

# A Research on Factors Impacting Occupational Satisfaction of College Teachers: A Case Study of Dezhou University of Technology in China

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** The study investigates the influence of five independent variables (Teacher's Self-efficacy, Teacher's Career Motivation, School Climate, Principal's Transformational Leadership, and Principal's Transactional Leadership) on one dependent variable (Teacher's job satisfaction). Additionally, it aims to identify significant differences between variables. **Research design, data, and methodology:** The research employed the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) for validity and a Cronbach's Alpha in a pilot test (n=40) for reliability. 280 valid responses from lectures at a college were analyzed by multiple linear regression to verify the significant relationship between variables. Following this, 40 lectures underwent a 14-week Intervention Design Implementation (IDI). Afterward, the quantitative results from post-IDI and pre-IDI were analyzed in the paired-sample t-test for comparison. **Results:** In multiple linear regression, the study revealed that teacher's self-efficacy, teacher's career motivation, school climate, principal's transformational leadership, and principal's transactional leadership had a significant impact on teacher's jobs satisfaction. Finally, the results from the paired-sample t-test for comparison demonstrated a significant difference in teacher's self-efficacy, teacher career motivation, school climate, principal's transformational leadership, and principal's transactional leadership between the post-IDI and pre-IDI stages. **Conclusions:** This study aims to explore the factors that affect the professional satisfaction of college lectures to improve the teaching quality of colleges and universities.

**Keywords:** Job Satisfaction, Self-efficacy, Career Motivation, Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership

**JEL Classification Code:** I23, J28, L2

## 1. Introduction

The study of the professional satisfaction of college teachers is of paramount importance, particularly within the context of modern higher education (Caprara et al., 2006). This importance is underscored by several factors, including the teachers' well-being, the effectiveness of educational leaders, and the overall environment of the institutions where they work. At the individual level, the career satisfaction of college teachers directly influences their mental health, level of engagement, and career development (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Teachers who are satisfied with their careers are more likely to exhibit higher enthusiasm and dedication to their teaching and research activities. This, in turn, positively impacts their students, who benefit from higher-quality

education and mentorship. Conversely, teachers who experience low levels of job satisfaction may suffer from burnout, which can decrease the quality of their teaching and research outputs.

The significance of studying this area becomes even more apparent when considering the leadership within educational institutions (Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). Effective leadership, particularly transformational and transactional leadership styles, plays a crucial role in shaping the satisfaction of teachers. Principals and other educational leaders who exhibit transformational leadership qualities—such as vision, inspiration, and individualized consideration—can significantly enhance the job satisfaction of their teachers. These leaders create an environment where teachers feel valued and supported, which improves their job

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satisfaction and enhances the institution's overall functioning. On the other hand, transactional leadership, which focuses on tasks, rewards, and corrective actions, also has its place in managing teacher satisfaction by ensuring a clear structure and recognition of performance. When balanced effectively, both leadership styles contribute to a positive school climate that fosters teacher satisfaction (Gusriani et al., 2022).

The organizational environment, or school climate, is another critical factor that influences the professional satisfaction of college teachers (Ortan et al., 2021). The school climate includes various elements such as the physical working conditions, the level of administrative support, the relationships among colleagues, and the overall culture of the institution. A positive school climate where teachers feel supported and valued increases job satisfaction, enhancing their commitment to the institution and their willingness to invest in their professional growth (Gusriani et al., 2022). Moreover, an encouraging school climate has a cascading effect, promoting better student outcomes, fostering innovation, and contributing to the overall progress of society. Conversely, a negative school climate can lead to dissatisfaction, high turnover rates, and a decline in the quality of education provided (Aktan & Toraman, 2022).

The current conditions at HY College offer a conducive environment for research into the professional satisfaction of college teachers. The college's institutional support, availability of resources, and a climate that encourages academic inquiry provide a fertile ground for such a study. The college's administration supports initiatives aimed at understanding and improving teacher satisfaction, which is crucial for the success of this research. Additionally, a diverse faculty with varying levels of experience and from different disciplines provides a rich data set for understanding the factors influencing college teachers' job satisfaction.

This study must also consider several key perspectives to ensure a comprehensive analysis. Firstly, it is important to examine the self-efficacy and professional motivation of the teachers, as these are the primary drivers of job satisfaction (Mokhtar et al., 2023). Teachers with high self-efficacy are more confident in their teaching abilities, are more likely to take on challenges, and persist in facing difficulties. On the other hand, professional motivation relates to the teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic drives to succeed in their careers, which can significantly impact their satisfaction levels. Secondly, the study should look at the school climate, which includes the physical and psychosocial environments in which the teachers work (Akmalia et al., 2023). The physical environment, such as the quality of classrooms and laboratories and the availability of teaching resources, can significantly affect job satisfaction.

Meanwhile, the psychosocial environment, which includes relationships with colleagues, administrative

support, and the overall culture of the institution, plays a crucial role in shaping the teachers' perceptions of their work and satisfaction with it. Thirdly, leadership styles within the institution must be analyzed, particularly how transformational and transactional leadership styles influence teacher satisfaction (Yohannes & Wasonga, 2021). Transformational leaders who inspire and motivate their staff can enhance job satisfaction by making teachers feel valued and empowered (Iskandar et al., 2023). Transactional leaders who focus on clear structures, rewards, and performance can also contribute to job satisfaction by providing stability and recognition. Lastly, the study should consider the impact of professional development opportunities on teacher satisfaction. Continuous learning, skill development, and opportunities for advancement are crucial for maintaining high levels of job satisfaction among college teachers. Teachers who feel they can grow professionally and that their efforts are recognized and rewarded are more likely to be satisfied with their careers (Kadiyono et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the professional satisfaction of college teachers is a multi-faceted issue that is influenced by individual factors, leadership, organizational environment, and opportunities for professional development. Understanding these factors and how they interact is crucial for creating a supportive environment that promotes teacher satisfaction, which in turn enhances the quality of education and contributes to the overall progress of society.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Teacher's Self-Efficacy

The concept of self-efficacy was first proposed by the psychologist Bandura (1997). It is defined as an individual's belief in his or her ability, which allows the individual to believe that he or she can successfully perform a specific task in a specific situation (Bandura, 1997). Schwarzer and Luszczynska (2008) pointed out that this belief will profoundly affect an individual's thinking patterns, emotional experiences, and behavior. People with high self-efficacy are more likely to persevere, set higher goals when facing challenges, and adopt more effective coping strategies when facing difficulties.

Klassen and Chiu (2010) proposed that the self-efficacy of university teachers refers to their confidence in completing teaching, research, and guidance responsibilities in a higher education environment. This includes teachers' confidence in their ability to effectively design courses, assess student learning outcomes, and communicate and manage effectively in higher education settings. At the same time, Schunk and Pajares (2009) pointed out that college teachers with high self-efficacy are often more inclined to

adopt innovative and effective teaching methods, such as trying differentiated teaching and technology integration, thereby improving classroom interactivity and student engagement (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Therefore, teachers' self-efficacy is related to improving the quality and innovation of teaching strategies and directly affects students' learning motivation and sense of achievement. Teachers with high self-efficacy can more effectively stimulate students' interest and motivation in learning, help them build self-confidence, and improve learning effectiveness.

**H1:** Teacher self-efficacy has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

## 2.2 Teacher's Career Motivation

Steffen (2020) define the career motivation of college teachers as the intrinsic and extrinsic driving force for teachers to engage in teaching and academic research. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) provides a profound theoretical framework for understanding teachers' professional motivation. This theory distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations and explores the role of these two motivations in driving individual behavior (Ryan et al., 2009). The first is the intrinsic motivation of the teaching profession (Barber et al., 2012). Intrinsic motivation is the drive that originates from within an individual. In the teaching profession, intrinsic motivation may manifest as a passion for teaching and a desire for continuous learning and professional growth. When teachers are intrinsically motivated to teach, they are more likely to feel job satisfaction, demonstrate higher teaching effectiveness, and have longer-term professional commitment.

The second is the extrinsic motivation of the teaching profession proposed by (Rones, 2011). Extrinsic motivation involves behaviors that are driven by external factors, and for some teachers, the choice of a teaching career may be partially influenced by these external incentives. If these needs are met, teachers' intrinsic motivation is enhanced. For example, teachers may be more motivated if they feel they have autonomy in designing their courses and teaching methods (autonomy), feel competent and effective in teaching (competence), and make meaningful connections with students and colleagues (relatedness). The motivation for teaching during the second year in the profession" by Rones (2011), professional motivations in the early stages of teachers' careers mainly include a passion for education and teaching, the desire to impact students' lives and learning, and the pursuit of personal, professional growth. Therefore, teachers' professional motivation is very important.

**H2:** Teachers' career motivation has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

## 2.3 School Climate

The relationship between school climate and teacher professional satisfaction is an important and complex topic in educational research (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016). School climate, often defined as the overall quality and characteristics of the school environment, includes school culture, safety, teacher-student relationships, leadership style, and family and community involvement. This concept directly affects teachers' work experiences, significantly affecting their professional satisfaction. Teachers' professional satisfaction is affected by many factors, among which school climate plays a crucial role. A supportive school environment can increase teachers' well-being, work engagement, and intention to stay.

In contrast, a negative or depressive school climate can lead to teacher burnout, job dissatisfaction, and turnover (Mironova & Whitt, 2022). This is related not only to the professional development and mental health of individual teachers but also to students' learning effects and the overall educational quality of the school. The above literature's citations show that research in this field provides important theoretical support and practical guidance for improving teachers' professional satisfaction.

There is a strong link between teachers' professional satisfaction and students' academic achievement (Tashakkori et al., 2021). When teachers are satisfied in their professional roles, they are more likely to demonstrate higher enthusiasm and commitment to teaching, directly affecting student motivation and achievement. Teachers' positive attitudes and teaching quality are crucial to creating a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning. Overall, a close and direct relationship exists between college teachers' career satisfaction and school climate. A supportive, positive school climate can increase teacher job satisfaction, which is beneficial to the teachers themselves and has a positive impact on student learning and development. We can see that this view has been widely supported and recognized by citing relevant literature.

**H3:** School climate has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

## 2.4 Principal's Transformational Leadership

Principals' transformational leadership is centered on change and innovation, emphasizing leaders' importance for organizational change (Afshari et al., 2012). In education, this leadership style not only focuses on existing management and operations but also on motivating, inspiring, and leading teachers and students to achieve higher goals, innovation, and quality of education. Transformational leadership involves key elements, including establishing and delivering vision, motivation, personalized care, intelligent

stimulation, and role modeling. In addition, the role of a role model is an important aspect of principals' transformational leadership. Principals need to show teachers and students through their actions and attitudes how to drive change through positive values and actions. Bass (1985) proposed that this leadership style emphasizes the importance of the leader's behavior in shaping organizational culture and values.

To sum up, the principal's transformational leadership is a comprehensive leadership method that focuses on the school's daily operations and management and, more importantly, promotes the school's long-term development and educational innovation through motivation, inspiration, and leadership. This leadership style is of great significance for improving the quality of education, promoting educational equity, and cultivating innovative talents.

**H4:** Principals' transformational leadership has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

## 2.5 Principal's Transactional Leadership

Principal transactional leadership is a leadership approach based on a transactional or exchange process, the core of which lies in the interaction between leaders and followers. Bass (1985) pointed out that principals' transactional leadership in education can be regarded as a management method based on rewards or punishments, aiming to motivate teachers and students to achieve established educational goals.

Loftus et al. (1978) proposed that transactional leadership in educational settings is often reflected in the interaction between principals and teachers. The principal sets clear teaching goals and expectations and provides feedback by evaluating teacher performance. When teachers meet or exceed these goals, they may receive rewards such as bonuses, job promotions, or other forms of recognition. Conversely, teachers who fail to meet predetermined goals may face negative consequences, such as increased training requirements or decreased job evaluations.

Spillane et al. (2022) proposed that transactional leadership has also received some criticism, especially in education. Critics argue that this leadership style may focus too much on short-term goals and superficial achievements while neglecting the long-term goals of education and deep learning. In addition, overreliance on rewards and punishments may decrease teachers' intrinsic motivation, thereby affecting their enthusiasm and creativity for teaching. Nonetheless, transactional leadership remains an important component of educational management practice, especially where there is a need to improve school performance or achieve specific educational reform goals rapidly. To apply this leadership style effectively, educational leaders need to ensure that the goals they set are

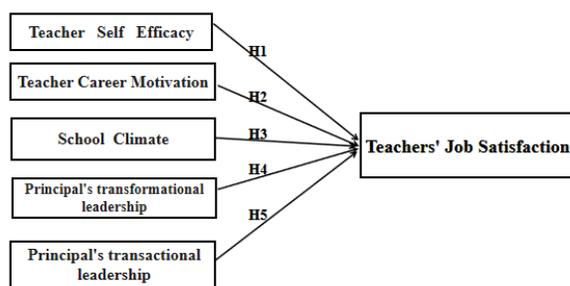
both challenging and achievable and that rewards and penalties are closely tied to teachers' actual performance and student le An effective transactional leader makes flexible use of rewards and feedback to promote teacher growth and satisfaction. In summary, principals' transactional leadership complexly impacts teachers' professional satisfaction.

**H5:** Principals' transactional leadership has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

## 3. Research Methods and Materials

### 3.1 Research Framework

The conceptual framework is based on three core theories and three main studies. The first is Bandura's social cognitive theory. Social cognitive theory is a psychological theory developed by Albert Bandura (Bandura, 1986). The theory focuses on how individuals learn by observing the actions of others and their consequences, known as observational learning. Bandura (1997) proposed that the core of social cognitive theory is to emphasize the interaction among individuals, environment, and behavior.



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework

**H1:** Teacher's self-efficacy has significant impact with teachers' job satisfaction.

**H2:** Teacher's career motivation has significant impact with teachers' job satisfaction

**H3:** School climate has significant impact with teachers' job satisfaction.

**H4:** Principal's transformational leadership has significant impact with teachers' job satisfaction.

**H5:** Principal's transactional leadership has significant impact with teachers' job satisfaction.

### 3.2 Research Methodology

The research process comprises four distinct stages. The entire research population (n=208) was initially surveyed to collect data for the proposed conceptual framework. Subsequently, all hypotheses underwent rigorous testing

using multiple linear regression to determine their significance at a value threshold of  $< 0.05$ . As a result, hypotheses that received support were retained, while those that did not meet the criteria were eliminated. The second stage involved conducting pre-IDI surveys on the remaining population of 208 lectures within the supported hypotheses. The third stage introduced the Intervention Design Implementation (IDI), specifically implemented with 40 participants. In the final stage, 40 IDI participants completed a survey, generating the necessary data for conducting a paired-sample t-test analysis to compare the pre- and post-IDI results. This comprehensive process allowed for thoroughly examining the research's objectives and hypotheses.

### 3.3 Research Population, Sample Size, and Sampling Procedures

#### 3.3.1 Research Population

This research aims to detail the composition of teachers in different majors of HY University as research objects. The researcher selected 208 teachers who formed the core subjects of this study. They not only represent the teaching strength of HY University but also reflect the educational level and characteristics of the institute in different teaching fields, which include 29 teachers in the business English major, who have professional knowledge and rich experience in teaching English communication skills and business terminology; there are 30 teachers in the information management major, and they focus on teaching courses such as data management and information systems; the logistics management major is composed of 35 teachers, who are responsible for teaching important courses such as supply chain management, transportation and distribution; the financial management major has the largest teacher team, with a total of 60 teachers. The majors covered accounting, financial analysis, and other fields; the e-commerce management major comprised 54 teachers. Teachers in this major mainly teach e-commerce, online marketing, and other courses. The experience and insights of these teachers will be critical to the depth and breadth of this study, and their participation will provide us with valuable data and insight. The research population is shown in the following table:

#### 3.3.2 Sample size

In terms of research design and sample size selection, Hair et al. (2010) widely accepted the view that a sample size of 30 to 500 people is usually sufficient for most studies. This range provides sufficient data volume to support reliable statistical analysis while keeping the study practical and manageable.

For this study, in the preliminary diagnosis stage, we conducted a reliability test with a sample size of 15. Subsequently, when performing a multiple linear regression

test, the sample size increased significantly to 208. During the strategic plan, the study specifically selected 40 teachers as participants. This selection was designed to ensure that the strategic plan explored teachers' experiences and feedback in depth and specificity. In the strategic plan, these 40 teachers will again undergo the same research methods as in the strategic plan, including questionnaires, interviews, and observations. The coherence of this approach enables studies to effectively compare changes and effects before and after strategic plans, thereby providing in-depth insights into the effectiveness of a strategic plan.

#### 3.3.3 Sampling Procedures

In the sampling procedure of this study, we adopted a purposive sampling method and distributed questionnaires specifically to teachers of SHY University of Economics and Management. The distribution of the questionnaire was completed through Questionnaire Star software and was sent to a total of 208 teachers.

After collecting and checking responses, 208 were deemed eligible for further research. By conducting multiple linear regression (MLR) analysis on these questionnaire data, we effectively established the final action research plan.

In the second stage of the strategic plan, we continued to use the purposive sampling method to select 40 teachers from the Business English major of the School of Economics and Management as participants.

Sampling 3: Sampling for IDI Researcher randomly selected and sampled 40 lectures to implement IDI.

### 3.4 Research Instruments

#### 3.4.1 Design of Questionnaire

The researcher designed the survey questionnaire by following three steps.

**Step 1:** The first step is planning and defining objectives, where the researcher identifies the research goals, determines the target audience, and selects the appropriate type of survey. This stage ensures the survey has a clear purpose and is directed at the right respondents. They identify questionnaire sources from three openly published articles.

**Step 2:** Adjusting and Presenting survey questionnaires on Chinese university students' Context. The second step is questionnaire design, which involves developing questions that align with the research objectives. The researcher organizes the questions logically to maintain a smooth flow, starting with easier or less sensitive questions to engage respondents. Pilot testing is conducted to identify issues with question clarity or interpretation, allowing for adjustments before full deployment.

**Step 3: Implementing IOC.** The survey is administered to the target audience, and data is collected. The researcher monitors the process to ensure adequate participation and high data quality. Based on the initial responses and feedback, the questionnaire may be revised to improve clarity, reduce biases, or better meet the research goals.

### 3.4.2 Components of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part includes questions about teacher satisfaction. The second part of the questionnaire was designed to explore the various factors influencing teachers' professional satisfaction. To effectively measure these factors, the questionnaire uses a rating scale to collect data by asking respondents how much they agree or disagree with specific statements. This approach is intuitive and provides participants with a clear framework to express their views and feelings. In China SHY's teacher satisfaction survey, the Likert scale was considered an ideal tool to measure teachers' psychological capital. Likert scales are a widely used survey tool that effectively captures people's attitudes and reactions to various statements. This study used a 5-point Likert scale to allow participants to express their agreement or disagreement on five levels (Alkharusi, 2022). Specifically, the five levels include strongly disagree (1 point), disagree (2 points), neutral (3 points), agree (4 points), and strongly agree (5 points). This grading provides sufficient flexibility to allow participants to express precisely how they feel about each statement (Dawes, 2007; Joshi et al., 2015). This fine-grained distinction helps to capture teachers' perceptions and satisfaction more accurately with aspects such as work environment, leadership style, resource allocation, and more. The study could quantitatively and effectively measure and analyze the key factors influencing teachers' professional satisfaction through this carefully designed scale. This enhances the accuracy and reliability of the research results and provides a solid foundation for further data analysis and action research.

### 3.4.3 IOC Results

This study effectively applied the Index of Item-Object Congruence (IOC). The IOC method verifies the suitability of the research instrument by gathering expert judgment (Rovinelli & Hambleton, 1977). Although IOC requires evaluation by at least two experts, this study went beyond this standard by inviting three experts to evaluate a questionnaire developed based on previous research. Two of the experts are teachers in the field of higher education teaching, and the other is from university management. Two other experts had doctorates in organizational development, which was extremely useful in examining the questionnaire's content from an organizational development perspective. Through this approach, this study achieved high

questionnaire design and evaluation standards, providing strategic planning and a solid basis for collecting and analyzing data.

### 3.4.4 Pilot survey and Pilot test results

The researcher randomly implemented a pilot survey of 40 lectures by asking them to complete the questionnaire and give feedback. Afterward, the researcher implemented Cronbach's Alpha's internal consistency reliability test, in which values should be equal to or greater than 0.7 (Tissieres, 2020). Therefore, the table below demonstrates the approved results for the high reliability of each construct.

**Table 1: Pilot Test Result**

Variables	No. of Items	Sources	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Job Satisfaction (JS)	4	Loftus et al. (1978)	0.829	Good
Teacher Self-Efficacy (TSE)	4	Bandura (1997)	0.917	Excellent
Teacher Career Motivation (TCM)	2	Steffen (2020)	0.703	Acceptable
School Climate (SC)	5	Steffen (2020)	0.790	Acceptable
Principals' Transformational Leadership (PTFL)	5	Afshari et al. (2012)	0.956	Excellent
Principals' Transactional Leadership (PTL)	4	Bass (1985)	0.884	Good

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Results

#### 4.1.1 Demographic Profile

The researcher demonstrated the demographic profile of the entire research population (n=208), followed by selected lectures (n=40), who participated in IDI, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Demographic Profile**

Entire Research Population (n=208)		Frequency	Percent
Major	Major of Business English	29	13.94%
	Major of Information Management	30	14.42%
	Major of Logistics Management	35	16.93%
	Major of Financial Administration	60	28.85%
	Major of Electronic Commerce Management	54	25.86%
<b>Total</b>		<b>208</b>	<b>100%</b>

Entire Research Population (n=208)		Frequency	Percent
IDI Participants (n=40)		Frequency	Percent
Major	Major of Business English	10	25%
	Major of Information Management	10	25%
	Major of Logistics Management	10	25%
	Major of Financial Administration	10	25%
<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### 4.1.2 Results of multiple linear regression

The author distributed questionnaires to 208 lectures randomly chosen from the faculty of education, and Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) was done to report hypotheses. Multiple linear regression analysis was used for these hypotheses. Multiple linear regression was hypothesized since the five independent variables, including the teachers' self-efficacy, career motivation, school climate, the principal's transformational leadership, the principal's transactional leadership, and the dependent variable (teachers' job satisfaction), are continuous variables. They can be analyzed using multiple linear regression (MLR).

The relationship between independent and dependent variables at the diagnosis stage is shown in the following table.

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

Variables	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t-value	VIF	P	R	R Square
Teacher Self-Efficacy	.752	7.733	1.385	.000	.876	.768
Teacher Career Motivation	-.126	-.853	3.197			
School Climate	.097	.496	5.589			
Principals' Transformational Leadership	.028	.157	4.712			
Principals' Transactional Leadership	.297	1.508	5.668			
Dependent variable: Job satisfaction						

Note: p-value <0.05\*, p-value <0.001\*\*

In sum, Spss was used to conduct the multiple regression analysis, and the R-squared value was 0.768, indicating that the independent variables accounted for 76.8% of the dependent variable. In addition, the result of a significant value ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicates that all five independent variables impact teachers' job satisfaction. The regression coefficients of the four variables are greater than 0, which indicates that all four independent variables are positively correlated with the dependent variable. By observing the standardized regression coefficients, the standardized regression coefficient for teacher self-efficacy (0.752) was significantly

higher than that of the other four dimensions. Statistically, the first dimension, teacher self-efficacy, had the highest impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

In the multivariate regression analysis, a multicollinearity test on five independent variables, including teachers' self-efficacy, career motivation, school climate, principal's transformational leadership, and principal's transactional leadership, was also conducted. The VIF values for the five dimensions were 1.385, 3.197, 5.589, 4.712, and 5.668. The VIF values for three dimensions were less than 5, which was a very favorable result, and the VIF values for two dimensions were between 5 and 10, indicating no multicollinearity among these five independent variables. Therefore:

H6: There is a significant mean difference in teacher's self-efficacy between the pre-IDI and post-IDI phases.

H7: There is a significant mean difference in teacher's career motivation between the pre-IDI and post-IDI phases.

H8: There is a significant mean difference in teacher school climate between the pre-IDI and post-IDI phases.

H9: There is a significant mean difference in principal's transformational leadership between the pre-IDI and post-IDI phases.

H10: There is a significant mean difference in principal's transactional leadership between the pre-IDI and post-IDI phases.

H11: There is a significant mean difference in teachers' job satisfaction between the pre-IDI and post-IDI phases.

#### 4.2 IDI Intervention Stage

According to the results of MLR and the opinions offered by lecturers and deans in interviews, the author mainly focused on job satisfaction and the Principal's Transformational Leadership. The detailed design of the IDI stage covered 14 weeks, and the lecturers intervened by the author were chosen randomly from the College of Economic Management, so as lecturers, they not only have a deep understanding of the activities.

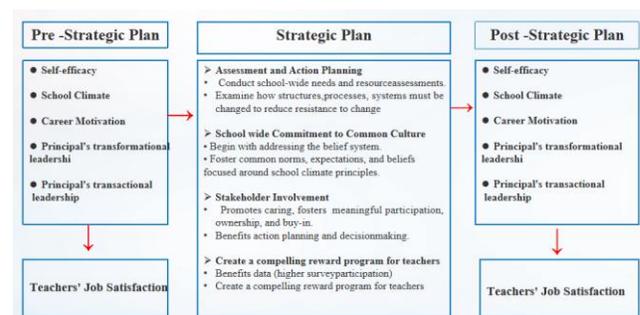


Figure 2: IDI Activities

### 4.3 Results Comparison between Pre-IDI and Post-IDI

The researcher implemented a paired-sample t-test analysis on all six variables to identify whether there were any differences between teacher's job satisfaction, teachers' self-efficacy, professional motivation, school environment climate, principal's transformational leadership style, and transactional leadership style between the pre-IDI and post-IDI phases. The tables below illustrate a paired-sample t-test analysis on six variables as follows:

**Table 5: Paired-Sample T-Test Results**

Variables	Mean	SD	SE	p-value
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>				
Pre-IDI	3.99	0.591	0.1058	0.046
Post-IDI	4.38	0.484	0.1263	
<b>Teacher's Self-Efficacy</b>				
Pre-IDI	3.91	0.612	0.1135	< .001
Post-IDI	4.51	0.469	0.0904	
<b>Teacher's Career Motivation</b>				
Pre-IDI	3.98	0.707	0.1094	< .001
Post-IDI	4.43	0.526	0.0780	
<b>School Climate</b>				
Pre-IDI	3.96	0.525	0.0909	< .001
Post-IDI	4.42	0.454	0.0885	
<b>Principal's Transformational Leadership</b>				
Pre-IDI	4.11	0.492	0.1109	< .001
Post-IDI	4.49	0.522	0.0982	
<b>Principal's Transactional Leadership</b>				
Pre-IDI	3.88	0.463		
Post-IDI	4.22	0.592		
<b>Teachers' Job Satisfaction</b>				
Pre-IDI	3.99	0.591	0.0934	< .001
Post-IDI	4.38	0.484	0.0765	

Table 5 illustrates the results of the paired-sample t-test analysis of pre-IDI and post-IDI comparison as follows:

There was a significant increase in Job Satisfaction between pre-IDI (M=3.99, SD=0.591) stage and post-IDI stage (M=4.38, SD=0.4484), while  $P < 0.001$  and mean value difference between post-IDI stage and Pre-IDI stage was 0.9.

There was a significant increase in Teacher's Self-Efficacy between post-IDI (M=4.51, SD=0.469) stage and pre-IDI stage (M=3.91, SD=0.612), while  $P < 0.001$  and mean value difference between post-IDI stage and Pre-IDI stage was 0.9. Therefore, H11 supported the idea that there is a significant mean difference in teachers' self-efficacy between pre- and post-IDI.

There was a significant increase in Teacher's Career Motivation between post-IDI (M=4.43, SD=0.526) stage and pre-IDI stage (M=3.98, SD=0.707), while  $P < 0.001$  and mean value difference between post-IDI stage and Pre-IDI stage was 0.9. Therefore, H11 supported the idea that there is a significant mean difference in teachers' career motivation between pre- and post-IDI.

There was a significant increase in School Climate between post-IDI (M=4.42, SD=0.454) stage and pre-IDI stage (M=3.96, SD=0.525), while  $P < 0.001$  and mean value difference between the post-IDI stage and Pre-IDI stage was 0.9. Therefore, H11 supported the idea that there is a significant mean difference in school climate between pre- and post-IDI.

There was a significant increase in the Principal's Transformational Leadership between post-IDI (M=4.49, SD=0.522) stage and pre-IDI stage (M=4.11, SD=0.492), while  $P < 0.001$  and mean value difference between post-IDI stage and Pre-IDI stage was 0.9. Therefore, H11 supported the idea that there is a significant mean difference in a principal's transformational leadership between pre- and post-IDI.

There was a significant increase in the Principal's Transactional Leadership between post-IDI (M=4.22, SD=0.592) stage and pre-IDI stage (M=3.88, SD=0.463), while  $P < 0.001$  and mean value difference between post-IDI stage and Pre-IDI stage was 0.9. Therefore, H11 supported the idea that there is a significant mean difference in a principal's transactional leadership between pre- and post-IDI.

There was a significant increase in Teachers' Job Satisfaction between post-IDI (M=4.38, SD=0.484) stage and pre-IDI stage (M=3.99, SD=0.591), while  $P < 0.001$  and mean value difference between post-IDI stage and Pre-IDI stage was 0.484. Therefore, H11 supported the idea that there is a significant mean difference in teachers' job satisfaction between the pre-IDI and post-IDI phases.

## 5. Conclusions, Recommendations and Limitations

### 5.1 Conclusions & Discussions

The importance of job satisfaction among college teachers is mainly reflected in the quality of teaching and the quality of student training. Teachers with high satisfaction are usually more actively engaged in teaching, can treat student training with greater enthusiasm and responsibility, and provide a better teaching experience. However, college teachers' main challenges are usually work pressure and workload. College teachers need to undertake heavy teaching tasks and maintain a high level of performance in scientific research, paper publication, project application, student guidance, and various administrative affairs. This pressure can easily cause teachers to feel tired and stressed, thus affecting their job satisfaction. Therefore, this study aims to explore interactive strategies to improve teachers' job satisfaction in an applied private university in Shandong Province, China.

This study had three main stages: pre-IDI, IDI, and post-IDI. The first stage mainly focused on diagnosing the current situation, exploring the elements needed for changes, SWOT assessment, constructing a conceptual framework, and collecting and analyzing data for preparing the intervention stage. So, after reading relevant literature, the author adopted independent variables from Moore (1989), which included the teachers' self-efficacy, career motivation, school climate, principal's transformational leadership, principal's transactional leadership, and the dependent variable, which is the teachers' job satisfaction. Then, the conceptual framework was proposed, and the quantitative and qualitative methods were used for data collection and analysis. In the beginning, a questionnaire was adopted. Three experts did the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) rating for validity test, which removed one item (The principal will not bother the teachers if they will not bother him or her.) In addition, pilot test was conducted to 15 samples by Jamovi for ensuring reliability and consistency of each measurement item, and 1 item was removed (I have serious conversations with students who are very different from me in terms of our religious, political opinions, or personal values). After this, the author distributed questionnaires to 208 lectures randomly chosen from the faculty of education, and Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) was done to report hypotheses. The results of MLR showed significant influences between teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' self-efficacy, career motivation, school climate, principal's transformational leadership, and principal's transactional leadership. Meanwhile, 15 colleagues were interviewed to offer suggestions for the intervention process, among whom there were 13 lectures and 2 deans from the

College of Economic Management. At last, the Finalized Intervention Design and Implementation Model was constructed.

In the second stage, 15 lecturers were interviewed to offer opinions about intervention. Five principles from different colleges were interviewed, and five lecturers were chosen randomly from the author's college, which would be intervened in, and five lecturers were chosen randomly from other colleges.

These teachers not only represent the teaching strength of SHY College but also reflect the educational level and characteristics of the institute in different teaching fields. By studying these teachers, we can better understand the teaching methods, teacher development, and student learning outcomes in higher education. According to the results of MLR, the intervention mainly focused on the Teacher's Self-efficacy and the Principal's Transformational Leadership. Powell and Snellman (2004) pointed out that in the era of the knowledge economy, higher education bears the important responsibility of knowledge innovation, promoting the development of theory and the exploration of the frontier of knowledge. The author designed interactive activities to improve lecture engagement, such as Workshops and Training Sessions, Collaborative Research Projects, Interactive Seminars and Discussions, and Feedback and Reflection Sessions, which lasted 14 weeks.

In the third stage, a paired sample t-test was used to verify significant differences between pre-and post-IDI. The results of the paired sample t-test showed that there were significant differences in teachers' satisfaction and Tell-efficacy, teachers' Motivation, School Climate, Principals' Transformational Leadership, and Principals' Transactional Leadership between pre-IDI and post-ID, which implied that the intervention worked. Meanwhile, the 40 lecturers were interviewed by the author's university to give opinions about teacher job satisfaction strategies.

In summary, this study lasted nearly one and a half years, including reading literature, proposing questions, discussing with experts and colleagues, setting frameworks, collecting data, conducting interviews, designing intervention plans, conducting interventions, and analyzing data. The results showed that a teacher's self-efficacy, career motivation, school climate, and principal's transformational and transactional leadership can influence a teacher's job satisfaction.

### 5.2 Recommendations

#### 5.2.1 Implement Balanced Workload Management

Implementing balanced workload management is one of the most critical steps to improving teacher job satisfaction. Teachers often face excessive workloads, including teaching responsibilities, grading, research, and administrative tasks,

leading to stress and burnout. Institutions can significantly enhance teachers' job satisfaction by developing better strategies to manage teachers' workloads. For example, schools can introduce measures such as optimizing class sizes to ensure that teachers are not overwhelmed by the number of students they are responsible for. Additionally, redistributing administrative tasks to support staff can free up teachers' time and allow them to focus more on their primary teaching and research roles. Providing teachers with designated time for research or administrative tasks within their schedules can also help them balance their workload. The benefit of this approach is that it allows teachers to dedicate adequate time to each aspect of their job without feeling overburdened, leading to better performance and higher job satisfaction. When teachers have manageable workloads, they are more likely to feel motivated and engaged in their work, which can also positively impact student outcomes. In summary, balanced workload management is essential for reducing stress and improving job satisfaction among teachers, ultimately leading to a more effective and supportive educational environment.

### **5.2.2 Promote Fair and Transparent Policies**

Promoting fair and transparent policies within educational institutions is another key recommendation for improving teacher job satisfaction. Teachers need to feel that their efforts are recognized and rewarded fairly, which requires clear and consistent policies regarding workload distribution, promotions, and rewards. When these policies are transparent and applied consistently across the institution, it reduces the likelihood of perceptions of favoritism or bias, which can lead to dissatisfaction among faculty members. For instance, schools can establish clear criteria for promotions and workload assignments, ensuring that all teachers understand how decisions are made. Regularly communicating these policies and involving teachers in decision-making can further enhance their sense of fairness and inclusion. The benefit of promoting fairness and transparency is that it fosters trust between teachers and the administration, leading to a more positive work environment. Teachers who feel they are treated fairly are more likely to be motivated, engaged, and committed to their roles. This, in turn, contributes to a more stable and productive faculty, which benefits the entire educational institution. Fair and transparent policies are crucial for building trust and ensuring teachers feel valued and supported, leading to higher job satisfaction.

### **5.2.3 Enhancing Professional Development Opportunities**

Enhancing professional development opportunities is essential for improving teacher job satisfaction, as it allows teachers to grow and advance in their careers. Teachers with

access to meaningful and relevant professional development opportunities are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, as they can continuously improve their skills and knowledge. Institutions can offer various professional development programs, such as workshops, conferences, and online courses, that align with teachers' career goals and schedules. For example, schools can provide training on the latest teaching methods, educational technologies, and classroom management techniques, which can help teachers stay updated with the latest trends in education. Additionally, offering mentoring programs where experienced teachers can guide and support newer faculty members can be highly beneficial. Enhancing professional development improves teachers' skills and increases their confidence and job satisfaction. When teachers feel that they are growing professionally, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their work, positively impacting student learning outcomes. In summary, institutions can help teachers reach their full potential by investing in professional development opportunities, leading to greater job satisfaction and a more effective teaching workforce.

### **5.2.4 Increasing Autonomy in Teaching Methods**

Increasing autonomy in teaching methods is another important recommendation for improving teacher job satisfaction. Teachers who can choose and implement their preferred teaching methods are likelier to feel empowered and satisfied with their work. Autonomy in the classroom allows teachers to tailor their teaching strategies to meet their students' needs and experiment with innovative approaches that can enhance student engagement and learning. For example, teachers might incorporate project-based learning, flipped classrooms, or technology-enhanced instruction into their teaching practices. Schools can support this autonomy by providing resources and professional development and encouraging creative and effective teaching methods. The benefit of increasing autonomy is that it fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among teachers, leading to greater job satisfaction and motivation. Teachers who can design their lessons according to their strengths and interests are likelier to enjoy their work and feel fulfilled. Moreover, this autonomy can lead to better educational outcomes, as teachers are more likely to engage students with diverse and innovative teaching methods. In summary, providing teachers with greater autonomy in their teaching methods is a powerful way to boost job satisfaction and improve the overall quality of education.

### **5.2.5 Investing Adequate Resources and Infrastructure**

Investing in adequate resources and infrastructure is crucial for improving teacher job satisfaction, as it directly impacts their ability to perform their duties effectively. Teachers need access to modern teaching tools, well-

maintained facilities, and sufficient support staff to deliver high-quality education. When these resources are lacking, teachers may struggle to meet their teaching goals, leading to frustration and dissatisfaction. For example, providing up-to-date technology in the classroom, such as interactive whiteboards, tablets, and reliable internet access, can significantly enhance the teaching and learning experience. Additionally, ensuring that classrooms are clean, well-equipped, and conducive to learning is essential for creating a positive work environment for teachers. Schools can also allocate resources for teaching assistants who can help manage classroom tasks and support students, allowing teachers to focus on instruction. The benefit of investing in resources and infrastructure is that it enables teachers to perform their jobs more efficiently and effectively, leading to higher job satisfaction. When teachers have the tools and support, they need, they are more likely to be motivated, engaged, and committed to their work. In summary, providing adequate resources and infrastructure is a foundational aspect of improving teacher job satisfaction and ensuring the success of educational institutions.

### 5.3 Limitations for Future Research

The primary limitation of the current study on improving teacher job satisfaction is the potential lack of generalizability due to the specific context in which the research was conducted. The study may have been carried out in a particular educational institution or within a specific geographic region, which might only represent some educational settings. For example, factors affecting job satisfaction in a well-funded, urban school may differ significantly from those in a rural or underfunded institution. This limitation suggests that the study's findings may not be applicable across different types of schools, regions, or education systems. Future studies should aim to include a more diverse range of educational institutions and settings to enhance the generalizability of the findings. By broadening the scope, researchers can better understand the factors influencing teacher job satisfaction across different contexts.

Second, a significant limitation is the potential bias in self-reported data. The study likely relied on surveys or interviews where teachers provided their perceptions of job satisfaction and related factors. While self-reported data is valuable for understanding personal experiences, it can be prone to biases such as social desirability bias, where respondents might report what they believe is the "correct" answer rather than their true feelings. Additionally, recall bias can affect the accuracy of responses, especially if teachers are asked to reflect on past experiences. To mitigate this limitation, future research could incorporate more objective measures of job satisfaction, such as performance data, absenteeism rates, or retention statistics. Combining

self-reported data with objective indicators would provide a more comprehensive and accurate picture of teacher job satisfaction.

Third, the study may need more longitudinal insights, particularly if it was cross-sectional. Cross-sectional studies provide a snapshot of teacher job satisfaction at a specific time but do not capture how satisfaction levels may change over time or in response to interventions. Understanding the long-term impact of efforts to improve job satisfaction is crucial for developing effective strategies. For example, an initiative that initially boosts job satisfaction might not have lasting effects if not sustained over time. Future studies should consider longitudinal designs that track teacher satisfaction over several years. This approach would allow researchers to observe trends, identify factors contributing to sustained job satisfaction, and evaluate the long-term effectiveness of interventions.

Finally, in the future, the study may have neglected the voices of certain subgroups within the teaching population. Teacher satisfaction can vary widely depending on age, gender, years of experience, subject area, and personal circumstances. If the study did not sufficiently differentiate between these subgroups, the findings might not fully capture the diversity of experiences among teachers. For instance, early-career teachers might face different challenges compared to those nearing retirement, and these differences should be considered when developing strategies to improve job satisfaction. Future studies should ensure they capture a broad range of teacher experiences by including diverse subgroups and analyzing how satisfaction levels vary among them. This approach would lead to more tailored and effective interventions that address the specific needs of different teacher demographics.

In conclusion, while the current study provides valuable insights into improving teacher job satisfaction, it is important to acknowledge its limitations and areas for future research. By addressing issues such as the generalizability of findings, potential biases in self-reported data, the need for longitudinal analysis, the inclusion of broader systemic factors, and the diversity of teacher experiences, future studies can build on the current research and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how to enhance job satisfaction among teachers effectively. This ongoing research is essential for developing strategies that improve teacher well-being and lead to better educational outcomes for students.

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