection based on Grounded Theory (GT), as a structured methodology developed by Corbin and Strauss (1990), investigated

the CPA of teachers, and then proposed a model for this purpose. First, the teachers' professional qualifications and their challenges along with causal conditions, underlying conditions, intervening factors, strategies, and the related outcomes were

identified. Concerning the research objectives and questions, the CPA model for teachers was designed. To collect the data, library sources and interviews were further utilized. For sample selection, snowball sampling, as a purposeful method, was practiced. To this end, the samples consisting of the experts and teachers affiliated to the Department of Education (DoE), who could potentially provide the most useful information, were selected. In addition, each sample was asked to introduce other informants to the researchers if they knew them. Therefore, the following inclusion criteria were considered for the interviews:

- The interviewee needed to be involved in education and working as a teacher, with at least 20 years of teaching experience.
- The interviewee was familiar with teaching, education, and HR management.

The statistical population composed of the experts and teachers affiliated to the DoE (n=12482) in the southeast of Tehran province, Iran, during the 2018-19 Academic Year Calendar, which consisted of the cities of Varamin, Pishva, Fashafouyeh, Qarchak, Shahr-e Ray 1, Shahr-e Ray 2, and Kahrizak, including 5637 women and 6845 men. According to the inclusion criteria, that is, having at least 20 years of teaching experience, 1382 people, i.e., 843 men and 539 women were found. In this study, 17 samples were finally selected as the interviewees, and after 12 interviews, the researchers concluded that the data reached the theoretical saturation, but continued until the completion of the 17th interview to provide full assurance. The general characteristics of the interviewees are given in Table 1.

Table 1. General characteristics of interviewees

No.	Field of study	Level of education	Occupation	Teaching experience (year)	City
1	Curriculum Design	PhD degree	Professor	30	Tehran
2	Philosophy of Education	PhD degree	Professor	27	Tehran
3	Curriculum Design	Master's degree	Primary School Teacher	28	Varamin
4	Primary Education	Bachelor's degree	Primary School Teacher	20	Varamin
5	Primary Education	Bachelor's degree	Primary School Teacher	22	Pishva
6	Applied Mathematics	Master's degree	Primary School Teacher	21	Fashafouyeh
7	Applied Mathematics	Master's degree	Primary School Teacher	21	Shahr-e Ray 2
8	Experimental Science	Bachelor's degree	High School Teacher	21	Kahrizak
9	Social Science	Master's degree	High School Teacher	22	Qarchak

10	Arabic Language and Literature	Master's degree	High School Teacher	22	Qarchak
11	Educational Technology	Master's degree	High School Teacher	21	Shahr-e Ray 2
12	English Language Teaching	Master's degree	School director	21	Fashafouyeh
13	Islamic Teachings	Bachelor's degree	High School Teacher	17	Pishva
14	Social Science	Master's degree	High School Teacher	16	Varamin
15	Psychology	Bachelor's degree	Primary School Teacher	21	Qarchak
16	Industrial Design	Master's degree	Art Instructor	23	Shahr-e Ray 1
17	Drawing	Master's degree	Art Instructor	28	Varamin

According to GT, developed by Corbin and Strauss (1990), the adequate sample size was 10-25, and the rise in their number depended on theoretical saturation. In this study, 17 interviews were conducted, and no new data were practically obtained after the 12th interview, so theoretical saturation was achieved. The samples were further selected by snowball sampling to run the interviews.

As well, test-retest reliability was exploited to calculate the reliability of the interviews and their coding. To do so, some interviews were initially selected as the

samples, and each one was re-coded at short and specific intervals. Then, the given codes were compared within two intervals for each interview. The test-retest method was accordingly used to evaluate the coding stability by researchers. In each interview, the same codes during two intervals were marked as the agreed codes and the different codes were shown as the disagreed ones. The following formula was thus exploited to calculate the inter-rater reliability coefficient at two intervals:

$$\text{Reliability coefficient} = \frac{\text{Twice number of agreed codes} \times 100}{\text{Total codes}}$$

Formula 1: Inter-rater reliability formula

To calculate test-retest reliability (re-coding) in this study, three interviews were selected, and then each one was coded twice during 10-day intervals. The coding results are

presented in Table 2, wherein the number of agreed codes is in the form of paired codes. As an example, the number of agreed codes in interview no. 4 is 29 pairs or 58 codes.

Table 2. Calculation of agreed codes

No.	Interview	Total codes	Number of agreed codes	Number of disagreed codes	Test-retest reliability (%)
1	No. 4	79	29	21	73
2	No. 9	85	30	25	70
3	No. 11	93	35	23	75
Total		257	94	69	72

The findings showed that the total number of codes at two 10-day intervals was equal to 257, the total number of the agreed codes in the three interviews was 94, and the total number of the disagreed codes was 69. Therefore, the test-retest reliability results revealed the value of 72% for the reliability coefficient based on the mentioned formula. In view of this, it was concluded that the coding had good reliability.

In this study, the paradigm model proposed by Corbin and Strauss (1990) was implemented for axial coding. Within this model, the concepts could be associated with the central phenomenon, causal conditions, underlying conditions, intervening factors, practical strategies (that is, actions and interactions), and outcomes. After completing the interviews, data analysis was performed in accordance with GT, at the

open, axial, and selective coding stages. To reach the credibility of the research findings, each interview was presented to the interviewees, as experts and knowledgeable people, and there was much discussion and exchange of opinions about the related categories and subcategories. The following items were also used for meeting credibility in order to improve accuracy, validity, and reliability, viz., sensitivity to methodology coherence, adequate samples, repetition principles, and feedback. To validate the study findings, the analysis and coding results were further provided to seven individuals (including the participants) and three people outside the study setting, and their opinions were obtained about the extracted codes, concepts and their labels, as well as the data content.

Table 3. Examples of open coding

Interview transcriptions	Open codes	Concepts
To tackle the abundant changes that often come about during the teaching career, it is a good idea that teachers have a string of special qualities and capabilities, for example, they need to have expertise in the related subject they teach (Interviewee No. 5)	Having specialized pedagogical knowledge	Teacher’s professional qualifications
If teachers keep themselves empowered by further studying and learning for lifelong, changes at work will be very useful (Interviewee No. 14)	Continued learning by teachers	
The students’ parents come from different social classes and have their own tastes and demands. This diversity must be thus well managed by teachers.	Teacher’s encounters with different parents	Managing multiple stakeholders
Teachers encounter many students with different morals, needs, and behaviors from one classroom to another or from one school to another.	Dealing with various students	
As a teacher, I go from one school to a new one, and meet new principals and colleagues. Without doubt, I think new individuals have their own behaviors and characteristics, so I must be able to deal well with such issues, these types of people, and new colleagues.	Meeting new colleagues at school	

Findings

To address the research questions according to the semi-structured, in-depth interviews in this study, the interviews were recorded in line with observing the ethical considerations and the principles of confidentiality of information, upon receiving permission from the interviewees. After transcribing the interviews, the central phenomenon, categories, and subcategories were determined using the line-by-line and phrase-by-phrase content analysis based on the similarities between the concepts and the commonalities of the open codes, concepts, and categories. During the data analysis, the concepts were developed through coding, directly from the interview transcriptions. For this purpose, the interviews were first

converted into small semantic units, and the categories were placed under larger ones. Upon completing each stage, the duplicated concepts were excluded, and the same ones were merged. In this way, the underlying and causal conditions were established after finding the central phenomenon. According to these conditions, the practical strategies were presented, and finally, the outcomes were delineated.

After the interviews were transcribed and analyzed, 198 codes and concepts were identified and classified, and then re-coding was fulfilled. At the axial coding stage, 40 subcategories were formed by organizing the given concepts, and then classified under 20 main categories. In the following, the central phenomenon was systematically selected by

selective coding and connecting it to other categories, the relevant theory was developed, and the CPA model for teachers was proposed. Finally, six dimensions of the model and their interrelationships formed the central phenomenon (the CPA of teachers, 2 categories), causal conditions (3 categories), underlying conditions (4 categories), intervening factors (4 categories), strategies

(4 categories), and outcomes (4 categories), as given in Table 5. In order to identify the main categories and subcategories of the CPA model for teachers, open coding and categorization were done. At this stage, the data obtained from the content analysis of the interviews, which included 40 concepts, are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Initial coding

No.	Extracted concepts	Interview	Code
1	Organizational decision-making	2,6,13,17,19	C1
2	Laws and directives	16,11,5,2	C2
3	Encounters with transitions and changing grade levels	11.1.13.14.17	C3
4	Autonomy	9.13.1.2.6	C4
5	Organizational culture	4.7.8.9.11.16	C5
6	Motivation through mutual trust	1.3.9.13.15	C6
7	Perceived support	17.14.3.6.9.15	C7
8	Dealing with newly published books	3.4.5.8.11.12.14.15	C8
9	Attitudes and values	3.8.9.11.13	C9
10	Capabilities	4.5.7.11.17	C10
11	Financial concerns	3.5.6.8.11.13	C11
12	Poor specialized knowledge	3.6.7.9.11.12.16	C12
13	Hope	4.5.8.11.15.16	C13
14	Meeting new stakeholders	1.2.6.7.13.15.17	C14
15	Planning for HR training	4.5.11.15.16	C15
16	Weaknesses in information and communication technology	5,2.3.6.8.9.10.11.12.13.15.16	C16
17	Job satisfaction	5.3.2.6.8.9.10.11.12.13.15.16.17.1	C17
18	Non-bureaucratic organizational relationships	4.7.9.11.13.16	C18
19	Fields of knowledge	2.3.5.7.11.13.14.17	C19
20	Motivation through compensation by service	4.5.7.10.11.15	C20
21	Work self-efficacy	10.8.16.12.3.11	C21
22	Higher levels of organizational commitment	5.7.8.10.11.16	C22
23	Needs for teaching methods	3.4.9.11.13.14.15	C23
24	Proper HR attraction, selection, recruitment, and retention	1.3.4.5.7.11.14.16	C24
25	Personal qualities	1.2.5.6.8.9.13.16	C25
26	Cost reduction	1.4.7.8.9.11.14.15.16.17	C26
27	Skills	3.4.6.7.9.11.12.16	C27
28	Creating and increasing motivation at work	1.4.5.8.9.10.15.17	C28
29	Handling multiple directives	1.4.5.8.9.10.15.17	C29

30	Leadership styles	5·6·8·9·10·11·13	C30
31	Training and empowerment	2·3·5·6·8·9·19·13·14·15·16	C31
32	Career interests	1·3·5·8·9·11·12·13·16	C32
33	Learning organizations at schools	1·2·5·8·11·14·15	C33
34	Budgeting problems	1·2·3·6·8·11·12·13·17	C34
35	Drawing a clear career path	5·6·9·11·16	C35
36	Reduced employee turnover	3·5·6·8·9·11·12·15·16	C36
37	Optimism	8·2·3·16·11·4	C37
38	Low power of the DoE Minister	2·3·5·6·7·9·10·11·12·14·15·17	C38
39	Delegation of authority	3·6·8·9·10·14	C39
40	Incentive systems for HR training	1·2·5·9·11·12·14·16·17	C40

After the data management and the model development at three coding stages, selective coding, resulting from the interviews, was completed (Table 5).

Table 5. Selective coding from interviews

Model components	Main categories	Subcategories
Causal conditions	Personal conditions	Optimism
		Hope
		Autonomy
	Organizational conditions	Organizational decision-making
		Laws and directives
	Career-related conditions	Workplace self-efficacy
Perceived support		
Central phenomenon	Workplace challenges	Dealing with newly published books
		Handling multiple directives
		Encounters with changing grade levels
		Weaknesses in information and communication technology
		Poor specialized knowledge
		Needs for teaching methods
		Meeting new stakeholders
	Qualifications	Skills
		Attitudes
		Capabilities
		Personal qualities
Underlying conditions	Leadership style	Leadership styles
	Organizational culture	Organizational culture
	HR development requirements	Learning organizations
	Motivational conditions	Planning for HR training
		Incentive systems for HR training
Intervening	Organizational context	Non-bureaucratic organizational relationships
		Career interests
	Personal context	Financial concerns

factors	Political context	Low power of the DoE Minister
	Economic context	Budgeting problems
Strategies	Learning and training	Training and empowerment
	Career advancement	Drawing a clear career path
	Motivation	Motivation through mutual trust
		Motivation through compensation by service
HR attraction, selection, recruitment, and retention	Proper HR attraction, selection, recruitment, retention	
Outcomes	Career interests	Reduced employee turnover
	Individual interests	Job satisfaction
	Organizational interests	Higher levels of organizational commitment
		Delegation of authority
	Cost reduction	

Research Question 1

What are the main categories and subcategories of CPA as the central phenomenon in this study?

Table 6: Open codes and categories related to CPA

	Main category	Open codes	Interviews
CPA	Workplace challenges ahead	No familiarity with the right methods for teaching newly published books, lacking specialized knowledge to teach new books due to their many changes, no interactions with the newly published books, directives to change the educational systems to 3-3-6, compulsory directives for transferring some teachers to primary schools due to their shortages, directives for making changes in student evaluation methods, directives for not considering higher education qualifications for teachers, transitions of teachers between grade levels regardless of their willingness or unwillingness, lack of planning and organizing teachers to teach in their specialized fields, having no skills to practice new technologies during teaching and in classrooms, being deficient in knowledge required to teach non-specialized subjects by teachers, employing teachers with no expertise based on Article 28, lagging behind modern science and knowledge in teaching, no mastery on how to teach unrelated subjects, facing many students, different parents, and new colleagues	ME1,MR2.,MR6,M D7,MD13,MD15,M R17,MR11,ME12. ME9,ME16.MD4.M E5.,ME14,MR15
		Skills for using teaching methods in classrooms, planning for teaching, exploiting technology in teaching, motivating students, group work, attitudes toward lifelong learning, teachers' attitudes, being	ME1,MR2,MD5,M R8,MD9,MD16 ME13,MR17,ME14 ,MD7,MR11,ME3.

	Required qualifications	student-centered, positive attitudes to new issues and innovation, optimistic attitudes to change, flexible attitudes, ability to influence the implementation of reforms at schools, ability to create positive changes, engaging students with lessons, conveying positive thoughts and opinions to students, leadership styles, self-efficacy, self-confidence, self-esteem, flexibility, having the spirit of continued learning, adequate specialized knowledge, having knowledge related to educational courses and content, teaching strategies, knowledge of using media and foreign languages, knowledge of measurement and evaluation, learning through continuous study, expertise	
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The study results showed that the central phenomenon in this model was CPA for teachers, which consisted of 2 main categories, workplace challenges ahead and required qualifications, and 42 subcategories (Table 6).

Research Question 2

What are the causal conditions affecting CPA?

Table 7. Open codes and categories related to causal conditions

Selective category	Main categories	Open codes	Interviews
Causal conditions	Organizational conditions	Decisions by the DoE, decisions by Education Offices, directives issued by Education Offices, decisions by school directors, Acts of Parliament, approvals by the Supreme Council of Education, regulations by the cabinet	MD16,ME11,MR7, MR15,MD3,MD6, MR10,ME5,ME4,MD9,MD1,ME15,MR10,MR2
	Personal conditions	Being optimistic about changes at work, being hopeful to gain more income resulting from job changes, having positive thinking about one's career path ahead, having hope for future career path, waiting for positive changes in one's career, showing hope for new working conditions, putting emphasis on better performance at work in the future, being interested in more freedom at work, attempts to maintain autonomy in performing one's duties, no interest in being a subordinate in the workplace, no interest in being ordered and prohibited at work	MR11,ME1,ME13, MD5,MD16,MR17, ME3,MD8,MR10,MR17,ME9,MD14,ME2
	Career-related conditions	Teacher's beliefs in one's ability to do things successfully, coping well with one's family, teacher's ability to do things correctly at school, teacher's support by school director, teacher's support by school director if necessary, school director's encouragement to teachers for growth and effort, receiving school director's support in career crises, receiving school director's support in challenging and competitive issues	MR13,MD6,MD15, ME2,MD11,ME6,ME5,MR3,MD9,MD8,MR10,ME1,MD2, ME16,MR17

The study results indicated that the major causal conditions shaping the central phenomenon here, CPA, were organizational, personal, and career-related conditions (Table 7).

Research Question 3

What are the intervening factors shaping CPA?

Table 8. Open codes and categories related to intervening factors

Selective category	Main categories	Open codes	Interviews
Intervening factors	Economic context	Insufficient allocation of funds for education, discrimination between ministries in terms of allocation of funds and facilities, inadequate teacher income, failure to meet financial needs of teachers and their families, teachers taking on second and third jobs, inappropriate insurance policies and financial support for teachers, teacher's salary not fitting with their knowledge and educational qualifications	MR11,ME3,MR7,MD12,MD5,MD9,ME8,MR14,MD17,ME2,MR10,MD4,MD6,ME8
	Political context	Insufficient teaching experience of the DoE Minister, poor managerial power of the DoE Minister, political perspectives by the DoE Minister in terms of the appointment of managers and officials, political party and faction affiliations of the DoE Minister, no authority of the DoE Minister in the government	ME6,ME5,MR3,MD9,MD8,MR10,ME1,MD2,ME16,MR17
	Organizational context	School director's view of teachers as colleagues but not subordinates, school director's intimacy with teachers, school director's attention to teacher's beliefs and values	ME13,MR17,ME14,MD7,MR11,ME3.
	Personal context	Having much interest in the teaching career, not being successful in finding another job, knowing the conditions of the teaching career before choosing it, having parents and relatives working as teachers, receiving career advice before entering a job, good academic ranking in the National Entrance Exam of Universities, freedom of action for individuals to choose one's job, adoring the teaching career since childhood, showing interest in teaching others	ME1,MR2,MR6,MD7,MD13,MD15,MR17,MR11,ME12,ME9,ME16,MD4,ME5,ME14,MR15

The study findings demonstrated that the main intervening factors influencing the strategies were economic, political, organizational, and personal contexts (Table 8).

Research Question 4

What are the underlying conditions concerning CPA?

Table 9. Open codes and categories related to underlying conditions

elective S category	Main categories	Open codes	Interviews
Underlying conditions	HR development requirements	Permanent in-service learning at schools, teachers' actions for training each other at schools, research for learning at schools, research at schools to transfer knowledge to each other, seriousness in supervisions in classrooms, learning lessons from each other, weaknesses in teacher education and training, lack of proper planning to provide teachers needed in the 3-3-6 system, use of service staff to teach in the 3-3-6 system, inability to provide and train required staff in each academic year, classrooms facing shortages at the beginning of the academic year, lack of in-service courses for teachers, no foresight to prepare teachers for changes	ME6,ME5,MR3,MD9, MD8,MR10,ME1,MD2,ME16,MR17
	Motivational conditions	Low motivation among teachers to participate in training courses, not holding high-quality courses to encourage teachers, not providing financial and non-financial rewards for participating in courses, no courses in religious and recreational cities, not providing training courses with attractive subjects for teachers, need for motivating teaching among young HR, increasing teacher's salary and benefits according to their knowledge and abilities, giving advantages to teachers compared to other jobs, raising teachers' positions in society	MR13,MD6,MD15,ME2,MD11,ME6,ME5,MR3,MD9,MD8,MR10,ME1,MD2,ME16,MR17
	Leadership style	Sincere and friendly behavior by school directors toward teachers, having no top-down view by school directors for running schools, consulting with teachers in doing some affairs, behaving like a colleague with teachers by school directors and being honored to serve them	ME1,MR2,MR6,MD7, MD13,MD15,MR17,MR11,ME12,ME9,ME16, MD4,ME5,ME14,MR15
	Organizational culture	Belief in in-service learning by teachers, accepting the necessity of positively facing job changes by teachers, looking at changes as opportunities by teachers, believing in innovation in performing one's duties as obligations	MR13,MD6,MD15,ME2,MD11,ME6,ME5,MR3,MD9,MD8,MR10,ME1,MD2,ME16,MR17

The study results signified that the key motivational conditions, leadership styles, underlying factors affecting the strategies, and organizational culture (Table 9). viz., HR development requirements,

Research Question 5

What are the strategies influencing CPA?

Table 10. Open codes and categories related to strategies

Selective coding	Main categories	Open codes	Interviews
Strategies	Learning and training	Providing in-service training for teachers, conducting educational needs assessment for planning in-service courses, holding in-service courses for teachers, using competent professors, providing necessary facilities and conditions for holding courses, correct evaluation during courses, increasing knowledge and skills in teachers, improving courage and motivation among teachers to make decisions, creating appropriate decision-making power in teachers	MD16,ME11,MR7,MR15,MD3,MD6,MR10,ME5,ME4,MD9,MD1,ME15,MR10,MR2
	Career advancement	Creating different job positions for teachers according to their qualifications, taking account of teachers' academic degrees to promote their careers, paying attention to knowledge and experience of teachers to promote their careers and positions, giving specialized academic ranks to teachers according to their education and experience, increasing salaries and teacher's rewards according to their ranks and job positions, drawing paths for career advancement of teachers with regard to their ranks and academic degrees	ME13,MR17,ME14,MD7,MR11,ME3,ME1,MR2,MD5,MR8,MD9,MD16
	Motivation	Involving capable teachers in school administration, consulting with teachers in making decisions, forming working groups consisting of teachers, using teachers' expertise to do some affairs, justifying the necessity of job changes for teachers, eliciting opinions and consulting with teachers about job changes as a necessity	ME6,ME5,MR3,MD9,MD8,MR10,ME1,MD2,ME16,MR17
	HR attraction, selection, recruitment, and retention	Recruiting candidates interested in becoming a teacher through Farhangian University, conducting specialized in-depth interviews to accept candidates, holding teacher training courses with high standards	ME6,ME5,MR3,MD9,MD8,MR10,ME1,MD2,ME16,MR17

Based on the results obtained from the analysis of the participants' interviews, the strategies that could affect CPA of teachers were learning and training, career

advancement, motivation, and HR attraction, selection, recruitment, and retention (Table 10).

Research Question 6

What are the outcomes of CPA?

Table 11. Open codes and categories related to outcomes

Selective coding	Main categories	Open codes	Interviews
Outcomes	Career interests	Having a good feeling about one's job and maintaining interest in it, reducing burnout due to the teaching career and leaving it, having a sense of being useful and efficient as a teacher, having a sense of pride due to one's ability to overcome changing conditions and difficulties at work, increasing teacher's self-confidence thanks to their successes	MR11,ME1,ME13, MD5,MD16,MR17, ME3,MD8,MR10 MR17,ME9,MD14, ME2
	Personal interests	Reaching happiness due to being successful in performing one's duties, feeling delighted attributable to showing one's capabilities, feeling satisfied with being able to do group work, happiness following winning the trust of managers and officials, gaining a superior career position in terms of growth and development, earning rewards, financial and spiritual benefits resulting from career advancement, earning higher salaries and benefits from a new job	ME1,MR2,MR6,MD7,MD13,MD15, MR17,MR11,ME12ME9,ME16.MD4. ME5.,ME14,MR15
	Organizational interests	Improving teacher's positive attitudes toward school and one's job, strengthening teacher's sense of loyalty to school and one's job, teacher's sense of commitment toward school and goals of one's job, considering oneself committed to participating in doing things and solving problems, having a feeling of being allowed to make decisions by teachers in line with one's job, increasing teacher's ability to participate and solve problems through intellectual help, using teacher's expertise to help in school administration, reducing costs of holding undesirable training courses, lowering costs due to leaving jobs by experienced teachers, minimizing costs of recruiting substitutes for experienced teachers, cutting costs due to conflicts and possible tensions between teachers, decreasing costs of increased productivity and teachers' efficiency, bring down costs due to teachers' burnout	MR13,MD6,MD15, ME2,MD11,ME6, ME5,MR3,MD9,MD8,MR10,ME1,MD2,ME16,MR17

Based on the results obtained from the analysis of the interviews in this study, the most important outcomes of CPA included

career, personal, and organizational interests (Table 11).

Research Question 7

What is the CPA model proposed for teachers?

Underlying conditions HR development requirements Leadership styles Organizational culture			
Causal conditions - Organizational conditions - Personal conditions - Career-related conditions	Central phenomenon CPA - Workplace challenges - Professional qualifications	Strategies - Education - Career advancement - Motivation - HR attraction, selection, recruitment, and retention	Outcomes - Personal interests - Career interests - Organizational interests
Intervening factors Economic context Political context Organizational context Personal context			

Figure 2. CPA model for teachers

Figure 2 displays the CPA model for teachers, as briefly discussed below.

- The central phenomenon is actually the core of the study, namely, CPA for teachers, and includes workplace challenges ahead and professional qualifications.

- The causal conditions refer to the incidents and events that lead to the occurrence or development of a phenomenon, here, ideas, incidents, and events, along with a set of actions or reactions are directed to manage it, or a set of actions are related to it. According to Table 6, the set related to causal conditions in this study was personal, organizational, and career-related conditions.

- The intervening factors are the general conditions that can shape processes and strategies. Such factors can also strengthen or weaken the central phenomenon. In this study, according to Table 6, the intervening factors consisted of organizational, personal, economic, and political contexts.

- The underlying conditions represent a special group of features related to the central phenomenon. They mean the situations and events occurring during a limited period. As depicted in Table 6, leadership styles, organizational culture, HR development requirements, and motivation established the underlying conditions in this study.

- The strategies are specific actions or interactions, resulting from the central phenomenon. In fact, strategies can provide the solutions to face the phenomenon, that is, manage and accomplish it. In this study, the strategies according to Table 6 included education, career advancement, motivation, and HR attraction, selection, recruitment, and retention

- The outcomes refer to the consequences or results of actions and interactions. In this study, the outcomes were grouped into three categories, viz., personal, organizational, and career interests, as shown in Table 6.

Discussion

The main objective of this study was to propose a CPA model for teachers, using a qualitative approach based on GT. The data collection tool was semi-structured in-depth interviews with 17 experts. Afterward, 198 key concepts were extracted, and then 40 subcategories were formed under 20 main categories of the central phenomenon, that is, the CPA of teachers. The final model was presented according to the causal conditions, underlying conditions, intervening factors, strategies, and outcomes.

Regarding the first research question, addressing the main categories and subcategories affecting the central phenomenon, CPA, in this study, the results showed that CPA could be defined as a set of psychological attributes and qualifications, capabilities, and motivation, which could help teachers deal with the changes and events facing their career path in a constructive manner, boost their flexibility, demonstrate the right behavior to harmonize with their job, and cope with future changes.

CPA accordingly consisted of the dimensions of recognizing workplace and career challenges as well as acquiring the skills and competencies required for this purpose, which was in line with the results in

In relation to the second research question, that is, the effect of the causal conditions on CPA, it was established that teachers as employees affiliated to the DoE might receive and perceive organizational support in performing their duties and providing services to their beneficiaries, students, and society, so they could compensate for this support like other employees, and take further steps according to Social Exchange Theory to make up for this support and increase the quantity and quality of their services through their better performance. The findings here associated with the causal conditions were thus consistent with the reports in indicating a significant positive relationship between perceived support by school directors for teachers and their adaptability, as well as the findings in (2017), demonstrating a positive relationship between teachers' perceptions of support for their autonomy and adaptability.

About the third research question, the impact of the intervening factors on CPA, the study results showed that economic context (that is, budgeting problems of education), political context (namely, low power of the DoE Minister), organizational context (viz., non-bureaucratic relationships governing schools and teachers), and personal context (to be exact, career interests and financial concerns among teachers), could have the most significant effects from the perspectives of the participants. Despite the systematic literature review, no study was found in line

with the present one, to the best of the authors' knowledge.

Considering the fourth research question on the underlying conditions affecting CPA, it could be acknowledged, based on the analysis of the interviews, that the leadership styles adopted by school directors was one of the major factors shaping adaptability and improving performance in teachers. To increase the professional effectiveness of teachers, it was thus necessary for school directors to interactively manage schools with the right leadership styles and approaches. The study results were accordingly in agreement with the findings in suggesting that the leadership styles of school directors could have a significant positive effect on teachers' job performance and public service motivation.

To answer the fifth research question, i.e., the strategies modifying CPA, the analysis of the interviews and the study findings showed that the professional development and training of teachers was the best policy for increasing their capacities, which could boost the effectiveness of teaching and lead to more learning among students. In addition, psychological empowerment was one of the vital strategies for expanding organizations and adapting to specific changes, so these results were along the lines of the findings in

With respect to the sixth research question, the outcomes of CPA, it was revealed that the consequences expected could appear if the factors and conditions mentioned in the CPA model for teachers could work well. These outcomes included three general categories of career, personal, and organizational interests, which respectively contained a descending trend in

leaving one's job, increased job satisfaction, higher levels of organizational commitment, and delegation of authority. The main side effect of CPA in teachers was the reduction in quitting the career. By increasing competitions and expanding HR development strategies, organizations could thus retain their talented employees and empower them to perform better. The findings of the present study on the descending trend of leaving one's job as the most important outcome of CPA for teachers were in line with the findings in Zue et al. (2019), reporting that employees with high adaptability were satisfied with their job and had little desire to leave it, as well as the research results that job satisfaction and perceived organizational support could have a positive effect on the relationship between CPA and the reduction in employees' intentions to leave their jobs. The second outcome was job satisfaction, emphasized by the interviewees as the main benefits or secondary consequences resulting from the implementation of the strategies in this study. Therefore, placing employees in their right positions based on their talents would help find the career path ahead, since it could act as a stimulating factor for better job opportunities, inside and outside the organization. These would further increase job satisfaction and performance among teachers, which was according to the findings in indicating that employees with stronger CPA had experienced higher job satisfaction, and CPA could strengthen the person-job fit, which could result in increased job satisfaction, aligned with the fact that CPA was one of the outcomes.

The analysis of the findings regarding the seventh research question, which dealt with the CPA model for teachers, showed that the given model containing the central phenomenon of CPA, was influenced by three main categories, viz., personal conditions (namely, optimism, hope, and autonomy), organizational conditions (viz., organizational decisions and laws and directives), and career-related conditions (to be exact, work self-efficacy and perceived support), whose absence or improper functioning would not lead to CPA among teachers. In the meantime, some strategies were obtained from the perspectives of the key informants, taking into account their lived experiences and perceptions, which included training and empowering, drawing a clear career path, motivation through mutual trust, motivation through compensation by service, and proper HR attraction, selection, recruitment, retention along with training. Despite these actions and reactions and with the establishment of the CPA model for teachers, the outcomes were expected at the career-related, personal, and organizational levels.

With reference to the study findings of the proposed model, the officials in the DoE can make the most of this model for meeting the requirements for its realization in Iran. By applying the current strategies from this study to different fields, the best measures can be taken toward accomplishing CPA in teachers, and in this way, improve their efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity. Practicing these strategies and the aforementioned measures can thus result in the valuable outcomes resulting from the

CPA of teachers at the personal, career-related, and organizational levels.

Limitations

Among the main limitations of this study was its nature, based on of GT. Since this structured methodology could describe the central phenomenon based on time and place constraints, this study was also restricted to the opinions of experts and few participants, and its findings might lack generalizability. To conduct the interviews, gaining access to experts and teachers due to their presence in classrooms and no free time was one of the limitations. Multiple interpretations and semantic uncertainty in this field and no familiarity with the concept of CPA among teachers were also among the big challenges, which could make it difficult to collect accurate and deep data.

Suggestions

This study aimed to propose a CPA model for teachers, which was developed upon reviewing the related literature and conducting the present study. In this regard, some practical suggestions were offered to managers and researchers according to the study findings. Considering the weaknesses in CPA among teachers and no recognition of this concept by some, it was advocated to pay much attention to cultural infrastructure by HR managers and officials. One of the important findings in this study was low motivation among teachers. It was thus recommended to plan for developing and practicing the right solutions to create and strengthen job motivation and utilize different motivational tools, both financial and non-financial, to maximize the positive outputs in these individuals. Based on the study results, a descending trend in quitting

one's job, increased job satisfaction, higher levels of organizational commitment, delegation of authority, and cost reduction were the main outcomes of CPA. In view of this, HR managers and officials were advised to reflect on such outcomes through developing motivational and educational strategies, drawing a clear career path, and even attracting, selecting, recruiting, and retaining qualified HR in order to accomplish them.

Ethical considerations

During the implementation of this research and the preparation of the article, all national laws and principles of professional ethics related to the subject of research, including the rights of statistical community, organizations and

institutions, as well as authors and writers have been observed. Adherence to the principles of research ethics in the present study was observed and consent forms were consciously completed by all statistical community.

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Conflict of interest

According to the authors of the present article, there was no conflict of interest.

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