Transformational leadership practices, teachers' communicative ability and motivation in Chinese higher vocational institutions

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Abstract

This study determined the transformational leadership, communicative ability, and motivation among instructors in Chinese higher vocational institutions. A descriptive survey with 500 randomly selected respondents revealed a demographic mostly aged 41 to 51, predominantly female, with master's degrees, and 11 to 15 years of teaching experience. Consensus was high on transformational leadership, particularly moral model, individual consideration, and inspirational motivation, with charism or idealized influence receiving the lowest assessment. Communicative ability was ranked from dissatisfied to learner autonomy. In terms of motivation, respondents concurred that motivators are more effective than hygiene factors. Younger instructors aged 20-30, holding a doctorate degree, and with 1 to 5 years of teaching experience exhibited higher motivation assessments. Males in this demographic showed more favorable evaluations of transformational leadership and communicative ability. Significant differences emerged based on educational status, with sex influencing variations in inspirational motivation, and age impacting charismatic or idealized influence, inspirational motivation, leadership, and hygiene factors. Positive leadership positively influences warm communicative abilities and control dimensions, but hinders them in negative contexts. Strong communicative ability in positive dimensions enhances teacher motivation, while in negative dimensions, it exhibits a negative correlation with motivation. To improve Chinese higher vocational institutions, recommendations include implementing innovative strategies, promoting learner autonomy, boosting teacher motivation, establishing continuous assessment systems, and encouraging collaboration.

Keywords: transformational leadership practices, teachers' communicative ability, motivation

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1. Introduction

The government's strong support for increased investment and reforms in vocational education has led to the growth of vocational colleges and improvements in educational quality. In Chinese Higher Vocational Institutions, the role of teachers is paramount in shaping the institution's overall success and fostering a conducive learning environment. As these institutions adapt to the evolving educational landscape, the adoption of effective leadership practices, strong communicative abilities, and motivation among teachers becomes crucial for driving positive outcomes in teacher development and student success. These three variables play a pivotal role in shaping the educational environment, enhancing teacher effectiveness, and promoting overall institutional development. Understanding the relationship among these variables can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of leadership, communication, and motivation within Chinese Higher Vocational Institutions.

Although scholars have slightly different definitions of transformational leadership, their views are generally consistent in essence. In the cultural context of China, the definition of transformational leadership by Li , et. al., (2005) has been widely adopted. They believe that transformational leadership inspires employees' intrinsic motivation, enabling them to transcend their ordinary selves and achieve higher levels of self-realization, thus contributing to organizational goals. This definition is adopted in this study. Transformational leaders effectively address structural inequalities and adeptly navigate turbulent periods to sustain their leadership positions (Majeed, 2023). They engage in critical reflection, foster a shared vision, enhance stakeholder capacities, form strategic alliances, and participate in supportive professional networks (Yacon, et. al., 2023). Transformational leadership is viewed as a facilitator for supporting teachers in adapting to organizational changes and providing organizational support (Alainati et al., 2023). Leaders are tasked with empowering stakeholders, providing guidance, exercising authority in decision-making, and fulfilling their roles effectively (Leovigildo, 2023). Teachers who exhibit transformational leadership practices can inspire and motivate their teams toward higher levels of performance and professional growth. Through visionary leadership, charisma, and the ability to empower others, transformational leaders can create a sense of shared purpose and direction, encouraging collaboration and innovation among teachers.

Furthermore, effective communication is a vital aspect of a teacher's basic abilities. Teachers with strong communicative abilities can articulate goals clearly and engage students effectively. Effective communication not only ensures that the vision and objectives of the institution are conveyed efficiently but also creates a positive and collaborative work environment among teachers and students. Teacher communication skills refer to the abilities and capacities of educators to effectively communicate with students, colleagues, and other stakeholders within an educational environment. These skills encompass linguistic proficiency, verbal and rhetorical techniques, as well as the ability to adjust communication methods according to different situations and individuals (Kachak, et. al., 2023). The teachers' communicative ability mentioned in this study mainly refers to the communication ability between teachers and students. Effective communication is crucial for establishing positive teacher-student relationships, facilitating learning, and promoting classroom cooperation and engagement. The development of communication skills is seen as a key factor in improving the quality of school and classroom functioning.

Teachers' motivation refers to the factors that drive and influence their professional engagement, which is closely related to their achievements, health, sense of well-being, enthusiasm, job satisfaction, and overall performance (Rufini, et. al., 2023). Teachers' motivation can be classified into different types, such as autonomous motivation and controlled motivation. Autonomous motivation refers to teachers' intrinsic drive and personal interest in their work, while controlled motivation refers to external factors influencing teachers' motivation, such as rewards or pressure from others. Motivated teachers are more likely to engage in continuous professional

development, seek innovative teaching approaches, and establish meaningful connections with their students. Teachers' motivation is influenced by various internal and external factors, with administrative leadership and communication being two key external factors that significantly shape this motivational aspect.

Teachers' motivation is influenced by various internal and external factors, and leadership and communication are two key external factors that significantly shape this motivational aspect. Research has indicated a relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' communication skills and motivation. The leadership style of department heads, marked by collaboration, shared decision-making, and employee development, can impact teachers' enthusiasm (Mann, 2023). Transformational leadership practices have the potential to inspire and motivate teachers by fostering a sense of purpose and vision within the institution. When administrators exhibit transformational leadership qualities, such as providing intellectual stimulation, individualized support, and setting high-performance expectations, teachers are more likely to feel valued, empowered, and motivated to excel in their roles. Moreover, principals' transformational leadership and interpersonal communication directly affect teachers' performance motivation (Sumaji, 2022). Furthermore, research has shown that dimensions of transformational leadership, such as idealized influence and individualized consideration, are linked to teachers' work motivation (Morales, 2022). Some suggest that using transformational leadership guidance can serve as a means to motivate teachers and drive change within educational institutions (Arias, et. al., 2020). Similarly, effective communication can positively impact teachers' motivation (Maragha, 2021). Clear and transparent communication of institutional goals, expectations, and recognition of teachers' efforts can create a sense of belonging and appreciation among educators. Conversely, ineffective or ambiguous communication can lead to confusion, demotivation, and reduced engagement among teachers. While the significance of leadership and communication on teachers' motivation is well-documented, there is still a need for comprehensive research in the context of Chinese Higher Vocational Institutions. Therefore, understanding how transformational leadership practices and communicative abilities influence teachers' motivation is essential for designing effective strategies to enhance teacher motivation and, consequently, improve the overall learning experience for students. The aim of this research is to examine the relationship between transformational leadership practices and teachers' communicative ability and motivation within Chinese Higher Vocational Institutions.

In the context of Chinese vocational colleges, several issues may be observed regarding the impact of leadership practices and communication skills on teachers' motivation. Firstly, there could be a deficiency in leadership practices, with leaders lacking guidance and support in implementing transformational leadership approaches. This could result in teachers feeling confused and uncertain in their teaching and management roles, consequently affecting their motivation levels. Secondly, some teachers may lack the necessary language and rhetorical skills required for effective communication with students and colleagues. This deficiency could lead to ineffective communication and the dissemination of inaccurate information, thereby impacting teaching effectiveness and collaboration among teachers. Additionally, there may be disparities in the motivation levels of different teachers, with some experiencing low motivation due to factors such as job dissatisfaction, limited professional development opportunities, or inadequate support from the organizational culture. These issues highlight the importance of understanding how transformational leadership practices and communicative competence influence teacher motivation. Addressing these challenges and designing effective strategies to enhance teacher motivation is crucial for improving the overall learning experience of students in vocational colleges.

Objectives of the Study - The primary objective of this research is to explore the relationship between transformational leadership practices, teachers' communicative ability, and motivation. The study aimed to achieve several objectives: it determined specific components of the Transformational Leadership factors, including Moral Model, Charism or Idealized Influences, Inspirational Motivation, and Individual Consideration. The study also identified Communicative Ability in terms of Control dimension (Authoritarian, High Standards, Lenient, Learner Autonomy) and Warmth dimension (Dissatisfied, Leadership, Uncertainty, Understanding). Additionally, it identified Motivation in terms of Hygiene Factors and Motivators. Furthermore, the study tested significant relationships between Transformational Leadership Practices, Communicative Ability, and Motivation when

grouped according to profile variables. Finally, the study provided a teacher training plan for educational institutions and policymakers on how to enhance work behavior among teachers through effective leadership, motivation, and communication strategies.

2. Methods

Research Design - The researcher used the descriptive and quantitative research method in the Transformational Leadership Practices, Teachers' Communicative Ability and Motivation in Chinese Vocational Colleges. The data gathered using a questionnaire was administered and subjected to data analysis to analyze and interpret the results. The descriptive method is used in the assessment and finds answers to questions through the analysis of variables' relationship. It is very important and preliminary to the study to utilize the school documents and records to serve as basis for evaluating programs as basis for development and improvement.

Participants of the Study - The study focused on participants from Higher Vocational Institutions in China, which have about 1.36 million full-time teachers. From this pool, 500 college teachers from eight public vocational colleges in China were chosen to participate in the study. These teachers were specifically selected from public vocational colleges in China. The participants exclusively comprised teachers, serving as the central instructional personnel responsible for conducting courses, mentoring students, and engaging in various academic activities within the institution. These teachers constituted the survey respondents, contributing essential data for the examination of the relationship between transformational leadership practices, teachers' communicative ability, and motivation. The study utilized random sampling, specifically simple random sampling, to select participants. This method involves selecting individuals from a population in such a way that each has an equal chance of being chosen. In this survey, each sample was selected only once, without replacement, ensuring that the units in the sample were not returned to the population. The sampling frame for this survey consisted of public college teachers in China.

Data Gathering Instrument - This study employed three questionnaires, and respondents provided their responses using a 4-point Likert scale. The Transformational Leadership Questionnaire utilized in this study is derived from Li Chaoping and Shi Kan's "Transformational Leadership Questionnaire, TLQ." Within the unique cultural context of China, transformational leadership is conceptualized as a four-dimensional structure, encompassing Moral Model, Charism or Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, and Individual Consideration. The questionnaire comprises 26 items. Through repeated application and validation, the questionnaire has demonstrated robust reliability. The questionnaire for "Teachers' Communicative Ability" was sourced from the Communication Styles Questionnaire (CSQ), developed by Oxford Brookes University (Joe Harkin & Gill Turner, 1997). This scale comprises 75 items organized into two dimensions: Control dimension (Authoritarian, High Standards, Lenient, Learner Autonomy) and Warmth dimension (Dissatisfied, Leadership, Uncertainty, Understanding). The "Motivation Questionnaire" used in this study was adapted from MySkillsProfile.com Limited in 2017, based on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. It consists of 29 items representing Hygiene Factors and Motivators. The questionnaire has been reviewed by the advisor to ensure its suitability and effectiveness as a research instrument. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient, specifically designed for Likert scales, is the conventional index for assessing reliability. A higher coefficient value signifies a greater degree of internal consistency, indicating enhanced reliability of the scale. The reliability coefficient, ranging from 0 to 1.0, is used to assess internal consistency. Specifically, items 1 to 4 pertain to the first dimension, transformational leadership; items 5 to 12 correspond to the second dimension, communicative ability; and items 13 to 14 relate to the third dimension, motivation. The Cronbach's alpha value for transformational leadership exceeds 0.92, indicating excellent scale reliability within this dimension. Similarly, the motivation dimension demonstrates a Cronbach's alpha value above 0.87, suggesting good scale reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure - The study adopted an online approach for questionnaire preparation, distribution, recovery, and testing. The process involved several steps. Initially, the author engaged in comprehensive communication with leaders, teachers, and students of Jiangmen Polytechnic through Face-face, Wechat and phone

calls in China. The purpose and significance of the research were explained, support was sought, and staff were mobilized to diligently complete the questionnaire. Subsequently, utilizing the Questionnaire Star platform, the author created questionnaires and generated web links for respondents to fill them out. To ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, an initial batch of 30 questionnaires was distributed, demonstrating satisfactory reliability and validity. Following this, a large-scale distribution of questionnaires was carried out among selected Chinese Higher Vocational Institutions via WeChat and Email. Utilizing the data collection function of the Questionnaire Star platform, all data were exported in Excel format and meticulously checked for accuracy. To uphold questionnaire validity, the author implemented screening based on specific principles. Firstly, a minimum completion time of 120 seconds was set for a questionnaire to be considered valid. If the completion time fell below this threshold, the questionnaire was deemed invalid. Secondly, if a respondent attempted to fill in the questionnaire multiple times, only the first valid submission was considered.

Data Analysis - The collected information was organized and analyzed using various statistical methods. Frequency distribution was used to present the data, showing the frequencies of profile variables as percentages of the total frequency. The data for Transformational Leadership Practices, Teachers' Communicative Ability, and Motivation were aggregated using weighted means. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to measure Communicative Competencies, while the Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the relevance of Transformational Leadership Practices, Teachers' Communicative Ability, and Motivation in Chinese Vocational Colleges.

Ethical Considerations - The data collected for this research was handled in accordance with the Data Privacy Act, ensuring strict confidentiality. Ethical considerations were carefully taken into account to uphold the quality and integrity of the research. Prior consent was obtained from the administrators and offices of each school or university, soliciting their approval for the respondents to participate in the study. To ensure confidentiality and protect the anonymity of the participants in this study, the names and personal information of the teachers remain undisclosed. For the purpose of statistical analysis and data presentation, codes or numbers are assigned to the questionnaire responses in the tabulated data. This approach allows us to maintain the privacy of the individuals involved while still enabling meaningful analysis and interpretation of the results. Respondents were ensured the freedom to voluntarily participate and express their opinions. During interviews, the personal opinions of respondents were respected, ensuring that all information was based on their own perspectives. Lastly, ensuring the safety and well-being of the study participants was prioritized to prevent any harm.

3. Results and discussion

Table 1
Summary Table on Transformational Leadership

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Moral Model	3.35	Agree	1
Charism or Idealized Influence	3.01	Agree	4
Inspirational Motivation	3.20	Agree	3
Individual Consideration	3.31	Agree	2
Composite Mean	3.22	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 1 presents the summary table on transformational leadership, which was agreed on moral model (3.35), individual consideration (3.31), inspirational motivation (3.20)and charism or idealized influence (3.01). Respondents on transformational leadership validated the importance of moral model as it describes It refers to leaders who embody and emphasize moral and ethical values, as well as guiding members of the organization by example. In the context of educational management, Moral Model emphasizes that leaders take integrity, honesty and noble behavior as examples, and influence the moral behavior and decision-making of organization members through the transmission of moral norms and values. High scores for moral models may reflect leadership's emphasis on and practice of ethical values. This leadership style may motivate teachers to become more actively involved in the educational process by stimulating their intrinsic motivation. In addition, by emphasizing moral

models, leaders may be committed to building a positive organizational culture that emphasizes shared values and ethics. This culture helps to improve teachers' career satisfaction and teamwork, thus contributing to the overall quality of education. The practice of moral models may stimulate teachers' professional responsibility and make them pay more attention to the overall development of students. This helps to create a positive educational environment and improve the quality of education.

Transformational leadership validates the importance of a moral model by emphasizing the role of ethics and morality in leadership. It recognizes that leaders have a responsibility to act as role models, creators of new meanings, and exemplars of character and integrity (Neves, et. al., 2019). It acknowledges that the absence of morality can have disastrous outcomes and that leaders' actions or inaction can have far-reaching effects on others (Qaiyum, et. al., 2015). Transformational leadership incorporates moral reasoning and universal moral principles as the basis for morally attractive leadership theories (Sendjaya, 2005). It also recognizes the importance of values, dos and don'ts, and Islamic work ethics in work environments, and explores the effect of transformational leadership components on Islamic work ethics (Meymand et. al., 2016). Overall, transformational leadership validates the importance of a moral model by integrating ethics, morality, and values into leadership practices.

On the other hand, the least evaluated is Charism or Idealized Influence. Charisma, particularly in the form of idealized influence, demonstrates a constructive influence on individual outcomes within the professional domain. Research by Chunhui et al. (2023) underscores that this charismatic aspect of leadership positively correlates with essential personal benchmarks such as job performance, job satisfaction, and job engagement. In the educational context, the positive effects of effective teacher-student interactions, embodying charismatic leadership qualities, extend beyond immediate outcomes. Itani, et. al., (2022) assert that these interactions contribute significantly to the cultivation of leadership qualities in students, indicating a broader impact on leadership development. As affirmed, expanding beyond the educational realm, Koomson et al. (2022) highlight the robust positive impact of transformational leadership, inclusive of idealized influence, on employee motivation and performance. This underscores the versatility of charismatic leadership qualities in fostering favorable outcomes across diverse organizational settings. Moreover, the influence of idealized influence and inspirational motivation transcends individual performance metrics. Almahasneh et al. (2022) assert that these leadership traits positively affect organizational culture and performance, with organizational culture serving as a mediating factor in this relationship. This finding underscores the broader organizational implications of charismatic leadership qualities. In summary, the multifaceted impacts of charisma, particularly as manifested in idealized influence within transformational leadership, extend across individual, educational, and organizational domains, underscoring its pivotal role in fostering positive outcomes and shaping various facets of professional life.

Table 2
Summary Table on Communicative Ability

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Authoritarian	2.72	Agree	3
High Standards	2.69	Agree	6
Lenient	2.71	Agree	4.5
Learner Autonomy	2.66	Agree	8
Dissatisfied	2.77	Agree	1
Leadership	2.71	Agree	4.5
Uncertainty	2.74	Agree	2
Understanding	2.68	Agree	7
Composite Mean	2.71	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 2 presents the summary for Communicative Ability of the respondents. The composite mean of 2.71 indicates that the respondents agreed in general. Among the eight indicators, Dissatisfied ranked first as expressed by the highest mean of 2.77, followed by Uncertainty with a mean of 2.74, Authoritarian (2.72), Lenien (2.71), Leadership (2.71), High Standards (2.69), Understanding (2.68). While Learner Autonomy was assessed with the lowest mean of 2.66.

Examining the highest-ranked indicators, it appears that teachers in China's higher vocational colleges might harbor a general dissatisfaction with the teaching environment and working conditions. Additionally, they may experience distress when confronted with uncertainty and the implementation of authoritative teaching methods. These findings likely mirror the challenges and pressures encountered by teachers in vocational colleges, encompassing issues such as a diverse student body, inadequate teaching resources, and potential institutional management challenges. Resolving these challenges may necessitate a concerted effort to provide teachers with enhanced support and training. This support can empower them to navigate dissatisfaction and uncertainty more effectively. Moreover, fostering more flexible leadership and teaching strategies is essential. This multifaceted approach aims to address the complexities of the teaching environment and contribute to the overall well-being and job satisfaction of teachers in higher vocational colleges. Teacher dissatisfaction with the teaching environment and working conditions is a prevalent concern, influenced by various contributing factors. To begin with, job satisfaction is positively influenced by role clarity and effective teamwork (Gomez, et. al., 2023). Teachers with well-defined roles and clear responsibilities tend to experience higher job satisfaction levels. Conversely, feelings of distress, perceived stress in teaching, and obstacles to professional development negatively impact job satisfaction (Admiraal, 2022). Moreover, the burden of excessive workload is compounded by disruptive and violent student behavior, prolonged after-school meetings, impractical deadlines, and administrative inspections, all of which contribute significantly to dissatisfaction (Sharma, et. al., 2022). Additionally, faculty members encounter occupational stress arising from hindrances to their research activities and a lack of support, further impacting their overall job satisfaction (Fuchigami, et. al., 2023).

Furthermore, the perception of the work environment plays a pivotal role. Institutional expectations, university governance, management practices, and working conditions directly and indirectly shape job dissatisfaction. These factors are interconnected with academic self-efficacy in research and teaching, creating a complex web of influences on teachers' overall satisfaction (Zhang et. al., 2020). In essence, the multifaceted nature of teacher dissatisfaction encompasses organizational, interpersonal, and personal factors, making it imperative to address these issues comprehensively for the improvement of overall job satisfaction in the teaching profession. Teachers encounter unique situations and challenges associated with uncertainty in their profession. One notable area of uncertainty pertains to their competence, confidence, and clarity when dealing with students who have experienced domestic violence (Selvik, et. al., 2023). This challenging circumstance underscores the need for teachers to develop specific skills and understanding to effectively support students facing such issues. Additionally, the integration of science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (STEAM) in education introduces a new layer of uncertainty for teachers. This integration requires them to navigate unfamiliar territory and adapt to innovative pedagogical approaches, reflecting the ever-evolving nature of education (Videla-Reyes, et. al., 2022). The evolution of the Russian education system further emphasizes the uncertainty teachers face. Anticipating professional challenges within the regional education system highlights the need for teachers to possess foresight competencies, showcasing their ability to navigate unforeseen developments and proactively address emerging issues (Albuni, et al., 2022). Furthermore, the modernization of teacher training to align with global standards involves confronting uncertain changes and embracing innovative education models. This emphasizes the dynamic nature of the teaching profession, necessitating continuous adaptation to new methodologies and educational paradigms (Ivaniuk, et. al., 2022).

In summary, teachers grapple with uncertainty across various dimensions of their profession. This includes addressing the diverse needs of students, adapting to emerging educational approaches, and cultivating the necessary competencies to meet future challenges. The ability to navigate and embrace uncertainty becomes a crucial aspect of a teacher's professional toolkit in an ever-changing educational landscape. Teachers often encounter challenges when implementing authoritative teaching methods. In the post-segregation era, some teachers find it difficult to enforce discipline without resorting to corporal punishment, as they perceive it challenging to exert authority without being perceived as autocratic. Andresen, et. al., (2023), through a case study, revealed the dilemma teachers face between encouraging student participation in new teaching activities and exercising authority. They concluded that teachers need to feel confident and satisfied with their authority,

creatively solving problems to effectively implement innovative teaching activities. They proposed four specific recommendations: creating a supportive classroom atmosphere to encourage students to accept and adopt new teaching activities, providing clear instructions and expectations to ensure students understand and meet the requirements of teaching activities, establishing norms for interaction and social relationships to enhance effective communication and collaboration between teachers and students, and evaluating teaching activities and providing feedback to help teachers improve the implementation and effectiveness of teaching activities. In South African schools, corporal punishment is prohibited, necessitating the adoption of alternative disciplinary measures. Some teachers struggle to find effective alternatives while still associating authority with authoritarianism. Novice teachers, in particular, find it challenging to exert authority in the classroom, while experienced teachers have a better understanding of the meaning of teacher authority and how to wield it effectively. This study suggests that educational practitioners should envision classroom leadership beyond mechanical and punitive control. Teacher authority should be built on a more comprehensive foundation, considering learners' emotional comfort and personal safety (Egunlusi, 2020).

In this study, learner autonomy scored the lowest, aligning with the common perception that authority tends to impede the development of student autonomy. The traditional education model in China emphasizes teacher authority and structured teaching, leaning toward a teacher-centered approach rather than a student-centered one (Bo et al., 2022). Additionally, limited resources, large class sizes, and institutional policy constraints may affect the effective implementation of learner autonomy. Thesing, et. al.,(2018) study also acknowledges the conflict between authority and autonomy concepts, noting the challenges school institutions face in resolving this issue. The research finds that the development of student autonomy is closely linked to teachers' practices and knowledge regarding their authority. When teachers exercise authority using a liberating teaching approach, it empowers students with the ability to engage in independent learning and decision-making. By providing a structured and supportive learning environment, authoritative teachers can create opportunities for students to develop autonomy and critical thinking skills.

Table 3
Summary Table on Motivation

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Hygiene Factor	3.16	Agree	2
Motivators	3.39	Agree	1
Composite Mean	3.28	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 3 presents the summary for motivation. The composite mean of 3.28 indicates that the respondents agreed in general. Among the indicators cited, motivators ranked first with mean score of 3.39, followed by hygiene factor (3.16), it shows that the influence of motivation factors on motivation is slightly stronger than that of health factors. The impact of motivational factors on individual motivation is significant, reflecting the proactive measures taken by educators and leaders in the Chinese higher vocational education environment to enhance job motivation. In comparison, the score for hygiene factors is relatively lower but still at an agree level, suggesting that respondents generally acknowledge the influence of hygiene factors on motivation, albeit less pronounced than motivators. Tirana et al. (2023) highlighted in their study on teacher job satisfaction that both external and internal motivation explain 24% of the variability in job pleasure. The results reveal that internal motivation has a more pronounced impact on job pleasure, with external motivation showing a relatively lower influence. Internal motivation, characterized by intrinsic qualities and self-driven attributes, fosters deeper job satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment when aligned with personal values and goals. It is noteworthy that strategies to improve working conditions are considered external motivational factors, with the potential to increase teacher enthusiasm and elevate job satisfaction.

In contrast, findings from Karaferis et al. (2022) concerning healthcare professionals in public hospitals indicate that external motivational factors such as salary, organizational policies, career growth, and job security have slightly higher average scores than internal motivational factors. Studies on teacher professional motivation

indicate that while internal motivation ensures behavioral consistency, external motivation plays a supportive role (Gümüştaş, et. al., 2022). Additionally, external factors such as physical health, economic status, student interests, and parental support also impact teacher enthusiasm. Ultimately, the research suggests that supportive management with tolerance and strong leadership characteristics is a crucial factor in motivating teachers and contributing to their success. Further research indicates that personal and social factors influence teacher motivation, encompassing physiological and safety factors, happiness factors, and self-esteem factors (Roy, et. al., 2016). Studies investigating factors influencing teacher professional motivation identify a multitude of factors across personal, school-related, socio-cultural, and political domains (Khanal, et. al., 2021). Policy-related factors include salary and benefits, leave facilities, promotions, training, pensions, and freedom to engage in trade unions. Similarly, school-related factors affecting teacher motivation include school management, leadership, teaching workload, professional development opportunities, and feedback and reinforcement mechanisms. Student-related factors comprise class size, student composition, regularity, and discipline. Socio-cultural factors influencing teacher motivation encompass social recognition of teachers, political interference, and teacher-parent cooperation. Finally, addressing teacher performance and motivation issues should be closely tied to teacher professional development policies.

Furthermore, upon closer inspection, we observe that distinct facets of practicing transformational leadership are associated with different facets of teachers' communication ability. This correlation is positive in some aspects, meaning that as transformational leadership improves, communicative ability also strengthens. Conversely, in other aspects, the correlation is negative, indicating that as transformational leadership improves, communicative ability weakens. This provides valuable insights into the relationship between leadership styles and communicative ability.

Table 4
Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Communicative Ability

Moral Model	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Authoritarian	-.359**	0.000	Highly Significant
High Standards	.284**	0.000	Highly Significant
Lenient	-.284**	0.000	Highly Significant
Learner Autonomy	.341**	0.000	Highly Significant
Dissatisfied	-.330**	0.000	Highly Significant
Leadership	.290**	0.000	Highly Significant
Uncertainty	-.263**	0.000	Highly Significant
Understanding	.282**	0.000	Highly Significant
Charism or Idealized Influence			
Authoritarian	-.479**	0.000	Highly Significant
High Standards	.385**	0.000	Highly Significant
Lenient	-.380**	0.000	Highly Significant
Learner Autonomy	.479**	0.000	Highly Significant
Dissatisfied	-.480**	0.000	Highly Significant
Leadership	.432**	0.000	Highly Significant
Uncertainty	-.474**	0.000	Highly Significant
Understanding	.433**	0.000	Highly Significant
Inspirational Motivation			
Authoritarian	-.384**	0.000	Highly Significant
High Standards	.436**	0.000	Highly Significant
Lenient	-.367**	0.000	Highly Significant
Learner Autonomy	.454**	0.000	Highly Significant
Dissatisfied	-.405**	0.000	Highly Significant
Leadership	.429**	0.000	Highly Significant
Uncertainty	-.465**	0.000	Highly Significant
Understanding	.464**	0.000	Highly Significant
Individual consideration			
Authoritarian	-.339**	0.000	Highly Significant
High Standards	.393**	0.000	Highly Significant
Lenient	-.398**	0.000	Highly Significant
Learner Autonomy	.443**	0.000	Highly Significant
Dissatisfied	-.412**	0.000	Highly Significant
Leadership	.395**	0.000	Highly Significant
Uncertainty	-.273**	0.000	Highly Significant
Understanding	.361**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Specifically, when transformational leadership is demonstrated effectively, communicative ability shows a positive correlation in dimensions such as High Standards, Learner Autonomy, Leadership, and Understanding. This suggests that as transformational leadership improves, teachers' communicative ability enhances in these dimensions. On the contrary, in dimensions like Authoritarian, Lenient, Dissatisfied, and Uncertainty, communicative ability shows a negative correlation when transformational leadership is strong. This implies that as transformational leadership improves, teachers' communicative ability tends to be relatively weaker in these dimensions. Jamilah, et. al., (2022), in their research, found differences compared to the results of this study. They assert a direct positive relationship between transformational leadership and communication suggesting that transformational leaders are more likely to engage in effective communication with team members, fostering strong relationships and promoting effective teamwork. However, it is important to note that the scales used in their study for measuring transformational leadership (30 items) and communication (9 items) differ from those utilized in our study.

On the other hand, Ahmadong (2022) conducted a study analyzing the relationships among transformational leadership, headmaster interpersonal communication, and teachers' work effectiveness. The results indicated a positive correlation between transformational leadership and teachers' work efficiency, as well as between headmaster interpersonal communication and teachers' work efficiency. However, the researcher did not conclude whether there is a correlation between transformational leadership and interpersonal communication. It is essential to consider these variations in measurement tools and findings when comparing different studies, as they can contribute to divergent results and interpretations.

Table 5
Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Motivation

Moral Model	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Hygiene Factor	.373**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	.419**	0.000	Highly Significant
Charism or Idealized Influence			
Hygiene Factor	.579**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	.586**	0.000	Highly Significant
Inspirational Motivation			
Hygiene Factor	.528**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	.464**	0.000	Highly Significant
Individual consideration			
Hygiene Factor	.475**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	.414**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 5 displays the association between transformational leadership and motivation. The computed r-values indicates a strong direct correlation and the resulted p-values were less than the alpha level. This means that there was significant relationship exists and implies that the better is the transformational leadership, the more that they are motivated. Morales (2022) reached similar conclusions in their study. The dimensions of transformational leadership exhibited significant associations with work motivation in terms of intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, intrinsic regulation, and extrinsic regulation. Organizational management could facilitate teacher development training workshops or initiatives to further enhance the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' work motivation, thereby fostering efficiency and effectiveness among members. Likewise, Rahmansyah's (2022) research, involving 112 primary school teachers in Penang, also indicated a direct positive impact of transformational leadership on motivation. Specifically, transformational leaders motivate and inspire teachers by setting high expectations, providing support, and cultivating a sense of purpose and meaning at work. They create a positive and empowering work environment that encourages teachers to unleash creativity, adaptability, and initiative, consequently reinforcing their motivation to perform optimally. Additionally, transformational leaders can promote teachers' sense of ownership and autonomy, thereby enhancing their intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction.

Furthermore, the study conducted by Kilinc and colleagues identified two types of school motivational

climates: high performance and high mastery. This research highlighted the significant influence of transformational leadership on teachers' commitment and sense of alienation. In schools with a performance-oriented focus, the school-level motivational climate mitigated the impact of transformational leadership, making it more effective in fostering collective commitment and reducing feelings of alienation among teachers.

Table 6 highlights the association between communicative ability and motivation, where the computed r-values indicate a robust direct correlation, and the resulting p-values are below the alpha level. This underscores a significant relationship, suggesting that as communicative ability improves, there is a corresponding increase in motivation.

Table 6
Relationship Between Communicative Ability and Motivation

Authoritarian	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Hygiene Factor	-.437**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	-.396**	0.000	Highly Significant
High Standards			
Hygiene Factor	.426**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	.408**	0.000	Highly Significant
Lenient			
Hygiene Factor	-.329**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	-.330**	0.000	Highly Significant
Learner Autonomy			
Hygiene Factor	.381**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	.410**	0.000	Highly Significant
Dissatisfied			
Hygiene Factor	-.406**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	-.437**	0.000	Highly Significant
Leadership			
Hygiene Factor	.434**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	.388**	0.000	Highly Significant
Uncertainty			
Hygiene Factor	-.361**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	-.406**	0.000	Highly Significant
Understanding			
Hygiene Factor	.391**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivators	.339**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Moreover, upon further examination, we discern correlations between different facets of communicative ability and various dimensions of motivation. In specific instances, this correlation is positive, signifying that improvement in communicative ability strengthens motivation. Conversely, in other scenarios, the correlation is negative, indicating that enhancements in communicative ability are linked to a weakening of motivation.

To delve into specifics, when communicative ability excels in dimensions such as High Standards, Learner Autonomy, Leadership, and Understanding, a positive correlation emerges with teachers' motivation. This suggests that as communicative ability improves in these aspects, teachers tend to display relatively stronger motivation. Conversely, in dimensions where communicative ability is pronounced, such as Authoritarian, Lenient, Dissatisfied, and Uncertainty, a negative correlation is observed with teachers' motivation. This implies that as communicative ability improves in these aspects, teachers become more susceptible to experiencing negative impacts on motivation. Furthermore, Janiah et al. (2023) conducted a comprehensive study revealing a direct correlation between the principal's communication and work motivation (0.292). Similarly, in Eğriboyun's (2022) research, a meaningful relationship emerged at the 0.01 significance level between job motivation and communication skills. The research model unveiled that the intrinsic job motivation perceptions of managers and teachers surpassed other variables, with the most robust correlation observed between overall job motivation and emotional communication. This underscores the pivotal roles of motivation and communication skills in shaping job satisfaction and overall professional dynamics. Expanding on these insights, Ingsih, et. al., (2021) research findings illuminate significant effects between communication, work discipline, leadership, and compensation on

teacher motivation. The implication of the research becomes evident, highlighting the crucial role of motivation in enhancing teacher performance. Importantly, the study emphasizes that communication, work discipline, leadership, and compensation collectively influence teachers' performance. Together, these research perspectives provide a comprehensive understanding, indicating that various factors, including communication and motivation, are intricately interconnected and play multifaceted roles in influencing teacher performance.

Table 7
Proposed Development Program to Enhance Transformational Leadership Practice, Teacher's Communicative Ability and Motivation

Key Result Areas	Strategies	Success Indicators	Persons Involved
Transformational Leadership Practices 1.1 Charism or Idealized Influence Objective：to cultivate an Open-Minded mindset among team members and stimulate innovation (I have an open-minded mindset and posses a strong sense of innovation)	Encourage team members to explore new ideas and perspectives Foster a culture that values diverse opinions and encourages constructive dissent Provide training on open-minded communication and decision-making	Achieve 85% of team members proposing innovative ideas Achieve 50% growth in diversity of opinions during team discussions	Team leaders HR Cross-functional teams
Communicative Ability 2.1 Learner Autonomy Objective：to promote learner autonomy in assignment selection (The students have the opportunity to choose the assignments they work on)	Implement a system that allows students to choose assignments based on their interests and strengths Provide clear guidelines and options for assignments, ensuring alignment with learning objectives Conduct workshops to educate students on the benefits of autonomy in assignment selection	80% of students actively choosing assignments Diverse selection of assignments reflecting various interests Improved student engagement and satisfaction with the learning process	Course instructors Academic advisors Student support services
Motivation 3.1 Hygiene Factor Objective：to enhance employee satisfaction and motivation through job autonomy and recognition (My job gives me freedom and power I think I am doing my job properly) 3.2 motivator Objective：To increase teachers' satisfaction and motivation with their work and make them more passionate and motivated to perform their duties. (I think I am doing my job properly)	Implement flexible work schedules or remote work options Gather feedback on autonomy preferences through surveys Establish clear guidelines for accountable autonomous work Provide ongoing professional development opportunities Establish effective communication channels Stimulate innovative thinking Provide a fair incentive mechanism	Increase 80% in engagement scores related to recognition and job satisfaction Increase 70% the percentage of employees utilizing flexible work options 90% of employees give positive feedback on their work-life balance and job satisfaction The proportion of teachers participating in professional development activities has increased 90% of teachers are more satisfied with the internal communication channels of the organization Teachers have higher evaluation on the fairness of incentive measures	Department managers HR Employees Leadership team Department managers HR Teachers

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The majority of respondents fall within the 41 to 51 age range, are female, hold master's degrees, and have been teaching for 11 to 15 years. The respondents expressed consensus on transformational leadership, particularly in terms of moral model, charism or idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individual consideration. Notably, there is strong agreement on moral model, individual consideration, and inspirational motivation, with the lowest assessment observed for charism or idealized influence. The respondents reached a consensus on communicative ability, ranking it in the following order: dissatisfied, uncertainty, authoritarian, lenient, leadership, high standards, understanding, and learner autonomy. As to the respondent's motivation, they agreed that motivators can better, inspire them， followed closely by hygiene factor. Significant differences emerged in responses regarding transformational leadership, communicative ability, and motivation based on educational

status. Gender influenced variations in inspirational motivation, while age impacted charismatic or idealized influence, inspirational motivation, leadership, and hygiene factors. However, no significant differences were noted in moral model, high standards, and leadership indicators when participants were grouped by years of service to the school or institution. There is a highly significant relationship among transformational leadership, communicative ability, and motivation. This implies that there may be important interactions between these factors that are critical to the quality of teaching and the overall performance of the teacher team. The proposed development program was proposed to enhance the transformational leadership, teachers'.communicative ability and motivation among Chinese higher vocational institutions.

Develop and implement innovative strategies for cultivating an open-minded mindset and stimulating innovation among teachers. This can be achieved through targeted training programs, fostering a culture that values diverse opinions, and encouraging constructive dissent. Advocate for the promotion of learner autonomy in assignment selection. Introduce systems that allow students to choose assignments based on their interests and strengths, accompanied by clear guidelines and educational workshops. Evaluate the impact on student engagement and satisfaction with the learning process. Implement flexible work schedules and remote work options to enhance teacher job autonomy. Gather feedback through surveys to understand autonomy preferences and establish clear guidelines for accountable autonomous work. Monitor the increase in engagement scores related to recognition and job satisfaction, as well as the percentage of employees utilizing flexible work options. Design and implement professional development programs tailored to address the specific needs identified in the study. Focus on enhancing transformational leadership qualities, communicative abilities, and motivational factors among teachers in Chinese higher vocational institutions. Establish a system for continuous assessment of teacher characteristics, including age, gender, educational status, and years of service. This will provide ongoing insights into how these factors may impact transformational leadership, communicative ability, and motivation. Implement a regular and rigorous evaluation process for the proposed teachers' development plan. Assess the success indicators outlined in the plan, gather feedback from involved parties, and make necessary adjustments to ensure its effectiveness over time. Encourage collaboration among different stakeholders, including team leaders, HR professionals, academic advisors, and student support services. Create cross-functional teams to facilitate the implementation of the development plan, ensuring a comprehensive and coordinated approach to improving transformational leadership, communicative ability, and motivation.

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