

A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING ON STUDENTS SATISFACTION OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN CHINA

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A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING ON STUDENTS SATISFACTION
OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN CHINA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of teacher transformational leadership style on student satisfaction, mediated through teacher effectiveness and school climate in selected Chinese universities. The aims of this study include examining the relationship between teacher transformational leadership style and student satisfaction, determining the mediating role of teacher effectiveness and school climate, and exploring the potential moderating effects of demographic variables. This study utilized a quantitative research method, with a cross-sectional survey design to collect data to answer the research questions and hypotheses developed. The data was collected through three sets of questionnaires from 260 teachers selected through the stratified random sampling from the selected Chinese universities and was analysed using the Simple Linear Regression and Sobel-test, hence answering the seven research questions and hypotheses. The findings revealed that teacher transformational leadership style had a positive and significant effect on teacher effectiveness, school climate, and student satisfaction. Moreover, teacher effectiveness and school climate were discovered to mediate the relationship between teacher transformational leadership style and student satisfaction. This study provides insights into the importance of teacher transformational leadership in promoting student satisfaction in Chinese universities. The findings suggest that teacher effectiveness and school climate are key mechanisms through which teacher transformational leadership impacts student satisfaction, thus acted as mediators between teacher transformational leadership and student satisfaction. This study has significant implications for both theory and practice. From a theoretical perspective, it advances understanding of the complex nature of teacher leadership and its impact on student outcomes. Further, the findings provide empirical evidence that supports the relevance of transformational leadership in higher education. In terms of practical implications, the study highlights the importance of investing in teacher professional development to enhance their leadership capabilities. Additionally, universities should prioritize creating a positive school climate to foster student satisfaction.



A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING ON STUDENTS SATISFACTION OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN CHINA

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menyiasat kesan transformasi gaya kepimpinan guru terhadap kepuasan pelajar, yang dimediasi melalui keberkesanan guru dan iklim sekolah di universiti terpilih Cina. Matlamat kajian ini termasuk mengkaji hubungan antara gaya kepimpinan transformasi guru dan kepuasan pelajar, menentukan peranan pengantara keberkesanan guru dan iklim sekolah, dan meneroka kesan sederhana potensi pembolehubah demografi. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah penyelidikan kuantitatif, dengan reka bentuk tinjauan keratan rentas untuk mengumpul data bagi menjawab soalan kajian dan hipotesis yang dibangunkan. Data dikumpul melalui tiga set soal selidik daripada 260 guru yang dipilih melalui persampelan rawak berstrata dari universiti Cina terpilih dan dianalisis menggunakan ujian Regresi Linear Mudah dan Ujian Sobel, sekali gus menjawab tujuh soalan kajian dan hipotesis. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa gaya kepimpinan transformasi guru mempunyai kesan positif dan signifikan terhadap keberkesanan guru, iklim sekolah, dan kepuasan pelajar. Selain itu, keberkesanan guru dan iklim sekolah juga didapati menjadi pengantara hubungan antara gaya kepimpinan transformasi guru dan kepuasan pelajar. Kajian ini memberikan pandangan tentang kepentingan kepimpinan transformasi guru dalam mempromosikan kepuasan pelajar di universiti Cina. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa keberkesanan guru dan iklim sekolah adalah mekanisme utama di mana kepimpinan transformasi guru memberi kesan kepada kepuasan pelajar, sekali gus bertindak sebagai pengantara antara kepimpinan transformasi guru dan kepuasan pelajar. Kajian ini mempunyai implikasi yang signifikan daripada perspektif teori dan amalan. Daripada perspektif teori, ia memajukan pemahaman tentang sifat kompleks kepimpinan guru dan kesannya terhadap hasil pelajar. Selanjutnya, penemuan ini memberikan bukti empirikal yang menyokong perkaitan kepimpinan transformasi dalam pendidikan tinggi. Daripada segi implikasi praktikal, kajian ini menekankan kepentingan melabur dalam pembangunan profesional guru untuk meningkatkan keupayaan kepimpinan mereka. Selain itu, universiti perlu mengutamakan mewujudkan iklim sekolah yang positif untuk memupuk kepuasan pelajar.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



This chapter will provide some important information about the study that will be conducted on the relationship between teacher transformational leadership style and students' satisfaction examining the teacher effectiveness and the school climate focusing on the selected universities in China. It starts with some information on the background of the study and followed by the problem statement that initiates the interest in the topic investigated. This is then followed by the purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions and research hypotheses that guide the study in collecting the relevant data to achieve and answer the research questions and research objectives of the study. Next, an explanation on the significance of the study is presented and this chapter ends with the limitations of the study and the definitions of terms used in the study.





1.2 Background of the Study

It was determined that teachers' transformational leadership has a positive impact on students' satisfaction. The organizational environment and teacher effectiveness, when combined with the teacher's leadership style, have an impact on knowledge satisfaction. Similarly, a teacher's transformative leadership style impacts the success and resilience of learners (Pascarla, Seifert & Witt, 2008).

A number of studies on leadership is related to the business community that examined the application of the principles of leadership theory in university classrooms by replacing instructors as administrators and students as juniors, thus the findings are acceptable (Bulkan, 2010). For a better understanding of the relationship between teacher's transformative leadership style and student's satisfaction, more studies on effective teachers learning and leadership styles should be conducted.

Teacher leadership has been stated by Frost and Harris as “the exercise of leadership by teachers regardless of position or designation” (Frost and Harris, 2003, 482) with a “focus upon improving learning” (Frost & Harris, 2003, 40) based on a type of leadership that stems from “professional collaboration, development and growth” (p. 40). In addition, teacher leadership involves the leadership of other teachers through coaching, mentoring, leading working groups, the leadership of developmental tasks that are central to improving learning and teaching, and the leadership of pedagogy through the development and modeling of effective forms of teaching. Darling-Hammond (1995) have emphasized that teacher leaders are open to new ways of doing things and are modelers of learning with a view to improving students' educational





experience. Berry and Ginsburg (1990) have identified the following three components of the role of what they have termed as ‘lead teachers’:

- 1) mentoring and coaching other teachers;
- 2) professional development and review of school practice; and
- 3) school-level decision making. Teacher leadership represents an enormous potential for the educational system.

While the actual system is often criticized as being too focused on academics and developing selfishness of both children and teachers, the latter focus only on their working hours and private tuitions. Transformational leadership is a combination of leadership qualities including charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985). Apart from this, transformational leaders also motivate their followers through inspirational leadership (charisma), work with employees on an individual level to meet their developmental needs (individualized consideration), and stimulate employees to take new approaches and expend more effort when problem solving (intellectual stimulation) (Seltzer & Bass, 1990). Transformational leadership is unique compared to other leadership approaches as it focuses on aligning followers’ self-interest with those of the group, elevating followers’ concerns for achievement and self-actualization, and fostering autonomy and challenging work (Bass, 1998). In business settings, transformational leadership has had positive relationships with follower job satisfaction, satisfaction with the leader, follower motivation, perceived leader effectiveness, follower empowerment, job satisfaction, and affective commitment (Castro, Perinan, & Bueno, 2008). Although a variety of models may be used to examine leadership style (Zorn & Violanti, 1999), effective classroom





leadership behaviors may be generally subsumed under the rubric of transformational leadership (Pounder, 2003). Nowadays, several researchers suggest that leadership models developed in business settings are applicable to the study of teacher behaviors. According to Chory and Mc Croskey (1999), “applying organizational concepts to the classroom setting seems plausible when the classroom is considered an organization” (p. 2). They further stated that “the classroom is an organization, the extension of concepts relating to organizations, but not yet tested in the classroom, is warranted” (p. 2). In fact, other researchers agree (Pounder, 2006, 2008; Walumbwa, Wu & Ojode, 2004) and have proposed that a fruitful direction for research may be the application of management principles to classroom settings where “instructors replace managers and participants or students replace subordinates in the leadership dyad” (Pounder, 2003, p. 9).



In an attempt to restore the transmission of knowledge and the proper functioning of the school, it is necessary to empower the teacher with transformational leadership so that he or she can lead the students of today to be leaders of tomorrow. The current situation, therefore, calls for transformational leadership; not solely teachers, but also of educators, one of the most important stakeholders in the educational field. Through this distributed leadership, teachers form part of an ensemble so as to develop students holistically.

After 1970s, leadership theory was influenced by various academic ideas, such as business leadership theory, new philosophy and social trends, that led to the emergence of new leadership theories such as transactional, transformational leadership, charismatic leadership, and moral leadership. One of the most widely





influential and highly respected leadership theories in management practice is the transformational leadership and transactional leadership proposed by Burns. Bryman calls transformational leadership a 'new type of leadership' and when this leadership theory appears to researchers, its sensational effect is enough to make researchers exclaim that 'this is the theory they have been waiting for many years' (Hunt, 1999), that have saved researchers from pessimism and inability to start, and they even once claimed to abandon the study of leadership (Greene, 1977). Since then, scholars have been enthusiastic about conducting studies on transformational leadership and transactional leadership, which is the focus of this research.

The term Transformational Leadership was first coined by Downton, and the political sociologist Burns was the first to use transformational leadership as a theory system in his classic *Leader Discussion* (Northouse, 2021). Transformative leadership is based on the criticism and analysis of transactional leadership and 'barter' of transactional leadership, which focuses on the establishment of group norms to guide members to work towards common goals of an organization; advocates moral leadership, believing that there is not only a power relationship between a leader and a led, but also a common need, desire and value. Moreover, transformational leadership can tap into the underlying motivations of followers, meet their higher value needs, and make followers consciously committed to the achievement of organizational goals. The result is a mutually motivating and enhancing connection that transforms followers into leaders and may also make leaders as moral spokesmen (Burns, 2004). As for this study, the followers are students and the leaders are teachers.





After Burns (1998) proposed the theory of transformational leadership, there was a great deal of interest in it, with the most systematic study of transformational leadership by Bass (1998) and other scholars. Bass (1998) believed that transformational leadership can stimulate the sense of responsibility and intrinsic value system of subordinates, establish a good organizational atmosphere, and promote subordinates to put the interests of the organization in the most important position and achieve excellent work performances. Followers idealize leaders as role models, giving them direction and goals. In the context of this study, teachers are role model for students; whatever teachers do or say is directly accepted by students. Theoretically, teachers can inspire students' desire for achievement, belonging, or power, thereby focusing them on the group's tasks (Lin, Lee & Riordan, 2018). Transformational leadership and transactional leadership are further explained as two extreme types of leadership that cannot be integrated, but rather two leadership styles that can be reconciled with each other, i.e. a leader can adopt both transformational leadership and transactional leadership, and the two leadership styles can complement each other (Bass, 1998). Referring to the context of this study, the implementation of transformational leadership makes students realize the importance of achieving the learning objectives, prompts them to change their interests, get rid of interruptions, and form their commitments to complete the activities assigned to them Yukl (2012).

At the same time, a teacher as a leader in a classroom who implements changes will give lesson more vitality, and through the cultivation and structural adjustment of the teaching environment, it will inspire students to be more proactive in achieving learning objectives (Portugal & Yukl, 1994). Apart from this, transformational leadership implemented by a teacher is believed to create an environment in a classroom





that encourages students to participate, share their decision-making power, promote their self-development, and achieve their personal value enhancement, to create conditions for the harmonious and stable development of the organization (Waddell, 1996). Hence, it is evident that transformational leadership aims to use the leader's own charisma to communicate effectively, empower employees to enhance their intrinsic motivation, and then stimulate the potential of employees, and form a relationship between leaders and followers to motivate and improve each other.

Existing studies have revealed that transformational leadership can still predict leadership across cultures, geographies, and sample the effectiveness of guiding behavior. In fact, transformational leadership has also revealed significant findings in particular after the introduction some studies focusing on the context of China. The



earliest empirical research completed in the Chinese community was conducted among

students from Taiwan as the sample for the data collection and analysis. Based on a number of multifactor Leadership Questionnaires (MLQ) developed by Bass and Avolio (2004), Wu and Lin (1998) have developed a change-oriented leadership measurement scale suitable for local use (Wu & Lin, 1998) based on the specific situation in Taiwan. Apart from this, scholars from China, Chen and Shi (2007) have also conducted research on transformative leadership (Chen & Shi, 2007) and they believed that transformative leadership is the process of influencing subordinates through the personality charm of leaders, using vision and goal motivation to enhance the level and intrinsic motivation of subordinates, and motivating subordinates to constantly surpass themselves and strive for higher goals. In their study, Wu and Shi (2010) proposed that transformative leadership simultaneously creates an organizational situation of respect and personalized care by influencing organizational





culture and communicating visions, stimulating the work potential of employees, and ultimately creatively achieving organizational goals.

The multiple leadership questionnaires (Multifactor Leadership Questionnaires) designed by Bass (1985) is meant to measure the dimensions of transformational and transactional leadership, basing theoretical construction on empirical research (Bass, 1985). The questionnaire measured five indicators of transformational leadership (idealized influencing traits, idealized influencing behaviors, encouraging motivation, intellectual stimulation, and personalized care) in which the two indicators of idealized influences can be combined into charismatic-trait and behavioral idealized influences. Apart from this, Judge and Piccolo (2004) also divided the dimensions of transformative leadership into charismatic influences, motivational incentives, intellectual stimulation, and individual care (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

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Based on a compilation of multiple studies, Northouse (2018) divided the transformational leadership factor into four aspects: charismatic influence, encouraging motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized care (Northouse, 2018). Considering the influence of special social scenarios, Chinese scholar Li and Shikan (2005) through the investigation and research of managers and workers using exploratory factor analysis and verification factor analysis, revised the transformative leadership measurement scale suitable for the Chinese social situation, and the difference with the dimension division of foreign countries is to emphasize the role of virtue model, respectively; the four dimensions are the virtue model, leadership charm, vision motivation, and personalized care. However, the indicator system weakens the importance of intellectual stimulation in the process of transformative leadership.





Based on the above indicators, transformational leadership can be divided into four dimensions: charisma influence, vision motivation, intellectual stimulation and personalized care. Charisma or idealized influence is used to ‘describe those who are influenced by their own charm’. The leader whose followers have a profound impact is made as a model for the followers and gets followers identify and emulate. These leaders typically have high ethical standards and are able to demonstrate confidence, state values, and enthusiastic and optimistic communication with employees. They are highly respected and trusted by their subordinates and can be described by their members to have a clear vision of the organization and a sense of mission for the members of the organization.

Inspirational motivation is a way of motivating and pushing followers to accomplish seemingly unrealistic things. The current organizational goal, ‘to use or add non-intellectual emotional factors in the process of influencing’ is to improve the expectations of a leader’s followers by motivating followers to take positive action to achieve their goals, a process in which Bass has described as the Pygmalion effect (Eden et al., 2000). In their management practice, leaders actively provide a compelling organizational vision to their subordinates, using team symbols and emotional appeals to unite their subordinates’ efforts to achieve more goals beyond their own interests.

Intellectual stimulation, in most cases, is a composition of ‘rational’ and ‘non-emotional’ leadership, in which leaders inspire the intelligence of their followers by creating ‘problem awareness and problem-solving approaches to ideas, imaginations, beliefs, and values’. This is further noted by Bass that the conceptualization, understanding, and perception of the nature of the problems they face through





intellectual stimulation by subordinate members have undergone important changes (Bass, 1985). Intellectual stimulation involves challenging followers' assumptions, summarizing, and stereotyping and stimulating followers to explore ways to improve current performance. Furthermore, leaders actively promote new perspectives and new methods within the organization, and encourage the generation to creative ideas and creative problem-solving behaviors of employees to cope with the challenges of the internal and external environment of the organization.

Over the past fifty years, an extensive body of research has advanced leadership and numerous theories of leadership have been proposed and tested in thousands of empirical studies (Borgmann & Rowold, 2008). A number of them take tests at school or university (e.g., Kurland, Peretz, & Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2010; Sammons, Gu, Day, & Ko, 2011; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). York-Barr and Duke (2004) described university education as highly effective. Over the past few decades, much work has been done to examine the relationship between the leadership behaviour of school principals and the improvement of organizational performance. Northouse (2013), an eminent expert on leadership literature, views leadership as a process that is distributed and executed by many people, including the official leader. This suggests that leadership in an educational setting is not limited to principals, but can also be the responsibility of others, one of whom is an educator. In this regard, Richardson's (2003) study on assisting teachers to be proficient participants in school leadership, supports that teacher leadership is becoming more prevalent and can help create an environment where students can learn as much as possible.





It would be unfair not to consider the problems of students in an educational study. Regardless of the style used by teachers and the quality of their teaching, if these do not lead to positive outcomes for students, little added value is added to the teaching and learning process. This notion points out that if a teacher's leadership style is appropriate, it is likely that teaching will be effective, which could lead to positive outcomes for students. As shown in studies by Harvey, Royal, and Stout (2003) as well as by Pounder (2003), the effectiveness of the leadership style has led to increased students' satisfaction with teachers, as well as other results.

In the leadership literature, there has been interest in leadership effectiveness research for many years, resulting in extensive research in this area (e.g., Aydin, Sarier, & Uysal, 2013; Sammons, et al., 2011). These researchers attribute the effectiveness of leadership as an important determining factor in producing positive results among disciples. Aydin, et al. (2013) identify these findings as organizational engagement and job satisfaction. Likewise, Sammons, et al. (2011) refer to these as performance and improvement. When teachers are considered as leaders in classrooms as argued by Williams and Williams (2011), then their effectiveness like leadership effectiveness in organizations, are equally, if not more important to produce positive outcomes in students. However, in contrast to the effectiveness of leadership that has received sufficient attention in organizational studies, the effectiveness of teachers is a seriously overlooked aspect in academic literature. In spite of the fact that the effectiveness of teachers is a central and vital component of the teaching and learning process in the educational context, previous studies have not systematically explored how teacher effectiveness affects the relationship between teacher leadership style and student's satisfaction. Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between



teacher leadership styles (transformational and transactional) and outcome for students (satisfaction) using teacher effectiveness as a mediator in this relationship.

1.3 Problem Statement

Studies on student's satisfaction on the efficiency of education is constantly confronted with the problem of assessing educational outcome. The clearest approach involves examining students learning as a measure of scholar success in addition to achievement (Sammons, et al., 2012). While other studies were interested in character, performance and efficacy of the teacher (Komarraju, et al., 2011). One of them is motivation that is to recognize learns satisfaction, however, it can be challenging to develop measures that are better than students' perceptions of satisfaction. In fact, McKitchie (2001) argued that not only learners are able to offer information on how teachers influence them, but they also have an excellent chance to evaluate what an assessor is doing and a class might need.

According to Williams and Williams (2011), if students are not constantly motivated, learning is very limited. Furthermore, they even suggested five items to improve student's motivation: learner, instructor, content, procedure and environmental. From an educator point of views who believes that an instructor should be inspiring and capable of creating a personal and an enabling environment for students. It is evident that such an encounter optimizes student's motivation to the general satisfaction of learning. Apart from this, Williams and Williams (2011) also acknowledged teacher attributes that are strongly associated with the transformative

leadership measurement, including stimulating attractiveness and individual considerations. As a result, a teacher's transformational leadership style is assumed to play an important role in the creation of better learning outcomes and greater students' satisfaction.

The role of teacher and students is equally important for the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. An instructor can demonstrate the best style and supply any resources, but if added value does not affect the learning experience, it will not satisfy students. Education is not merely a means of disseminating information. Balkan and Goodby (2009) suggested that to be operative, educators should have the capability of presenting their content, effective management of their classrooms, making it easier for students to participate as fully as possible and eventually improve learning for

There are a number of studies conducted to examine the relationship between teachers and students on the effectiveness of teachers' transformation style (Harvey et al., 2003; Ponder, 2003). However, past studies do not directly link the leadership style of teachers, the effectiveness of teaching, the school climate, and student's satisfaction and knowledge of researchers.

Teachers' leadership style is a portfolio to improve the job productivity of teachers. However, none of the leadership styles are better than others. In fact, a situation and context determine which style or styles to use to maximize work performance. Therefore, selecting the right leadership style is important because it has a positive effect on the professional performance of teachers (Ekhsisomi, 2011), hence



reflects an effective leadership. In helping teachers to obtain effective leadership, House (1971) introduced the transformational leadership theory, hence transformational leadership was used in this study because the main function of transformational leadership is to clarify the work paths of practitioners by removing obstacles in the path of practitioners (House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974; House & Mitchell, 1975; Northouse, 2018).

The effects of leadership can vary from one context to another because, over time, the skills and motivation of practitioners may differ (Northouse, 2018) and utilities, however, they are inconsistent. Thus, the perception of leadership is contextually dependent (Duke, 1998). Ekhsomi (2011) in a study correlated teachers leadership styles with teachers' job performance and highlighted that teachers' leadership styles were used on a situational basis, which is in the hands of teachers to maximize teacher productivity if it is used well, otherwise, it would reverse the results. Paradoxically, the impact of teacher leadership styles on the professional performance of teachers is different because of the diversity of the context and the work environment. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine an effective teacher leadership style conducive to different work contexts, including the teacher's effectiveness and school climate.

The present research was conducted to address a practical issue about the teacher leadership style of transformational leadership, particularly the effects of teachers' leadership styles outlined in theory on school learner's performance in universities in China. In a school context, teachers occupy the highest level of leadership position. It is evident that teacher leadership is one of the major factors that





affect teachers' job performance directly and indirectly (Imhangbe et al., 2018). According to a study conducted by Nsubuga (2008), it was discovered that the reason why schools fail to achieve the required performance is not only because of insufficient funds and inadequate facilities but also because of poor leadership. Indeed, teachers can adopt different types of leadership styles (Robbins, 2001). In fact, teacher can advance or ruin a school through the leadership style they adopt. Hence, a school reflects a teacher's personality (Hanlon & Clifton, 2004) and the effectiveness of leadership.

A preliminary interview conducted among the teachers in this study discovered that they remain busy in doing routine administrative tasks in their offices rather than supported, encouraged and motivated by the school administrators to work hard and achieve educational goals using appropriate teacher methods as well as other teachers' performance matters (Smith, 2019). It was also noticed during the preliminary interview that head offices bounded teachers to direct teachers to follow standard operating procedures (SOPs), set challenging goals, and support teachers under the given educational administration guideline. Apart from this, the head offices set clear rules, policies, and school administration SOPs for teachers to run and administer the schools. When school teachers need to operate the rules established by external authorities having no authority to decide for their schools (Oplatka, 2004), there is a need to give directions, set motivational targets and challenging goals with work support. In fact, Nsubuga (2008) stated that the performance of many teachers at secondary schools is unsatisfactory due to poor leadership because most teachers do not have a clear idea to change the leadership styles according to the situation due to the reasons mentioned above. Therefore, it was also the core reason to select universities for this study as compared to public schools. Consequently, Atsebeha (2016) suggested to conduct study





about the effects of teacher leadership styles on student's satisfaction in various work settings.

Paradoxically, transformational leadership is confusing due to the complexity of the theory itself, and it encompasses several heterogeneous aspects of leadership due to its broad scope and the interrelated set of assumptions about the leadership process (Northouse, 2018). The theory distinguishes between four leadership styles including directive, participative, supportive, and achievement-oriented, that are appropriate for SOPs, clarification of challenging goals regarding the task structure and carrying out assignments, the formal authority system, and successful job completion. Hence, the choice of one leadership style that simultaneously incorporates all of these attributes is a daunting task in a school context. As for practical outcomes, the theory requires school leaders and teachers to provide assistances, directions, and guidance to clarify job goals for teachers and remove obstacles that stop teachers from accomplishing these goals so that they can perform as expected. Furthermore, transformational leadership incorporates expectancy theory principles, by which followers (teachers) get motivated when their efforts and performance are reasonably contributive (Isaac et al., 2001).

However, transformational leadership inadequately elucidates the relationship between teacher leadership styles and students' satisfaction, i.e.; it inadequately explains the favorable role of such leadership styles in promoting students' satisfaction. Thus, teachers do not have a clear understanding of how their leadership informs students satisfaction. Notably, it does not provide an adequate explication of the effects of the four leadership styles on various job performance subcategories in terms of the following key performance indicators (KPIs): (a) teaching planning, (b) classroom





organization, (c) monitoring and evaluation, (d) classroom atmosphere and discipline, and (e) teacher leadership (Atsebeha, 2016).

Many empirical studies have been conducted on transformational leadership effectiveness to validate the effects of the four styles of school teachers on students' satisfaction. However, these submissions provided only a partial consensus because they documented students' satisfaction holistically. In simple words, earlier studies measured students' satisfaction as one component or variable and did not go far enough into the subcategories mentioned above.

Notably, all the studies computed students' satisfaction into a single performance factor. Therefore, school leaders, including teachers, are unable to identify problematic aspects of the effect of teacher leadership on students' satisfaction. Consequently, teachers' efficiency and productivity could decrease due to low job performance. In fact, low performance and productivity would lead to a high employee turnover rate, demotivation, and job dissatisfaction (Aziri, 2011; Vangel, 2011). Eventually, school aims would not be achieved and overall school performance, especially yield, would decline. Thus, there is a need to shed light on the effects of teacher leadership styles on each domain of students' satisfaction, because these effects will provide comprehensive understanding and assistance to school leaders, teachers, coordinators, and supervisors to deal with the problematic aspects of various leadership styles. As a result, teachers' job performance and efficiency will improve.

Although previous studies are enlightening, they ignored the perspective of universities teacher leadership personnel called university managers. Teacher





transformational leadership style act as a bridge between universities teachers teaching and students' satisfaction (Robbins & Coulter, 2017; Stephen et al., 2019). Additionally, these teachers interpret and communicate universities aims, implement policies, and closely supervise students' learning (Brown & Rutherford, 1999; Bennett et al., 2003). Therefore, the viewpoint of teacher transformational leadership style is crucial to consider. Thus, this study addressed the dearth of knowledge. Likewise, prior studies did not adopt advanced analytical models, e.g., confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling (Marsh et al., 2009; Khine, 2013; Brown, 2014). Hence, this study contributes to the current literature.

Besides, earlier investigations were administrated generally in public sector secondary schools. However, the effects of teacher leadership styles on students' satisfaction in universities are unclear due to differences in organizational objectives, nature of work settings, followers' motivational level, job capacity, and skills (Northouse, 2018). Yu (2009) specified that the financial motive is the main objective of private schools. Thus, there was a dire need to explore the job-oriented effects of universities teacher's leadership. The main research problem centers around the fact that universities teachers in China were perhaps not using appropriate leadership styles in specific situations to promote students' performances certainly. Moreover, the complexity of transformational leadership, particularly teachers' effectiveness and school climate effects of students' satisfaction, and how transformation leadership contingency factors mediate the effects of teacher leadership styles, need to be conceptualized thoroughly.





Through studies on teacher leadership related literature in China context, the author believes that the current studies on local scholars mainly focus on the connotation of teacher leadership, the influencing factors of teacher leadership, the development of teacher leadership, and the leadership of foreign teachers. With the increasing emphasis on teacher leadership in China, teacher leadership has become an important means to promote the reform of school education, the professional development of teachers and the academic progress of students, and how to develop teacher leadership have also become an important topic discussed by local scholars. Moreover, local scholars' studies on the path of teacher leadership development is almost indistinguishable from the study of teacher leadership development strategies, and both are essentially aimed at exploring ways to promote teacher leadership development.



Through literature study, it is found that at present, relevant studies of Chinese scholars on foreign teacher leadership is mainly distributed in two aspects: the development history of teacher leadership and the development path of teacher leadership. In studies of the development history of teacher leadership, Chen Chunjun and Wang Hong discussed the development history of British teacher leadership, and believed that the British teacher leadership studies have experienced three historical development stages. In Stage 1, the period of theoretical debate on teacher leadership mainly in response to the question of 'will teacher leadership exist in the school, what is teacher leadership'. In Stage 2, the development period of teacher leadership, mainly addressing the issue of 'how should teacher leadership move from theory to practice?' and 'What are the basic conditions for developing teacher leadership'. In Stage 3, the evaluation period of teacher leadership, mainly answering the question of 'How to





evaluate teacher leadership?’ and ‘What are the implications of teacher leadership’ (Chen & Wang, 2010).

Many studies have been conducted on transformational leadership and its impact on job performances, employee satisfaction, and job stress or innovations (Fleaschner & Shachar, 2006; Berson & Linton, 2005; Dubinsky, 1998; Tracy & Hinkin, 1994; Gill; Niehoff, 1990). However, only few studies attempted to examine the impact of transformational leadership and its influence on student’s satisfaction in developed and developing countries. When it comes to the effect of the teacher leadership behavior of speakers or teachers on students’ satisfaction and the sharp mediating role of organizational climate and teacher effectiveness, a number of studies have been conducted to examine these areas. Despite the importance of understanding transformational leadership and student’s satisfaction, most studies on transformational leadership in developed and developing countries have been limited to its influence on job performances and employee satisfaction or origination. A few studies have examined the relationship between transformational leadership and student’s satisfaction in developing countries. Hence, this study is very important to examine this topic in extenso and contribute to this coherent literature.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The application and effects of the leadership styles outlined in the path-goal theory, as articulated in (House, 1971), have been discovered to vary from situation to situation (Smith, 2011), particularly in developing countries. The present study was conducted





to determine the relationship between teacher transformational leadership style and student's satisfaction: mediating teacher efficiency and school climate at selected colleges in China. The following objectives guided this purpose of the present study:

1.5 Objective of the Study

1. Determine the relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and student's satisfaction.
2. Determine the relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and the school climate.
3. Determine the relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and teacher effectiveness.
4. Determine the relationship between teacher effectiveness and student's satisfaction.
5. Determine the relationship of school climate to student's satisfaction.
6. Determine whether the teacher effectiveness is a mediating variable in the relationship between teacher transformational leadership style and student's satisfaction.
7. Determine whether the school climate is a mediating variable between the teachers' transformational leadership style and student's satisfaction.





1.6 Research Question

1. Is there a relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and student's satisfaction?
2. Is there a relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and the school climate?
3. Is there a relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and teacher effectiveness?
4. Is there a relationship between teacher effectiveness and student's satisfaction?
5. Is there is a relationship between school climate and student's satisfaction?
6. Does teacher effectiveness is a mediating variable in the relationship between teacher transformational leadership style and student's satisfaction?



transformational leadership style and student's satisfaction?

1.7 Research Hypotheses

The first hypothesis: There is a relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and student's satisfaction.

The second hypothesis: There is a relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and the school climate.

The third hypothesis: There is a relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and teacher effectiveness.





The fourth hypothesis: There is a relationship between teacher effectiveness and student's satisfaction.

The fifth hypothesis: There is a relationship between school climate and student's satisfaction.

The sixth hypothesis: The teacher effectiveness is the mediating variable in the relationship between teacher transformational leadership style and student's satisfaction.

The seventh hypothesis: The school climate is a mediating variable between the teachers' transformational leadership style and student's satisfaction.

1.8 Significance of the Study



The transformation secretary's leadership style was found to have a positively impacting on learners' satisfaction, inspiration, theoretical achievement and student's sustainability (Baba, 2009; Pascarla Seifert, Witt & Ponder, 2008). Although much of the leadership literature has concentrated on the business community. The principles of leadership theory are acceptable to university classrooms, Replacing teachers as administrators and students as subordinates (Bolkan, 2009; Bolkan, 2010). To totally understand the relationship between transformational leadership style, student's satisfaction, and the mediating role of teacher effectiveness and school climate further research into effective teaching and leadership styles for teachers should be explored. This research is important because it opens the way for research and good achievements can be presented to planners and researchers.





Recently, students' perceptions of their instructors' transformational leadership qualities have been studied in university settings in western countries. These studies have reported positive relationships with transformational leadership and students extra effort, perceived instructor effectiveness, students satisfaction (Pounder, 2008), and with students trust in, and respect for, their instructors (Harvey, Royal, & Stout, 2003). Moreover, transformational leadership has been found to be positively associated with cognitive learning, affective learning, students motivation, students communication satisfaction, students participation, and perceived instructor credibility (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2009).

With transformational leadership in classroom, an opportunity presents itself for teachers to stand up and accompany students in the various spheres of education and build, from grass root level, gradually more responsible citizens who in turn will transmit this improved culture to the next generation. But there is no research on the classroom transformational teacher leadership at home. Local scholars have focused on the definition and role of the transformational leadership in workplace. They put emphasis mainly on factors of blocks, functions and promotions of teacher leadership, so this has offered significant importance and space for this study to go into the theoretical basis and practical value of transformational leadership in classroom.

So, based on Burns's (1978) transformational leadership theory and supported by Bass's (1985) four dimensions of the construct, the first purpose of this study is to identify what's the current situation of teachers' classroom transformational leadership and what the behavioral indicators of teacher's transformational leadership are in Local





college classroom in China perceived by students, and further explore the influence of teachers' transformational leadership on student's satisfaction.

This study highlights the important role of teacher effectiveness and school climate in translating student's satisfaction with the use of appropriate leadership style of teachers. With the focus on the relationships between teacher leadership styles and student's satisfaction, this study hopes to contribute by offering insights on the framework that may encourage educational institutes to enhance better teaching-learning experiences. Additionally, this study is being conducted in selected university in China, a relatively unexplored cultural setting in academic literature. Thereby, the finding of the study is expected to contribute to guide leadership practices more suitable to the cultural context of study.



Teacher leadership plays an important role in promoting the transformation of school education, teacher professional development and students' academic progress, teacher leadership in the United States emerged in the 1980s, after more than 40 years of development, has formed a relatively complete path of teacher leadership development. Our country is in the rise of teacher leadership research, and the study of the development path of teacher leadership in the United States, first of all, helps to improve the modern school management system in our country.

For a long time, China's school management system has been the principal responsibility system, and the principal, as the administrator of the school, has strong leadership. To a certain extent, this is easy to make the principal too powerful, so it is necessary to give play to the role of teachers in participating in school management and





improve the sense of ownership of teachers' participation in school management. From this point of view, the development of teacher leadership is of great significance for improving the internal management system of the school and encouraging the participation of teachers in the management of the school. Second, teacher leadership also plays an important role in promoting teacher professional development. Therefore, the study of the path of teacher leadership development will help to further deepen the research on the professional development of teachers in China and enrich the relevant theoretical achievements of teacher education. In addition, the development of teacher leadership is importantly influenced by distributed leadership theory, and the study of teacher leadership development paths helps to enrich the theoretical research of educational leadership in China.



Under the influence of Western teacher leadership research, teacher leadership

in China has also gradually developed. At present, although China has achieved some results in the relevant research on teacher leadership, there are still some problems, such as weak teacher leadership awareness and narrow path for teacher leadership development. Therefore, the study of the leadership development path of teachers in Iowa, USA, helps to enrich and improve the practical experience of teacher leadership development in China, especially to open up the development path of teacher leadership in China, which has profound practical significance for the development of teacher leadership in China.

First of all, the development of teacher leadership helps to promote school improvement, secondly, with the in-depth development of education reform, the role of teachers in the education and teaching process has undergone important changes,





education reform requires teachers to play their multiple roles, in the actual front-line teaching process, teachers should not only be responsible for students achievements, but also actively participate in school decision-making, enhance their own leadership awareness, and give play to teachers' right to participate in school education management and make suggestions. Finally, the development of teacher leadership can help to further enrich the professional quality of teachers, improve the comprehensive educational ability of teachers, and greatly help teachers' personal development.

1.9 Limitation of the Research

There are limits to what can be done. This study focused on China-selected colleges among teacher and students. The study examined the relationship between teachers' transformational leadership style and student's satisfaction: mediation of teacher effectiveness and school climate in some selected colleges in China. Consequently, the number of participants and sites was limited. Regarding the research purpose, the participants were mainly related characters, so they provided rich and national responses to answer all research questions. However, this study may not be widespread in other institutes and colleges until additional research has been conducted.



1.10 Definition of the Terms

This section will provide the definitions of the main terms used in the study. Among them are transformational leadership style, students' satisfaction, teacher effectiveness and schools' climates.

1.10.1 Transformational Leadership Style

Burns (1978) coined the term transformational leadership to define a process where leaders and followers work together to advance motivation and morale. While Bass (2005) added some elements to the meaning of transformational leadership style including transformational leadership charisma, personal consideration and intellectual stimulation. As far as this study is concerned, the transformational leadership style refers to the teachers' style of teaching in their teaching and learning process, as mentioned by Bass (2005), that affect the students' satisfaction in their lessons.

1.10.2 Students Satisfaction

Students satisfaction can be defined as an attitude resulting from an assessment of students' educational experience, services and facilities provided by the institution (Kanwar & Sanjeeva, 2022). Another definition of students' satisfaction, as defined by Mahmoudi (2010) refers to the students' desire and interest in the classroom and school activities. As far as this study is concerned, students' satisfaction refers to their



satisfaction, as mentioned by Mahmoudi (2010), on their teachers' style of teaching in the process of teaching and learning that they experienced.

1.10.3 Teacher Effectiveness

Teacher effectiveness refers to the notion that teachers believe what they do can affect students' performances (Koludrovic & Ercegovac, 2017; Hipp, 1996) or the capability to manage and implement the course of action required to achieve specific teaching tasks within a particular context (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998). One of the elements as an effective teacher is well organised and ready including making good use of their time. Apart from this, effective teachers also try to pre-set their schedule, use moments to change the subject, engage in various activities in the classroom, and introduce each learning incident to the introduction of their teaching and learning process (Mahmoudi, 2010). As for this study teacher effectiveness refers to its results from the teacher's transformational leadership style that affected students' satisfaction in the selected universities in China.

1.10.4 School Climate

One of the terms used in the study is school climate that refers to the quality and character of school life. Apart from this, school climate also is based on patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experiences of their school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and





organizational structures that are shared among them. According to Hoy & Hannum (2007, p. 291), school climate refers to “the relatively stable property of the school environment that is experienced by participants, affects their behaviors, and is based on their collective perceptions of behavior in schools”. As for this study the term school climate refers to elements as mentioned earlier.

