

Transformational Leadership Style and Self-Efficacy of Faculty Members in Universities in China

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Abstract

This study will be focusing on determining the relationship between transformational leadership style and self-efficacy of faculty members of selected public schools in China. The study will be participated in by two public universities in China: Hunan University of Arts and Sciences and Hunan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. 174 respondents will be acquired in each university with a total of 348 of overall target respondents. The researcher will utilize quantitative research in conducting the study. The researcher will adopt the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) by Bass & Avolio, 2000; Avolio & Bass, 2004, in determining the transformational leadership style of faculty members in the two universities while for the self-efficacy questionnaire, the researcher also adopted the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) questionnaire for the instruments. The study will be delimited to the faculty members of Hunan University of Arts and Sciences, and Hunan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Keywords

Chinese universities; Teachers; Leadership style; Self-efficacy.

1. Introduction

Educational leadership is centered on certain key principles. Firstly, educational leadership creates a vision of academic success for all students. There has always been a historical gap between students on different socio-economical levels and high and low achieving students. Second, educational leadership strives to maintain a safe and receptive environment. A healthy school environment is key to providing comfortable, orderly and structured classrooms. Third, educational leadership delegates responsibility to others so that teachers, parents and even students can take responsibility and accept accountability. Fourth, instructional methods and curriculum content must be continually improved. Finally, the field of education must borrow and adapt modern management tools, processes and techniques.

Teachers are the foundation of educational leadership. They manage students, but are leaders among their colleagues. They are the resource providers that help students and other teachers find online and community resources. They provide valuable classroom management and teaching strategies to other teachers. They also provide educational leaders with constructive feedback for curriculum improvements.

2. Research Design

This section discusses the methods and procedures to be utilized to gather the necessary data to assess transformational leadership and teachers' self-efficacy. The elements described in this section include the research design, sample and sampling technique, research instrument, data gathering procedure, and the statistical treatment of data which lead to the fulfillment of the study's purpose.

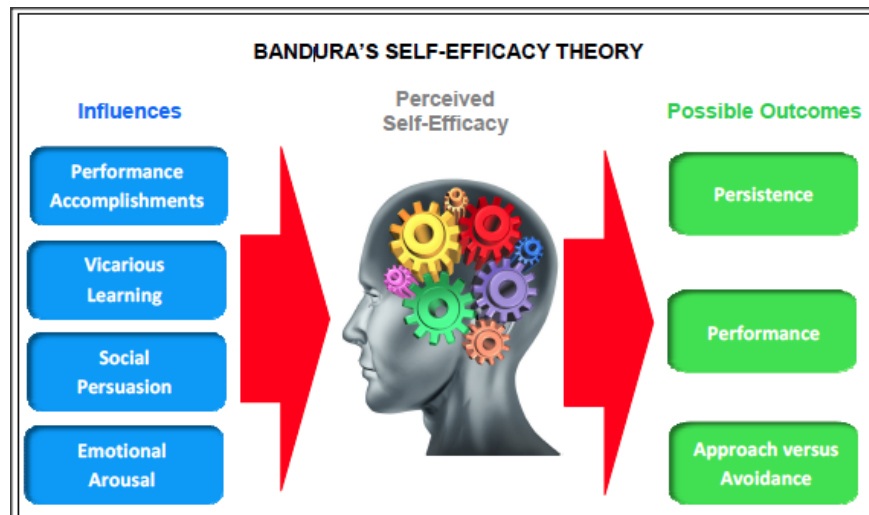


Figure 1. Albert Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory

Figure 1 shows a visual representation of Bandura's self efficacy theory. Bandura was the first to propose the notion and concept of self-efficacy, outlining five factors that influence its entirety. Five basic forms of influence can shape people's perceptions of their own efficacy. Mastery experiences are more than having a firsthand sense of mastery, according to performance experience. It takes expertise conquering problems via effort and endurance to develop a robust sense of self-efficacy. The second component is vicarious experience, which refers to people developing self-efficacy via observation of others, particularly those they see as role models. Seeing someone accomplish through perseverance strengthens our sense that we, too can master the tasks required for success in that field. Then there's societal influence. Parents, teachers, bosses, and coaches, for example, can reinforce the assumption that people have what it takes to achieve.

The quantitative research design embodies the positivism philosophy of empiricism philosophy and adopts the research paradigm of scientism (Zheng Hangsheng, 2019). Quantitative research is designed to enable researchers to make effective explanations by comparing and analyzing these data.

This study will employ a descriptive, comparative - correlational research design, to determine the transformational leadership style and self-efficacy of faculty members of selected universities in China. Based on Nassaji (2017), descriptive research aims to describe phenomena and their characteristics. This research is more interested in what happened then how or why it happened. Therefore, observation and survey methods are used to collect data.

2.1. Research Participants

The 348 respondents of this research will be from 2 public universities in Hunan, China. The two universities are Hunan University of Arts and Sciences and Hunan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

2.2. Research Locale

Hunan University of Arts and Sciences started from a normal college founded in 1958, and merged with other local vocational colleges in 1999 to become an undergraduate college. It has 64 years of history in running higher education. The campus has a beautiful environment, covering an area of more than 2000 mu, with a total building area of more than 683300 m², teaching room area of more than 297500 m², and laboratory area of more than 152500 m². It has sufficient teaching and scientific research instruments and equipment and books and documents. At present, the total value of teaching and scientific research instruments and

equipment is 348 million yuan. The library has more than 2.53 million paper books and 2.26 million electronic books (more than 3.05 million books).

The school's teaching reform has been deepening. In recent years, it has successively won one "new liberal arts" project of the Ministry of Education of China, and five provincial "new liberal arts", "new engineering" and "new agriculture" projects in Hunan; It has won 23 provincial teaching achievement awards in Hunan Province, including 3 first prizes and 6 second prizes. The school's professional curriculum construction has achieved remarkable results. There are five national first-class undergraduate specialty construction sites in China, including Chinese language and literature, geographical science, preschool education, English, and physical education, and 24 first-class undergraduate specialty construction sites in Hunan Province, including biological science, material science and engineering.

The university enrolls students from 31 provinces (cities, autonomous regions) in China, and has more than 26000 full-time undergraduate students. The school has a strong faculty, with 1550 staff, including 345 management teachers and 1205 full-time teachers, including 149 professors and 468 doctors.

Hunan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. There are 21429 full-time undergraduate students and 3266 graduate students. The school has a total of 1976 teaching staff, 471 management post teachers, 1505 full-time teachers, 667 teachers with professional titles above deputy senior high school, 153 doctoral supervisors, 892 postgraduate supervisors, and 74 experts enjoying special allowances from the State Council of China and the Hunan Provincial Government.

The predecessor of the school was Hunan College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, which was founded in 1934. In 1957, the Hunan Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine was established. In 1960, the Hunan College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, an undergraduate college, was established. In 1965, the Provincial Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine was integrated as a whole. In 1972, it was re-divided and restored to its original organizational system. In 1979, it became the first batch of colleges and universities in the country to obtain the qualifications for postgraduate education in traditional Chinese medicine. In 1990, the former Hunan University of Science and Technology was incorporated into the Hunan College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, in 1994, it became the first batch of Chinese medicine colleges and universities to recruit foreign students. In 2002, it was merged with the Hunan Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine (in 2022, the provincial academy of traditional Chinese medicine resumed its independent system). In 2006, it was renamed as Hunan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine with the approval of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. In 2021, the clinical medicine, pharmacology and toxicology of the school entered the top 1% of the ESI disciplines in the world. There are 28 undergraduate majors, covering 5 university disciplines, including medicine, science, engineering, management and literature. At present, there are 2 post-doctoral research mobile stations, 3 first-level discipline doctoral degree authorization points, 23 second-level discipline doctoral degree authorization points, and 1 doctoral professional degree authorization point; There are 9 masters degree authorization points in primary disciplines, 69 master's degree authorization points in secondary disciplines, and 7 master's degree authorization points.

Traditional Chinese medicine was selected as the "domestic first-class construction discipline", the combination of traditional Chinese and western medicine and pharmacy were selected as the "domestic first-class cultivation discipline", and clinical medicine, pharmacology and toxicology were ranked in the top 1% of ESI's global rankings. The university has built a three-level key discipline system at the national, ministerial and provincial levels, with 1 national key discipline, 23 key disciplines of the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, 2 key disciplines with advantageous characteristics in Hunan Province, 8 key disciplines in Hunan Province, and 20 key disciplines at the university level.

3. Sampling Method

The 348 respondents of this study will be selected from the teachers of Hunan University of Arts and Sciences and Hunan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. The samples will be selected through stratified sampling method. Stratified sampling is a type of sampling method in which the total population is divided into smaller groups or strata to complete the sampling process. The strata is formed based on some common characteristics in the population data. After dividing the population into strata, the researcher randomly selects the sample proportionally. (Bennett, Coleman & Co., 2003, table 1)

Table 1. Sample composition

universities	Teachers Total Population	Target Respondents
Hunan University of Arts and Sciences	1550	174
Hunan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine	1976	174
Total	3526	348

4. Research Instrument

The primary instrument utilized in the study is the questionnaire. According to Chen Huoping (2012), the questionnaire is a kind of data collection tool, which is compiled according to the needs of research topics and the respondents fill in the answers by themselves. There are two sets of questionnaires in this study. One is for the Transformational leadership style and the other one for the self-efficacy of faculty members. To measure the teacher respondents' assessment of the leadership styles of leaders, the following variables will be used like idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. (Bass & Avolio, 2000; Avolio & Bass, 2004)

The Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES), also known as Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale, was developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001). Work on this new measure of efficacy was undertaken by researchers and graduate students in a seminar on self-efficacy in teaching and learning in the College of Education at The Ohio State University. 52 items were generated to assess the full range of teaching tasks and capabilities. In addition, some items were used from a 30-item scale developed by Bandura. The new measure, the OSTES, was examined in three separate studies. In the first study, the original 52 items were reduced to 32 and in the second, the scale was further reduced to 18 items made up of three subscales. In the third study, 18 additional items were developed and tested. The resulting instrument had two forms, a long form with 24 items and a short form with 12 items. Finally, the factor structure, reliability, and validity of the new measure were examined, as well as the appropriateness of the new scale for both preservice and in-service teacher populations. Factor analysis identified three factors: (1) efficacy for instructional strategies, (2) efficacy for classroom management, and (3) efficacy for student engagement. Results of the analyses indicate that the OSTES could be considered reasonably valid and reliable. This study will use the long form of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale.

5. Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher will send a request letter via email to the leaders of Hunan University of Arts and Sciences and Hunan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine to carry out research among their faculty members. When the research project is approved by the head of the two universities and the researcher has obtained permission from school administrators, the researcher will distribute the questionnaire to the target respondents for data collection.

6. Ethical Considerations

This study will be done while observing ethical considerations as: (1) Informed consent form the respondents will be sought before they participate in the survey; (2) The respondents will participate voluntarily and not coerce; (3) The respondents' identities will be kept confidential together with their answers, and such will be used for academic purposes only in compliance to the Data Privacy Act of 2012. (4) The study will not cause or do any harm, risk or inconvenience to the respondents; and (6) the study will comply with the proper procedures for ethical review set by Adamson University. The researcher will submit the necessary forms required by the Ethics Committee and will apply the comments made by the evaluators (use of Participants Information and Informed Consent Form, asking permission to the original authors of the survey and provision of tokens for participants) before proceeding to the data gathering procedure.

All needed consent letters will be accomplished first before conducting the survey. The chosen respondents will be briefed and informed about the study and its purpose. It will be made clear with them that the study will be done just for academic purposes only and it will not jeopardize their safety and privacy. Further, no punishment or demerit will be given to them should reason to withdraw from participating in the study due to any personal, social or even religious reasons.

7. Statistical Treatment of the Data

In analyzing the data to be gathered, the following statistical treatments will be used in the study at 0.05 level of significance using Statistical Package for Social Sciences or SPSS software:

7.1. Frequency Count and Percentage

This will be used by the researcher in its analysis of the profile of the teacher respondents in terms of sex, age, years of teaching experience and educational attainment.

7.2. Weighted Mean

Firstly, this will be used by the researcher to analyze the Transformational Leadership style and self-efficacy of faculty members as assessed by teacher respondents (table 2 and table 3).

Table 2. Scale for the Transformational Leadership Style questionnaire

weight	Scale/Range	Description	Interpretation
4	3.51-4.00	Frequently	Highly Manifested
3	2.51-3.50	Fairly Often	Manifested
2	1.51-2.50	Once in a while	Slightly Manifested
1	1.00-1.50	Not at all	Not Manifested

Table 3. Scale for the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire:

weight	Scale/Range	Description	Interpretation
4	3.51-4.00	A Great Deal	Very True of me
3	2.51-3.50	Quite A Bit	True of me
2	1.51-2.50	Very Little	Slightly true of me
1	1.00-1.50	Nothing	Not at all true of me

7.3. T-test /ANOVA

The T-test and/or Analysis of Variance or F-test will be used by the researcher to determine if there are significant differences as well as relationships of variables as assessed by the faculty member respondents.

7.4. Pearson’s r Correlation Analysis

The researcher used Pearson’s r correlation analysis to determine the significant relationship between and among variables. Figure 2 shows the survey results.

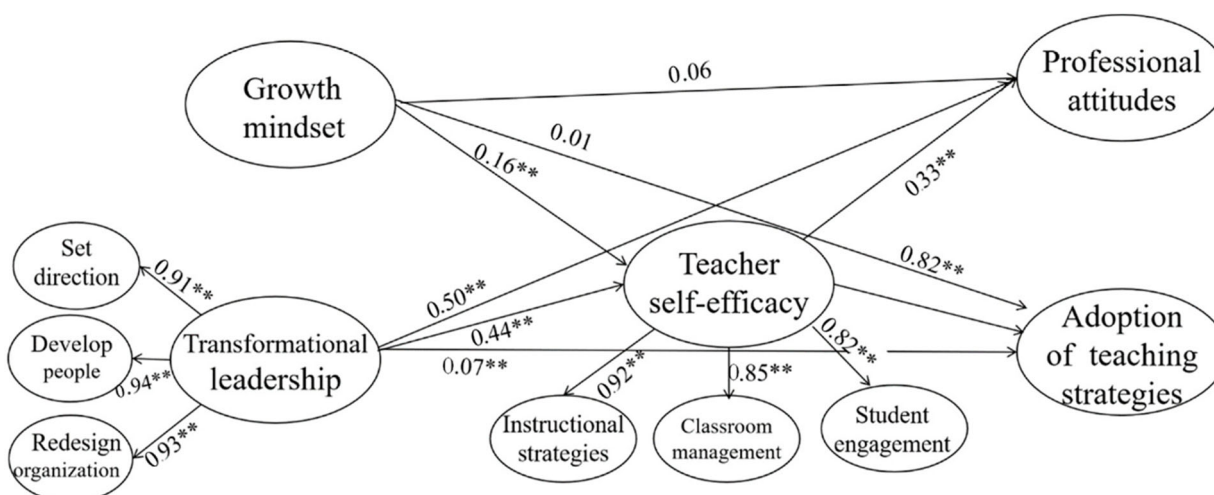


Figure 2. Survey results

8. Conclusion

The roles of teachers and schools are changing, and so are expectations about them: teachers are asked to teach in increasingly multicultural classrooms, integrate students with special needs, use ICT for teaching effectively, engage in evaluation and accountability processes, and involve parents in schools. For education improvement and school leadership impact scholars, school leadership has an indirect impact on education and schooling, has been considered for the implementation of a variety of reforms that aim to improve teaching but does not appear to be considered as a policy priority itself. Overall, school leadership reforms have been introduced to a limited extent across selected countries in relation to their capacity for educational improvement, and often associated with changing contexts.

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