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Factors Impacting on Teacher's Job Satisfaction at a Private Higher Education in Situation Zhanjiang, China

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to investigate the factors that influence the satisfaction of teachers in a school and verify the effectiveness of the strategic plan adopted. **Research design, data, and methodology:** The literature review prefabricated a questionnaire according to the previous maturity scale. After the validity and reliability of the questionnaire were tested and revised, 100 teachers were selected through purposive sampling for the online questionnaire survey. **Results:** After multiple linear regression analyses of the data, the results showed that the four factors of compensation and salary, respect, training and development, and teamwork had a significant positive relationship with teacher satisfaction. In contrast, work environment and empowerment had no significant correlation with teacher satisfaction. To verify the effectiveness of the strategic plan in improving teacher satisfaction and its influencing factors, 30 teacher representatives were selected to conduct a control experiment before and after the implementation of the strategic plan through a questionnaire survey. Seven teachers were interviewed to understand the changes in teacher satisfaction before and after the strategic plan implementation from a qualitative perspective. **Conclusions:** This paper validates that a series of strategic plan measures implemented by the school have a significant positive impact on teacher satisfaction and its four influencing factors.

Keywords: Satisfaction, Work Environment, Training and Development, Team Work, Strategic Planning

JEL Classification Code: I23, J28, L2

1. Introduction

Private higher education plays a significant complementary role in China's education system. The transformation of independent colleges into private undergraduate institutions has been a crucial development in recent years. The post-transformation sustainability and quality development of these institutions are closely tied to the stability and growth of their teaching staff. Private colleges face challenges such as insufficient funding, unreasonable faculty structure, poor team stability, low salary levels, weak teaching and research resources, and limited government support. Among these, the teaching staff's low job satisfaction and poor stability are central issues.

This study aims to explore the factors influencing teacher

job satisfaction and how schools can effectively enhance it to ensure longevity. By addressing these questions, we can significantly improve teacher satisfaction and promote the high-quality and sustainable development of private colleges, inspiring hope for their future in the field of higher education in China.

The research focuses on Zhanjiang University of Science and Technology, a post-transformation private institution that employs unstructured interviews and surveys. The study uses statistical software such as SPSS 26 and Stata 17 to conduct multiple regression analysis on survey data to test the significant correlation between teacher satisfaction and potential influencing factors. It also examines key factors affecting teacher satisfaction. Additionally, purposeful sampling selects 30 teachers as a sample, using pre-plan and post-strategic plan implementation survey data to perform

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paired sample T-tests. This analysis assesses whether the strategic plan effectively enhances teacher satisfaction and significantly improves influencing factors.

The findings of this research will not only contribute to the practical experience of high-quality development in Chinese private institutions post-transformation but also enrich theoretical research on factors affecting teacher satisfaction. This is particularly significant in the context of independent colleges transforming into general private undergraduate institutions, where studying the factors influencing teacher satisfaction and identifying effective strategic plans is of paramount practical importance.

The subsequent sections of this paper are arranged as follows: Section 2 presents the literature review and research hypotheses, Section 3 outlines the research methods and materials, Section 4 discusses the results, and Section 5 concludes with suggestions and limitations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Work Environment

The concept of the work environment has evolved. Early studies, such as Graham (1985), emphasized the importance of the work environment in motivating employees. Subsequently, Henn (2009) proposed that the work environment encompasses a comprehensive spectrum of perceptions, including reputation, mission, vision, values, and culture. Chen et al. (2006) defined the school work environment as the facilities, environment, and resources for school work and life. Çolakoğlu and Atabay (2014) highlighted the significance of freedom and autonomy in defining the work environment.

Teachers' perception of the work environment differs from that of workers in traditional manufacturing industries, focusing more on humanistic aspects rather than health and safety. Jentsch et al. (2023) suggest that teachers' perception of the work environment includes aspects such as autonomy, feedback, and support, which are positively correlated with work-related self-efficacy.

The work environment is closely related to teachers' job satisfaction, retention intentions, and performance. Clarke and Keating (1995) found that the work environment of educational institutions affects teachers' motivation. Webber (2018) noted that a conducive work environment that fosters interteacher relationships not only influences job satisfaction but also considerably impacts retention and propensity to change jobs. Jentsch et al. (2023) further confirmed the positive correlation between perceptions of the work environment and job satisfaction and the inverse correlation with work-related stress.

Satisfaction with the work environment affects teachers' psychological and physical health, as pointed out by Datta Gupta and Kristensen (2008). It also strongly correlates with teachers' job performance, as evidenced in studies by Johnson (1990) and Horng (2009).

In summary, the work environment is a multidimensional concept that profoundly impacts teachers' job satisfaction, motivation, performance, and health. Understanding and optimizing the work environment is crucial for enhancing teachers' overall well-being and teaching effectiveness as the educational environment continues to evolve. Consequently, the following hypothesis is presented:

H1: Work environment has a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

2.2 Pay and Benefits

Pay and benefits constitute a multifaceted compensation package, encompassing direct financial rewards such as wages and salaries and indirect forms of compensation like bonuses, leave, insurance, and other benefits (Chowhan et al., 2012; Syed & Yan, 2012). In employment, compensation is the sum of tangible and intangible rewards employers provide employees (Muguongo et al., 2015). It includes structured wage and salary plans derived from job descriptions, performance, financial metrics, and benefits like retirement plans and insurance (McNamara, 2008; Odunlade, 2012). Aswathappa (2005) adds that employee compensation should also encompass non-financial benefits, such as job responsibilities and development prospects, which are crucial for employee motivation and satisfaction.

Teacher salaries and benefits are a significant operational cost within the education sector and play a critical role in recruiting and retaining a competent teaching workforce. Heneman and Judge (2000) recognize pay and benefits as key organizational incentives. Rezaee et al. (2018) identifies salary and benefits as important predictors of teacher job performance, with compensation influencing performance through transparency and incentives (Papilaya et al., 2019).

Research indicates a robust and positive correlation between compensation and job satisfaction, with salary being a notable predictor of job satisfaction (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Currall et al., 2005). This finding should reassure you about the effectiveness of your compensation strategies. Pay satisfaction is also linked to organizational outcomes, such as academic achievement and teacher turnover intentions, underscoring its impact on both individual and institutional levels (Currall et al., 2005).

Pay and benefits are integral to the employment relationship, serving as a comprehensive reward system that extends beyond monetary compensation to include a range of benefits that contribute to employee well-being and performance. In the education sector, the structure and

hierarchy of pay and benefits are pivotal in shaping the quality of the teaching workforce and influencing job satisfaction and organizational outcomes. The evolving nature of compensation strategies underscores the critical need for continuous examination and refinement to meet the dynamic needs of the workforce and the educational institutions they serve. This practice is not just beneficial, but necessary and urgent. As a result, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Pay and benefits have a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

2.3 Respect

Respect plays a pivotal role in organizational behavior, encompassing employees' emotional well-being, autonomy, and overall efficacy. Currall et al. (2005) conceptualize respect as an individual's perception of being valued by their organization, highlighting the sense of inclusion within the organizational context. Lawrence-Lightfoot (1999) expands on this notion through the "six windows" model, which elucidates the multifaceted nature of respect, encompassing healing, empowerment, curiosity, dialogue, attention, and self-respect.

Drawing upon Kantian philosophy, Cranor (1980) posits that respect is an attitude grounded in the belief in the inherent value of the individual being respected. Academic discourse typically differentiates between horizontal respect, the unconditional equitable treatment of others, and vertical respect, contingent upon an individual's professional acumen or societal standing (Clarke, 2011; Darwall, 1977).

Kusluvan et al. (2010) argue that when employees perceive respect, it enhances their self-esteem, sense of belonging, and acknowledgment, fostering increased dedication, satisfaction, and efficacy. Desmarais et al. (2021) identify the fundamental components of genuine respect as including sincerity, trust, collaboration, and consideration for the feelings, wishes, or rights of others.

At the organizational level, respect is a key determinant in enhancing employee performance and job satisfaction (Abid et al., 2018). A respectful atmosphere can mitigate employee stress, absenteeism, and turnover rates while bolstering organizational commitment and trust in management. Thus, cultivating a respectful work environment is an effective strategy for managers to augment employee productivity and efficiency.

In summary, respect is a critical ingredient for organizational success, impacting individual employee development and serving as the cornerstone of organizational efficacy and team collaboration. Through respect, organizations can unlock the potential of their employees, fostering loyalty and engagement, thereby

achieving organizational goals and enhancing overall performance. Consequently, the following hypothesis is presented:

H3: Respect has a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

2.4 Empowerment

Empowerment is a critical managerial strategy that involves entrusting employees with authority, fostering a sense of autonomy, and enhancing intrinsic motivation (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Spreitzer, 1995). It is characterized by four dimensions: meaning, impact, competence, and self-determination, which together contribute to an individual's perception of their work's significance and their ability to influence outcomes.

Empowerment extends to the psychological domain associated with intrinsic task motivation and the capacity for self-directed action (Menon, 2001; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). A key aspect of empowerment is its link to decentralization, which allows lower-level employees to make decisions that lead to optimal outcomes (Barton & Barton, 2011; Pardo del Val & Lloyd, 2003).

Empirical evidence supports the positive impact of psychological empowerment on job satisfaction and organizational commitment across various sectors (Khera, 2015; Pelit et al., 2011; Singh, 2016). It is also noted for its influence on human resource productivity and enhancing operational efficiency and service quality in the hospitality industry (Melhem, 2004; Yaghoobi et al., 2011).

Social exchange theory underpins the relationship between empowerment and employee performance, suggesting that empowered employees are more likely to reciprocate the organization's investment through positive work behaviors, thereby improving individual and organizational performance (Karatepe, 2013; Nawaz et al., 2014; Saks, 1996).

In summary, empowerment is a multifaceted construct that significantly influences employee and organizational performance. By fostering a sense of autonomy and self-efficacy, empowerment strategies can lead to tangible benefits such as increased job satisfaction, commitment, and productivity. The strategic application of empowerment is essential for organizations seeking to optimize employee potential and achieve operational excellence. As a result, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Empowerment has a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

2.5 Training and Development

Training and development have a profound history in applied psychology, dating back to the early 20th century (Bell et al., 2017). Sadler-Smith (2009) defines it as a formal, systematic process for acquiring skills, rules, concepts, or attitudes to enhance performance in different settings.

Employee training is designed to provide essential information, new skills, and opportunities for professional growth (Elnaga & Imran, 2013). It enables employees to acquire necessary skills, collaborate, and achieve organizational goals (Truitt, 2011), thereby improving performance and correcting behavioral patterns (Naris & Ukpere, 2009).

Herzberg (1968) suggests that training and development are hygiene factors in his Two-Factor Theory, not necessarily the primary catalysts for job satisfaction. However, Bedingham (1997) argues that training and development can change work behavior, leading to increased productivity, job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and a greater willingness to embrace strategic and organizational changes, supported by Eaglen et al. (2000).

Acton and Golden (2003) found a positive correlation between employee training and job satisfaction and a negative correlation with turnover rates. Gazioglu and Tansel (2006) observed that employees with vocational training opportunities reported higher satisfaction levels. McNamara (2008) concluded that training and development enhance efficiency, innovation, and the ability to adopt new technologies and processes.

Training and development are crucial to organizational success, enhancing employee performance and satisfaction and fostering innovation and adaptation to new technologies. Effective training programs should consider individual differences and long-term organizational growth to equip employees with capabilities for current and future work environments. Consequently, the following hypothesis is presented:

H5: Training and development have a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

2.6 Teamwork

Teamwork, a fundamental concept in educational and organizational psychology, involves individuals with complementary skills working collaboratively towards shared goals (Daryanto & Rahman, 2020). It is characterized by interdependence, trust, and cohesion, with a strong emphasis on dynamic processes of communication, coordination, and conflict resolution. Trust and mutual support are key elements that underpin effective teamwork (Hoegl & Gemuenden, 2001; Wiyono, 2018).

Effective teamwork is grounded in six key dimensions,

with communication being a cornerstone. These dimensions also include coordination, equitable contributions, mutual support, dedicated effort, and unity (Hoegl & Gemuenden, 2001). It integrates individual efforts towards collective objectives, enhancing team performance (Mathieu et al., 2017; Salas et al., 2008). Empirical studies highlight the positive impact of teamwork on outcomes such as teacher commitment, bolstered by school culture (Daryanto & Rahman, 2020), and the influence of work discipline and mental intelligence on team cooperation and commitment (Emma et al., 2018).

Consistent evidence shows a strong correlation between teamwork and team performance, particularly in teams with effective communication and cohesion (Schwarz, 1994). Organizational culture and teamwork influence job satisfaction, with cross-professional teamwork mediating the relationship between culture and satisfaction (Körner et al., 2015).

In summary, teamwork is integral to organizational success, affecting job satisfaction, commitment, and performance. It thrives in an environment that fosters open communication, trust, and mutual support. As a result, the following hypothesis is posited:

H6: Teamwork has a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

2.7 Teacher's satisfaction

Teacher satisfaction is a pivotal concept in educational psychology, with Locke (1970) defining it as the degree to which an individual's values are realized in the work environment. It encompasses positive emotional states and pleasurable responses from evaluating work experiences (Locke, 1976).

Rowden and Conine Jr (2005) regard job satisfaction as a subjective personal perception of work, reflecting an individual's emotional reactions to their job and its components (Spector, 1997). For teachers, satisfaction is closely tied to rewards from student success, personal development, and the evaluation of the work environment, including the intrinsic "happiness" derived from teaching.

Research consistently indicates that teacher satisfaction significantly impacts school development and is influenced by work achievements, administrative support, and social interactions (Bolin, 2007; Usop et al., 2013). Dissatisfaction can lead to work stress and burnout, directly related to teacher turnover (Liu & Meyer, 2005; Pearson & Moomaw, 2005).

The relationship between teaching experience and job satisfaction is complex. Early-career teachers may face higher attrition rates (Ingersoll, 2003), yet some studies find that less experienced teachers report higher satisfaction, influenced more by administrative support than experience

(Perie, 1997). Stockard and Lehman (2004) note that social support and school management significantly correlate with job satisfaction and turnover rates, especially for novice teachers.

In summary, teacher satisfaction is a multifaceted construct influenced by intrinsic and extrinsic factors. It is crucial for the sustainable development of educational institutions and is closely related to teacher retention and performance.

3. Research Methods and Materials

3.1 Research Framework

Based on the hierarchy of needs theory, two-factor theory, equity theory, and other theories, this study refers to and integrates the theoretical framework of Chen et al. (2006) (Turkyilmaz et al., 2011) and Glaveli et al. (2022) to study teacher satisfaction. Combined with the initial investigation, Figure 1 below is used as the theoretical framework of this study.

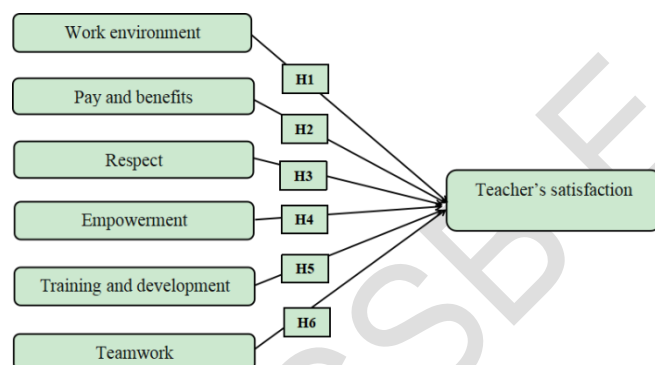


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

H1: Work environment has a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

H2: Pay and benefits have a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

H3: Respect has a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

H4: Empowerment has a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

H5: Training and development have a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

H6: Teamwork has a significant impact on teacher's satisfaction.

3.2 Research Methodology

The research unfolds in four phases. First, leveraging a validated conceptual framework, a survey was crafted and subjected to IOC testing and Cronbach's alpha for reliability, followed by random sampling of 100 teachers. A multiple linear regression analysis then evaluated the statistical significance of six determinants on teacher satisfaction to confirm hypotheses 1-6.

Phase two refined the survey, excluding non-essential factors, and engaged a representative sample of 30 teachers before the Strategic Plan's implementation, with data saved for post-implementation comparison.

Phase three is a pivotal part of the research as it executes the Strategic Plan, which introduces initiatives targeting the four key influencing factors. This phase is crucial as it sets the stage for the final assessment of the plan's impact on teacher satisfaction and its determinants.

The fourth and final phase resurveyed the 30 teachers to assess the Strategic Plan's impact on teacher satisfaction and its determinants through paired sample t-tests, validating the plan's effectiveness.

3.3 Research Population, Sample Size, and Sampling Procedures

3.3.1 Research Population

The research team, focusing on three institutions within ZUST, targeted a proportional representation of faculty members from each college for the study. Employing objective and convenience sampling techniques, the selection criteria mandated that participants be full-time educators with at least one year's tenure. Consequently, a cohort of 100 teachers was identified for the research. To ensure accessibility, the survey was disseminated online via an application, facilitating a peer-referral system for questionnaire completion.

3.3.2 Sample size

Hair et al. (2010) recommends a sample size ranging from 30 to 500 for most research endeavors. A sample of 15 suffices for initial reliability testing, while 100 is the benchmark for multiple linear regression analysis. In the Strategic Plan phase, 30 teachers will participate in the plan's execution. Subsequently, these 30 teachers will be re-engaged in the post-strategic Plan phase, adhering to the same research methodologies utilized in the pre-strategic Plan period.

This methodology ensures a consistent and adequate sample size across different research phases, maintaining methodological rigor from inception to follow-up.

3.3.3 Sampling Procedures

This study's sampling framework utilized a targeted approach, prioritizing business faculty for the questionnaire survey. The survey was disseminated to a cohort of 118 educators via WeChat, and upon meticulous review, 100 teachers were deemed appropriate for in-depth analysis. The questionnaire's multiple linear regression (MLR) analysis yielded insights that were instrumental in formulating the definitive action research strategy.

Advancing to the Strategic Plan phase, 30 teachers were deliberately chosen through purposeful sampling. The focus was on individuals enrolled in the Talent Excellence Program or recognized as high-caliber recruits with a heightened focus on their professional future and personal growth. Following the Strategic Plan's implementation, these 30 teachers were re-surveyed, and a subset of 7 were interviewed to evaluate the Strategic Plan's impact comprehensively.

3.4 Research Instruments

3.4.1 Design of Questionnaire

The researcher designed the survey questionnaire by following three steps.

Step 1: Identify questionnaire sources from four openly published articles (Chantathai et al., 2015; Chen et al., 2006; Glaveli et al., 2022; Hee et al., 2020).

Step 2: The questionnaire's content validity was tested through the IOC test, and based on expert suggestions, the questionnaire items were reduced and adjusted accordingly.

Step 3: Passed the reliability test.

3.4.2 Components of Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of two parts:

Part 1: Basic personal information of the teachers surveyed, such as age, gender, professional title, and educational background.

Part 2: The items of teacher satisfaction and several potential influencing factors. (1 DV and 6 IVs)

3.4.3 IOC Results

The researchers invited five independent experts in pedagogy, two of whom were teaching managers, to implement the project-goal alignment indicators. In the IOC process, experts scored +1 for consistency, 0 for suspicious, and -1 for inconsistency. Five of the 37 items failed to pass the test in this study and were deleted, while 1 item was revised to form the inactive questionnaire.

3.4.4 Pilot survey and Pilot test results

Using the questionnaire that passed the IOC test, the researchers randomly conducted a pilot survey on 30 teachers and conducted Cronbach's Alpha's internal

consistency reliability test on the questionnaire data. The index data are all greater than 0.8, indicating that the scale's internal consistency is satisfactory. Details are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Pilot Test Result

Variables	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Work environment	6	0.868	Good
Pay and benefits	4	0.875	Good
Respect	3	0.839	Good
Empowerment	4	0.802	Good
Training and development	4	0.928	Excellent
Teamwork	4	0.880	Good
Teacher's satisfaction	7	0.940	Excellent

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Demographic Profile

To verify whether the six potential influencing factors significantly correlate with teacher satisfaction, the researchers selected 100 teachers from three secondary colleges to conduct a questionnaire survey. The basic information of the 100 teachers is shown in Table 2..

Table 2: Demographic Profile

Property Attributes	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	64	62.7%
	Male	38	37.3%
Age	≤30	6	5.9%
	31-44	48	47.1%
	41-50	36	35.2%
	51-60	10	9.8%
	≥61	2	2.0%
	≤5	16	15.7%
	5-10	38	37.3%
	11-20	30	29.4%
Career years of teachers	≥20	18	17.6%
Professional title	teaching assistant	12	11.8%
	Lecturer	58	56.9%
	Associate professor	24	23.5%
	Professor	8	7.8%

4.1.2 Results of multiple linear regression

The researchers conducted multiple linear regression (MLR) on the results of 100 questionnaires to test whether hypotheses 1-6 are supported. According to the indicators in Table 3, Hypothesis 2,3,5,6 is verified, while Hypothesis 1 and 4 fail to pass the verification. Compensation and salary, respect, training and development, and teamwork have a statistically significant positive relationship with teacher satisfaction ($p < 0.05$). In contrast, work environment and empowerment have no statistically significant relationship with teacher satisfaction ($p > 0.05$). In the multiple regression analysis, we performed multiple collinearity tests simultaneously on the six influencing factors. The VIF values of the six dimensions are less than 4, indicating no multicollinearity among the six variables. The R-square value stands at 0.759, indicating that the independent variables can explain 75.9% of the variance in the dependent variable.

Table 3: The multiple linear regression of five independent variables on teacher's satisfaction

Variables	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value	R	R ²
Work environment	-0.098	-1.115	0.268	0.871	0.759
Pay and benefits	0.322	3.456	0.001		
Respect	0.214	2.517	0.014		
Empowerment	-0.039	-0.412	0.681		
Training and development	0.202	2.129	0.036		
Teamwork	0.387	4.191	0.000		

Note: p-value $< 0.05^*$, p-value $< 0.001^{**}$

According to the results of multiple linear regression, the non-significant influencing factors were deleted and adjusted into a new questionnaire. A control experiment was conducted on 30 teachers before and after the implementation of the strategic plan to verify whether a series of strategic plans adopted by the school significantly impacted teacher satisfaction. Therefore, the study proposes the following five hypotheses:

H7: A notable disparity exists in pay and benefits between Pre-Strategic Plan and Post-Strategic Plan stages.

H8: A notable disparity exists concerning the Pre-Strategic and Post post-strategic plan stages.

H9: A notable disparity exists in T&D between the Pre-Strategic Plan and Post post-strategic plan stages.

H10: A notable disparity exists in teamwork between the Pre-Strategic Plan and Post post-strategic plan stages.

H11: A notable disparity exists in teachers' satisfaction between the Pre-Strategic and Post-Strategic Plan stages.

4.2 Strategic Plan Process

To verify whether a series of strategic plans adopted by the school significantly impacts teachers' perceptions of the four factors of salary and salary, respect, training and development, and whether it is conducive to significantly improving teachers' satisfaction, the researchers explained the specific measures of SP in chronological order, as shown in Figure 2.

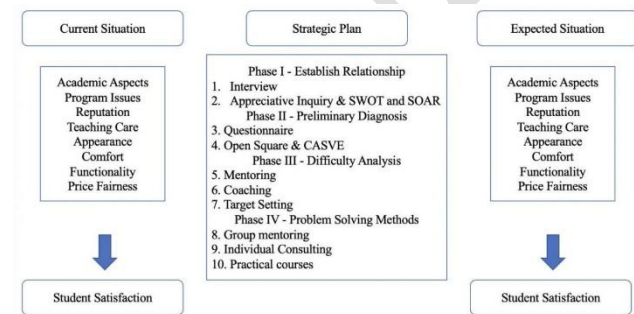


Figure 2: SP Activities

4.3 Results Comparison between Pre-IDI and Post-IDI

The research compares the stages of the current strategic plan with the stages of the expected strategic plan.

Table 4: Paired-Sample T-Test Results

Variables	Mean	SD	t-Value	p-value
Pay and Benefits				
Pre-SP	2.908	0.665	-3.5205	0.0014
Post-SP	3.175	0.743		
Respect				
Pre-SP	3.522	0.682	-3.2751	0.0027
Post-SP	3.722	0.684		
Training and Development				
Pre-SP	3.308	0.803	-5.5160	0.0000
Post-SP	3.708	0.823		
Teamwork				
Pre-SP	3.525	0.708	-3.3518	0.0022
Post-SP	3.808	0.759		
Teacher's satisfaction				
Pre-SP	3.476	0.749	-3.0133	0.0053
Post-SP	3.671	0.704		

From the t-test in Table 4, it is found that after the implementation of the strategic plan, the survey data on Pay and Benefits, Respect, Training and Development,

Teamwork, and Teacher satisfaction were compared with those before the implementation of the strategic plan. Both are increased (as can be seen from the change in the mean value), and the difference reaches statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). Hypotheses 7-11 are verified. Therefore, implementing the strategic plan has significantly improved teachers' perception of Pay and Benefits, Respect, Training and Development, Teamwork, and Teacher satisfaction.

5. Conclusions, Recommendations and Limitations

5.1 Conclusions & Discussions

The research has established a robust positive correlation between remuneration, respect, professional development, and collaborative teamwork with the satisfaction levels of educators within the private higher education sector. The strategic initiatives adopted by these institutions have significantly elevated the educators' perceptions regarding these dimensions, leading to a marked increase in their job satisfaction. Conversely, the study did not uncover a significant link between the work environment and empowerment with overall teacher satisfaction. This lack of correlation could be due to the limited direct impact these factors have on the individual benefits of teachers compared to other determinants. The work environment is considered a hygiene factor. In contrast, empowerment, in most educators' roles, does not carry substantial weight, thus diminishing its potential to boost teacher satisfaction significantly. A detailed exploration of these influencing factors will be conducted utilizing Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory, ensuring a scientifically rigorous and academically articulate discourse.

Maslow's hierarchy posits that compensation addresses safety and esteem needs, offering educators basic security and respect, which is highly valued, especially in Chinese culture. Professional development enhances job stability and competitiveness, thus satisfying safety needs and reducing insecurities from educational changes. Social needs are fulfilled through collegial support and respect, as teacher interviews highlight the importance of harmonious work relationships. A secure and stable work environment further meets safety requirements. Empowerment, allowing for autonomy in educational practices, caters to self-actualization, although it may not be a primary concern for grassroots teachers. The minimal influence of the work environment and empowerment on teacher satisfaction could be due to their placement at opposite ends of the hierarchy.

Herzberg's theory delineates job satisfaction into hygiene and motivator factors. Hygiene factors, such as the work

environment and basic salary, are foundational but do not inherently ensure satisfaction. Motivator factors stimulate satisfaction and personal growth, including additional compensation, respect, professional development, and team spirit. Empowerment's role as a motivator is contingent upon the teacher's position, authority nature, and need level. As per the study's questionnaire, it may be related to most teachers' work, diminishing its motivational impact.

5.2 Recommendations

Implementing a Competitive Compensation and Benefits Framework:

Institutions should adopt a comprehensive approach to compensation and benefits, ensuring that educator remuneration is competitive and reflects their professional value. Regular reviews and adjustments to the compensation framework are essential to enhance faculty motivation and retention. Additionally, a robust benefits program should be developed, including health insurance, retirement plans, and support for personal development, to improve overall teacher satisfaction further and foster a sense of loyalty and commitment to the institution. By integrating competitive salaries with a comprehensive benefits package, educational institutions can attract, retain, and motivate high-quality faculty, contributing to the long-term success and reputation of the school.

Nurturing Respectful Cultures:

Institutional cultures that honor the professional insights and contributions of teachers are vital. Recognition initiatives, participatory governance, and robust communication channels should be developed to bolster teachers' sense of belonging and esteem.

Expanding Professional Development Avenues:

Teachers should be offered ongoing opportunities for professional growth, such as academic symposia, pedagogical training, and instructional skill workshops, to keep them abreast of educational trends and enhance their capabilities.

Fostering Collaborative Environments:

Interdisciplinary and interdepartmental collaborations should be nurtured through collaborative platforms and resources to encourage knowledge exchange and the evolution of innovative pedagogical approaches, thereby improving teaching quality and teacher support networks.

Refining the Work Environment:

A safe, healthy, and supportive work environment is indispensable despite the study's findings. Ongoing assessments and enhancements of workspaces, amenities, and resources are essential for the well-being and productivity of the teaching staff.

Encouraging Empowerment and Involvement:

While not significantly impacting satisfaction in this study, empowerment can inspire creativity and a sense of duty among teachers. Institutions might consider offering greater autonomy and participatory opportunities in pedagogical strategies, curriculum development, and institutional policies.

Integrating Feedback Systems and Ongoing Assessment:

A robust feedback system must be established to ensure continuous institutional improvement, allowing teachers to express their opinions and suggestions on all aspects of their professional environment. This system is crucial for capturing the voices of educators and informing strategic adjustments that enhance teacher satisfaction. Concurrently, ongoing assessment of institutional strategies is imperative to evaluate their effectiveness over time and to adapt to the changing needs and feedback of the faculty. By integrating these mechanisms, the institution can demonstrate its commitment to teacher well-being, promote a culture of responsiveness, and drive long-term success by incorporating teacher insights into policy and practice refinements.

5.3 Limitations for Future Research

While this study has conducted empirical analysis on survey questionnaire data through multiple linear regression and paired sample T-tests, deficiencies remain due to limitations in scope, data, and methodology. Further in-depth research is warranted to address these limitations.

Sample Scope Limitation

The research is confined to a single university, which may restrict the broader applicability of its findings. Future studies should expand the sample to various private institutions to ensure the conclusions are more widely applicable.

Temporal Limitation

The study primarily assesses immediate post-implementation effects, with limited analysis of long-term outcomes. Future research should consider the enduring effects of strategic plans on teacher satisfaction over an extended period.

Methodological Limitation

The study's use of self-reported data may be prone to personal biases, impacting the results' objectivity. Future work should incorporate empirical data, such as faculty turnover and performance metrics, to strengthen the validity and reliability of the research.

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