International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE)
Vol. 15, No. 6, December 2026, pp. 5414~5426
ISSN: 2252-8822, DOI: 10.11591/ijere.v15i6.40301

Transformational leadership and job satisfaction: the role of organizational climate

Yan Zhou[1], Bity Salwana Alias[2], Aida Hanim A. Hamid[1]
[1]Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia
[2]Research Center of Education Leadership and Policy, Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia

Article Info

Article history:

Received May 6, 2026
Revised Jul 13, 2026
Accepted Oct 25, 2026

Keywords:

Job satisfaction
Organizational climate
President's transformational leadership
Private university
University counselor

ABSTRACT

University counselors in higher education increasingly face heavy workloads, role ambiguity, emotional labor, and limited organizational support, raising concerns about their job satisfaction and professional sustainability. However, limited evidence exists on how presidents' transformational leadership (PTL) influences counselors' job satisfaction (CJS) through organizational climate (OC), particularly in Chinese private universities. A cross-sectional survey was conducted among 487 counselors working in private universities in Guangdong Province, China. Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) with SPSS and AMOS. The findings revealed that PTL significantly enhanced OC and CJS. OC also positively influenced CJS and partially mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. This study contributes to higher education leadership research by extending transformational leadership research to university counselors, clarifying the mediating role of OC, and providing empirical evidence from Chinese private universities. These findings highlight the importance of supportive leadership practices and organizational environments in improving institutional effectiveness.

This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.

Corresponding Author:

Bity Salwana Alias
Research Center of Education Leadership and Policy, Faculty of Education
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia
Email: bity@ukm.edu.my

1. INTRODUCTION

The higher education sector is currently experiencing substantial changes driven by globalization, technological innovation, public accountability, and increasing societal expectations regarding educational quality and student development outcomes. These developments have increased the importance of leadership as a mechanism for supporting institutional effectiveness, employee well-being, and sustainable organizational growth. Transformational leadership has attracted extensive scholarly attention because it emphasizes four interrelated dimensions, namely idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (IC). Research conducted in educational settings has consistently linked transformational leadership with favorable employee outcomes, including stronger motivation, greater job satisfaction, enhanced organizational commitment, and improved professional well-being [1], [2]. At the same time, the effectiveness of transformational leadership in universities remains closely associated with organizational conditions and institutional culture.

Among these organizational conditions, organizational climate (OC) has been recognized as an important contextual factor shaping employees' perceptions, interactions, and work experiences. Empirical evidence suggests that supportive OCs contribute to stronger cooperation, organizational identification,

interpersonal relationships, and employee performance in higher education institutions [3], [4]. OC is also closely associated with leadership practices, communication patterns, organizational support, and institutional management processes [5]. Previous studies further indicate that positive OCs significantly enhance employees' job satisfaction, engagement, and organizational commitment across educational settings.

Job satisfaction is particularly important in higher education due to the emotionally demanding and multidimensional nature of academic and student affairs work. University counselors are increasingly exposed to emotional labor, heavy workloads, role ambiguity, and conflicting professional expectations, all of which may undermine their professional well-being and increase turnover intention [6], [7]. As key personnel responsible for student guidance, psychological support, ideological education, and developmental services, counselors are indispensable to sustaining the functionality of university-wide assistance frameworks [8]. In addition, counselors have a far-reaching impact on the worldview, outlook on life, and values of college students because of the dual roles they play in teaching and managing students [9]. Consequently, counselors' job satisfaction (CJS) is not only an important indicator of individual well-being, but also closely related to organizational stability and the quality of student development services.

Previous studies demonstrated that transformational leadership positively influences job satisfaction and organizational outcomes by fostering collaborative and supportive work environments [10], [11]. Similarly, OC has been identified as an important predictor of employee satisfaction and institutional effectiveness [12]. However, several important gaps remain in the existing literature, including the limited attention given to university counselors, the limited evidence regarding the mediating role of OC, and the scarcity of research conducted in Chinese private universities.

Addressing these gaps is particularly important for improving counselors' professional sustainability and strengthening student support systems in higher education institutions. Therefore, this research investigates how university presidents' transformational leadership (PTL) influence CJS, specifically evaluating OC as an intervening mechanism within Chinese private higher education. The novelty of this study lies in three key aspects. First, it extends transformational leadership research by focusing on university counselors, a professional group that has received relatively little scholarly attention. Second, it examines OC as the mediating mechanism linking PTL and CJS, offering evidence on the process through which leadership shapes counselors' workplace experiences. Third, it provides evidence from Chinese private universities, an underrepresented higher education context in the international leadership literature, thereby expanding the contextual applicability of transformational leadership research.

2. THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDING

2.1. Theoretical foundations

The conceptual parameters of this paper are informed by transformational leadership theory, field theory, and Herzberg's two-factor theory. Transformational leadership theory was developed by Bass [13], emphasizing that leaders can inspire the potential of subordinates and achieve organizational change through inspirational motivation, IC, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence [14]. Field theory [15] further emphasizes that employee behavior is shaped by the interaction between individuals and their organizational environment, supporting the role of OC as an important contextual mechanism linking leadership behaviors and counselors' work experiences. In addition, Herzberg's two-factor theory [16] explains CJS through both hygiene factors, such as organizational support and working conditions, and motivational factors, including achievement, recognition, and professional growth. Therefore, these theories provide an integrated framework for understanding how PTL and OC influence CJS in higher education settings.

2.2. The relationship between president's transformational leadership and job satisfaction

Lately, research on transformational leadership theory and framework has made significant progress in many fields, especially in organizational management, education, technological innovation and sustainable development. With the development of theory, researchers have further refined and expanded the four core elements of transformational leadership. For example, Adeoye *et al*. [17] pointed out in their research that idealized influence has developed to include ethical leadership and value consistency, while inspirational motivation places more emphasis on maintaining organizational resilience and employee morale in a rapidly changing environment. In addition, Duran [18] proposed that the application of intellectual stimulation in technology-driven industries has been deepened, promoting the formation of an innovative culture. Similarly, Owusu-Agyeman and Moroeroe [19] investigate how transformational leadership impacts institutional culture and structure in South African universities. The research underscores the need for university leaders to challenge staff cognitively, support career development, and create an environment conducive to institutional transformation. These findings demonstrate that transformational leadership is instrumental in reshaping educational institutions by aligning leadership strategies with institutional goals. Therefore, this

study aim to enrich current practice-oriented research by examining how president's transformational leadership influences the CJS in Chinese higher education institutions. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed: president's transformational leadership positively influences CJS (H1).

2.3. The relationship between president's transformational leadership and organizational climate

Transformational leadership is considered to have a positive effect on improving organizational performance, employee satisfaction, and innovation. Empirical research demonstrates that transformational leaders significantly boost organizational innovation performance by actively fostering key knowledge management practices, such as knowledge acquisition, sharing, and application [20]. Moreover, In the field of management, it is believed that the management behavior of leaders can significantly affect the OC. As managers of the entire organizational environment, leaders play a key leadership role in leading subordinates to achieve long-term development of the organization. Studying whether a leadership behavior can effectively improve the OC and promote employees' positive attitudes is an important research topic in management. Hardianto *et al*. [21] demonstrated that in Indonesian vocational schools, transformational leadership and OC are interconnected factors that jointly contribute to positive organizational results. The following hypothesis is drawn out in relation to earlier research: president's transformational leadership positively influences OC (H2).

2.4. The relationship between organizational climate and job satisfaction

Lack of a positive OC has been identified as one of the main factors constraining employee job satisfaction in previous studies. People's attitudes and impressions of their work are greatly influenced by the organizational atmosphere. Several investigations have shown job satisfaction and the OC are significantly correlated. According to Liu and Alias [22] empirical research, in China's higher education sector, a supportive OC characterized by open communication, supportive leadership, and growth opportunities significantly improved educators' job satisfaction and mental health, with technology serving as a moderating factor in this relationship. Similarly, Sinha and Rathi [23] indicate that heightened employee satisfaction and suppressed exit intentions are concurrently driven by favorable OC. However, some studies have indicated that negative OCs marked by ineffective communication and authoritarian leadership are linked to lower job satisfaction and higher turnover rates.

According to Santana and Pérez-Rico [24], within the healthcare sector, a poor OC significantly diminishes staff job satisfaction, and this decline in satisfaction adversely impacts the quality of patient care. In addition, other investigations have examined the mediating role of workplace stress. For instance, some people found that positive OCs effectively mitigate occupational stress among staff, thereby enhancing job satisfaction through this crucial channel [25]. Although previous studies explained the relationship between OC and job satisfaction, as well as how this relationship works, existing evidence shows no significant difference between mainstream schools and special needs schools regarding how OC on job satisfaction [26]. Nevertheless, a positive OC remains an important factor in predicting job satisfaction and positive work attitudes. As a result, the following hypotheses are put forward: OC positively influences CJS (H3).

2.5. The mediating role of organizational climate

Existing evidence from educational organizations suggests that transformational leadership, OC, and job satisfaction tend to develop in an interconnected manner rather than as isolated phenomena. Leadership practices shape how employees experience their working environment, which in turn affects attitudes toward work and professional outcomes. Specifically, by fostering a collaborative and motivating educational environment, transformational leadership enhances teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, and students' academic performance [10], [11]. Additionally, teacher performance and satisfaction are greatly influenced by the OC, and improved educational outcomes are a result of a healthy atmosphere [27]. The diversity of OCs has influenced the increasing academic attention in higher education, with a variety of thematic focuses. Researchers have shown through bibliometric analysis that there has been a significant increase in publications after 2016, which emphasizes how crucial OC is to raising performance in a variety of educational fields, particularly in nations like Malaysia, Indonesia, and the United States [28]. These results emphasize how important strong leadership and a positive workplace culture are in educational institutions.

Compared with more exchange-oriented leadership styles, transformational leadership appears to have a stronger association with employees' perceptions of job satisfaction [29]. In addition, a positive OC strongly predicts teachers' job satisfaction. OC, including aspects such as school infrastructure, student relationships, and participation in decision-making, significantly influences teachers' perceptions of work satisfaction [30]. The available evidence therefore indicates that leadership behavior and workplace conditions should be considered jointly when attempting to understand CJS. Understanding this interaction may help universities identify organizational conditions that support both employee job satisfaction and

institutional performance. Presidential leadership may influence counselors not only directly but also indirectly through its influence on communication, trust, cooperation, and perceptions of organizational support within the institution [31], [32]. Building on the preceding theoretical and empirical arguments, the following mediation hypothesis is proposed: OC mediates the relationship between president's transformational leadership and CJS (H4).

Figure 1 summarizes the conceptual structure derived from the theoretical and empirical discussions. According to the proposed model, PTL is expected to influence CJS both directly and indirectly. OC is conceptualized as the explanatory mechanism through which part of this influence operates.

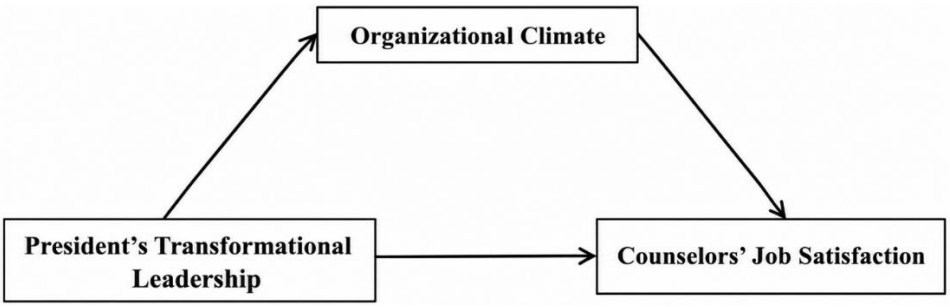


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

3. METHOD

3.1. Research design

To check the links among the study variables, a cross-sectional design was applied in a non-experimental way. Since the variables were measured at the same time, these results reflect correlation rather than cause-and-effect relationships. The survey data were gathered through an online self-report questionnaire on the Wenjuanxing platform. Necessary ethical clearance was granted by the relevant institutional review body before any data collection began. All respondents took part in this study voluntarily, and their informed consent was given before they filled out the questionnaire.

3.2. Population and sampling

The study population consisted of 3,320 full-time counselors employed across 24 private universities located in Guangdong Province, China. Referring to the sampling recommendations provided by Krejcie and Morgan [33]. Counselors were randomly selected from the participating universities to complete the questionnaire survey. To ensure sufficient sample adequacy, 550 questionnaires were distributed. Following data screening, a total of 487 submissions were preserved as usable datasets, translating into a final participation rate of 88.5%. The sampling frame was restricted to private universities in Guangdong Province, China. As a result, the external validity of the present baseline outcomes might be restricted when applied directly to public universities or institutions in other regions.

3.3. Research instrument

Measurement of the study constructs relied on three established instruments assessing PTL, OC, and CJS, respectively. All items were evaluated using a five-point Likert response format ranging from strong disagreement to strong agreement. PTL was operationalized using the Chinese transformational leadership questionnaire proposed by Li and Shi [34]. The instrument conceptualizes transformational leadership through four dimensions, namely moral modeling (MM), charisma (CH), articulated vision (AV), and IC [34]. Perceptions of OC were captured using the instrument introduced by Bock *et al*. [35], which represents the construct through the dimensions of fairness, innovativeness, and affiliation. CJS was evaluated using the short-form version of the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire originally developed by Weiss *et al*. [36], which includes intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction (ES) dimensions. Because two measurement scales were originally constructed in English, a back-translation procedure was implemented to preserve semantic equivalence and improve contextual suitability for respondents in the Chinese higher education setting.

3.4. Validity and pilot study

Before launching the formal data collection process, a pilot investigation involving 120 university counselors was undertaken to verify the clarity and consistency of the measurement items. Reliability analysis indicated that all scales achieved satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha

coefficients varying from 0.875 to 0.959. Furthermore, the questionnaire underwent expert evaluation by five scholars in educational management to ensure adequate content coverage and suitability for the target context.

3.5. Data analysis procedure

SPSS software was used for data management and subsequent empirical evaluations. The analysis began with descriptive statistics to summarize the distributional characteristics of the study variables, including their central tendencies and dispersion patterns. Subsequently, Pearson correlation analysis was performed to explore the initial associations among PTL, OC, and CJS. Prior to hypothesis testing, data screening procedures were conducted to assess normality, outliers, multicollinearity, and common method bias. Results from Harman's single-factor procedure showed that the largest unrotated factor accounted for 32% of the total variance, which was below the commonly accepted threshold and therefore did not indicate a substantial common method bias problem.

AMOS software was subsequently employed to perform covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM). Adhering to the classic two-stage analytical framework pioneered by Anderson and Gerbing, [37] we initially executed a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to verify the measurement model, including reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and model fit indices. After satisfactory model fit was established, the structural paths among the latent variables were estimated. The mediating effect of OC was further assessed using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. All SEM analyses were conducted in accordance with the recommended procedures for covariance-based SEM [38].

4. RESULTS

4.1. Descriptive statistics and correlation

Preliminary analyses concentrated on describing the general patterns observed in the data and identifying potential relationships among the principal constructs. Mean values and standard deviations were calculated to represent respondents' perceptions of PTL, OC, and CJS, whereas correlation coefficients were estimated to determine the direction and strength of their associations. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 1.

As shown in Table 1, the mean scores for PTL (M=3.461, SD=0.778), OC (M=3.452, SD=0.876), and CJS (M=3.451, SD=0.822) indicate that respondents reported moderate levels of PTL, OC and CJS. Pearson correlation analysis further revealed that PTL was significantly and positively correlated with OC ($r=0.529$, $p<0.01$) and CJS ($r=0.490$, $p<0.01$). In addition, OC was positively associated with CJS ($r=0.449$, $p<0.01$). Since the observed relationships aligned with the proposed theoretical expectations, the results supported proceeding to the next stage of analysis using SEM techniques.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	PTL	OC	CJS
PTL	3.461	0.778	1		
OC	3.452	0.876	0.529**	1	
CJS	3.451	0.822	0.490**	0.449**	1

Note: **correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.2. Structural equation modeling

4.2.1. Assessment of measurement model

Before checking the structural links among the variables, the measurement part was first evaluated. To see if the observed items appropriately reflected the corresponding variables, CFA was performed. The resulting measurement specification incorporated all latent variables together with their associated indicators. A graphical representation of the measurement framework is provided in Figure 2.

As illustrated in Figure 2, PTL is conceptualized via a multidimensional hierarchical structure, operationalized through four core lower-order facets: MM, AV, IC, and CH. OC consisted of three dimensions, namely affiliation (AF), innovativeness (IN), and fairness (FA), whereas CJS included intrinsic satisfaction (IS) and ES. The model specification follows the proposed theoretical framework and serves as the basis for evaluating the measurement properties before testing the structural relationships.

Model fit was assessed through a series of established fit statistics that are widely recommended in covariance-based SEM research [38], [39]. These indices were used to determine the extent to which the measurement specification corresponded with the empirical data. Table 2 compiles the comprehensive empirical indicators derived from this fit evaluation.

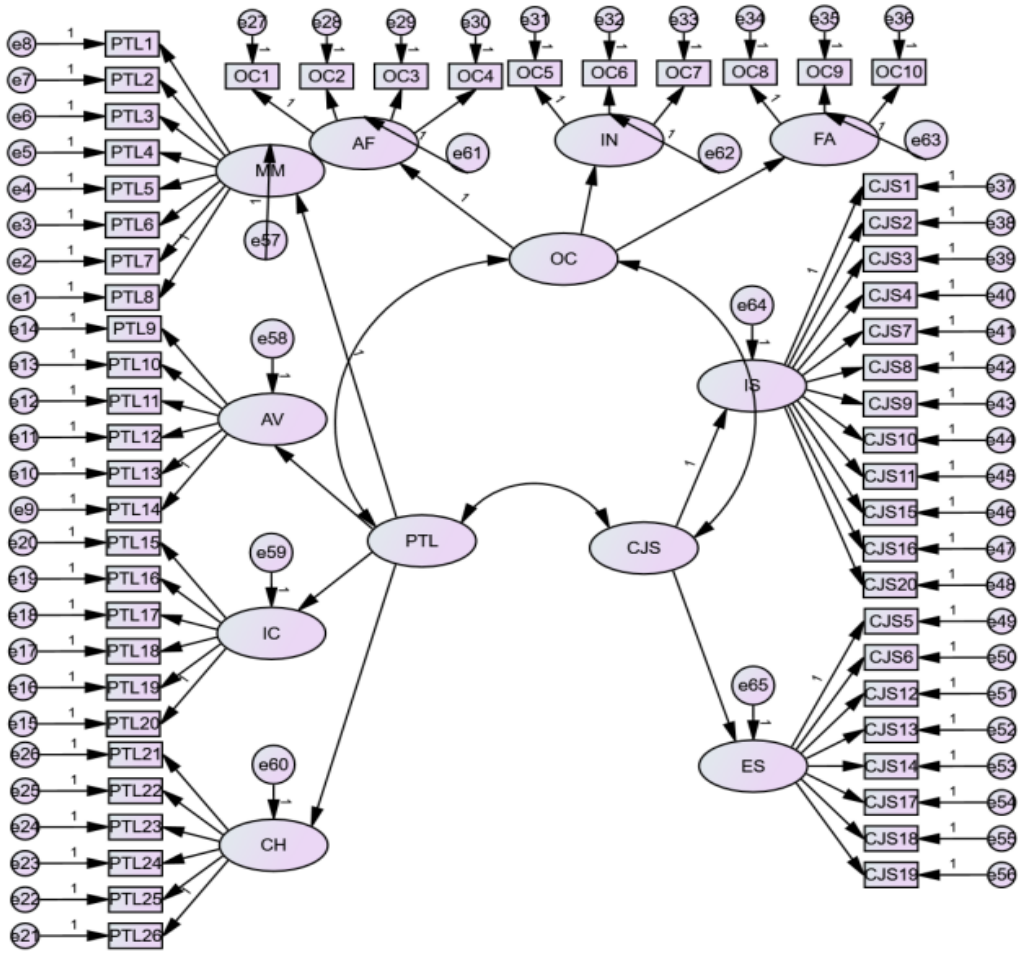


Figure 2. The measurement model

Table 2. Measurement model fit profiles and statistical thresholds

Index	CMIN/DF	RMSEA	IFI	TLI	CFI
Standard	Excellent: 1-3; Acceptable: 3-5	Excellent: <0.05; Acceptable: <0.08	Excellent: >0.9; Acceptable: >0.8	Excellent: >0.9; Acceptable: >0.8	Excellent: >0.90; Acceptable: >0.80
Value	2.568	0.057	0.894	0.888	0.894

As presented in Table 2, the values of chi-square divided by degrees of freedom (CMIN/DF) (2.568) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) (0.057) met the recommended thresholds. The incremental fit indices, including incremental fit index (IFI) (0.894), Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) (0.888), and comparative fit index (CFI) (0.894), also indicated a satisfactory model fit. Overall, the fit assessment provided sufficient empirical support for retaining the measurement model and proceeding to the evaluation of the structural component of the SEM framework.

4.2.2. Convergent and discriminant validity

Assessment of the measurement properties relied on multiple forms of reliability and validity evidence. Item performance was first examined through standardized loadings, followed by internal consistency evaluation using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) estimates. Convergent validity was subsequently determined from the average variance extracted (AVE) statistics calculated for each latent construct. Table 3 presents the results of these assessments.

As shown in Table 3, the standardized loadings associated with all retained indicators varied between 0.754 and 0.990, with every value remaining above the commonly accepted benchmark of 0.70, suggesting that the observed variables adequately reflected their intended constructs. Additional support for construct reliability was provided by Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.899 to 0.949 and CR estimates between 0.856 and 0.993, both of which exceeded the recommended criteria for acceptable reliability.

Furthermore, every construct produced an AVE value above 0.50, suggesting that the variance explained by the indicators exceeded the variance attributable to measurement error. Discriminant validity was also supported according to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, as the square root of each construct's AVE exceeded its correlations with the remaining constructs.

To supplement the Fornell-Larcker results, discriminant validity was also examined through the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) approach. Because PTL, OC, and CJS were specified as second-order constructs, HTMT was evaluated at the first-order construct level. To confirm acceptable discriminant validity, HTMT values must remain under 0.85 (or 0.90 for conceptually related constructs) [40]. The corresponding HTMT estimates are reported in Table 4.

As shown in Table 4, the HTMT coefficients generally supported adequate discriminant validity among the first-order constructs. The majority of the HTMT coefficients remained within the recommended range, providing additional support for the distinctiveness of the first-order constructs. Although the specific HTMT correlation linking IS and ES (0.969) exceeded the recommended threshold, these two dimensions represent theoretically related components of the higher-order construct of CJS and are therefore expected to exhibit substantial conceptual overlap. Accordingly, this result is considered conceptually acceptable and does not undermine the overall discriminant validity of the measurement model.

Table 3. Convergent and discriminant validity results

Construct	Indicators/loadings	α	CR	AVE	PTL	OC	CJS
PTL	MM (0.754), AV (0.792), IC (0.776), CH (0.773)	0.949	0.856	0.598	**0.773**		
OC	AF (0.837), IN (0.784), FA (0.820)	0.899	0.892	0.675	0.65	**0.822**	
CJS	IS (0.984), ES (0.990)	0.948	0.993	0.954	0.547	0.511	**0.977**

Note: diagonal values in bold represent the square root of AVE, while off-diagonal values indicate inter-construct correlations.

Table 4. HTMT matrix

Dimensions	PTL				OC			CJS	
	MM	AV	IC	CH	AF	IN	FA	IS	ES
MM	—								
AV	0.586	—							
IC	0.584	0.622	—						
CH	0.576	0.623	0.614	—					
AF	0.463	0.380	0.445	0.449	—				
IN	0.374	0.407	0.398	0.369	0.647	—			
FA	0.429	0.431	0.351	0.411	0.689	0.655	—		
IS	0.440	0.473	0.415	0.404	0.443	0.410	0.399	—	
ES	0.431	0.460	0.368	0.387	0.431	0.417	0.400	0.969	—

4.2.3. Assessment of structural model

Following satisfactory evaluation of the measurement component, attention shifted to the assessment of the structural relationships among the latent constructs. The structural model was specified based on the proposed theoretical framework. As illustrated in Figure 3, the model incorporated PTL, OC, and CJS, with OC positioned as the mediating mechanism linking PTL and CJS. Estimation of this model enabled examination of the hypothesized paths and empirical evaluation of the proposed hypotheses.

The fit of the total model was checked by using standard fit indexes before analyzing the structural paths. These measures were applied to see how well the proposed model matched the actual data structure. Table 5 summarizes the obtained fit statistics. As presented in Table 5, the structural model demonstrated a satisfactory fit with the observed data, with CMIN/DF=2.083, RMSEA=0.047, TLI=0.903, IFI=0.908, CFI=0.908 and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR)=0.0547. Collectively, these indices satisfied the evaluation criteria adopted in this study, suggesting that the model provided a sufficiently accurate representation of the observed covariance structure and could therefore be retained for subsequent path estimation and hypothesis testing. Collinearity diagnostics were additionally performed using variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics to determine whether excessive overlap existed among the predictor constructs. Both PTL and OC produced VIF values of 1.389 with corresponding tolerance values of 0.720. These estimates remained substantially below the conventional cutoff value of 5.0 [41]. The collinearity diagnostics therefore suggested that multicollinearity was unlikely to bias the parameter estimates, supporting the stability and interpretability of the structural coefficients.

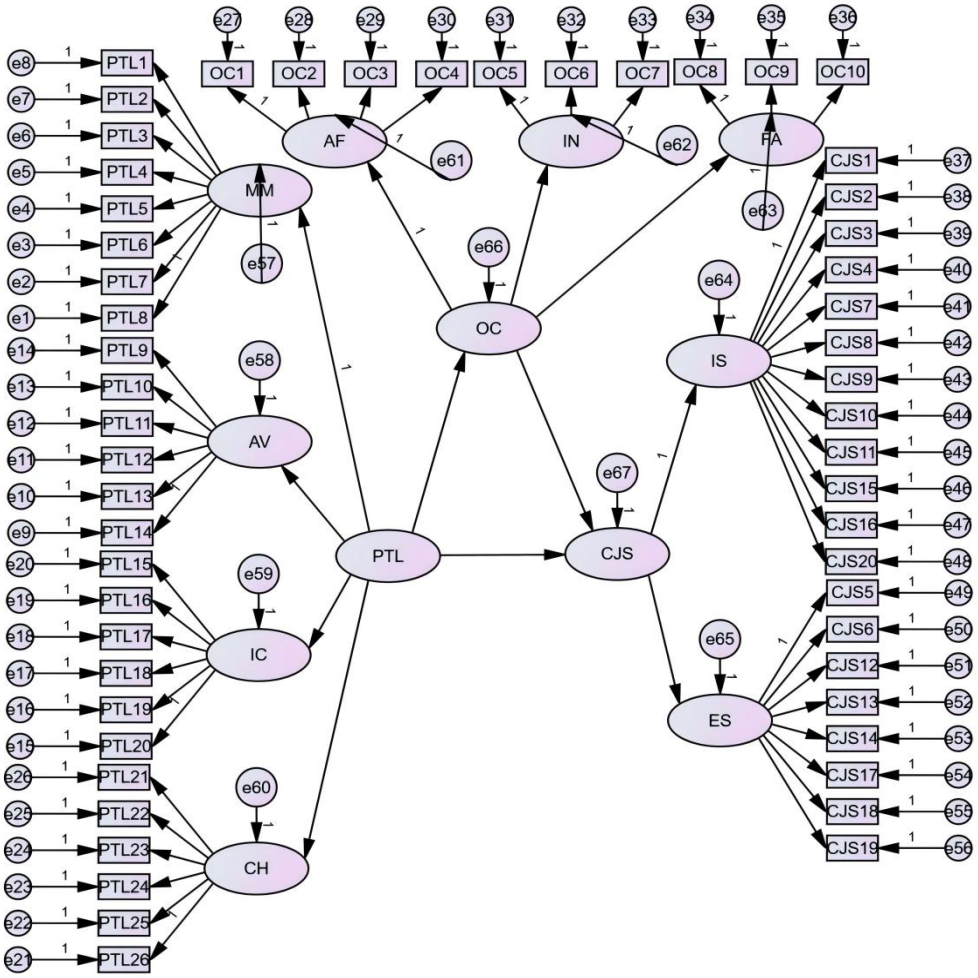


Figure 3. The structural model

Table 5. Model-fit indices for structural model

Index	CMIN/DF	RMSEA	TLI	IFI	CFI	SRMR
Recommended	<3.00	<0.08	>0.90	>0.90	>0.90	<0.08
Obtained	2.083	0.047	0.903	0.908	0.908	0.0547

4.3. Hypotheses testing: path analysis and mediation

4.3.1. Path analysis

Structural path analysis was conducted to examine the hypothesized direct relationships among the study variables. The analysis evaluated the significance of the structural paths as well as the explanatory power and effect sizes of the proposed model. The results are presented in Table 6.

The structural path analysis revealed that PTL had a significant positive effect on CJS (β=0.350, t=7.735, p<0.001) and OC (β=0.526, t=13.692, p<0.001). Concurrently, the statistical evidence confirmed that OC exerts a highly favorable and significant drive toward higher CJS (β=0.267, t=5.881, p<0.001). The structural model accounted for 42.2% of the variance in OC (R^2=0.422) and 34.1% of the variance in CJS (R^2=0.341), indicating satisfactory explanatory power. Furthermore, effect size (f^2) values indicated a large effect of PTL on OC (f^2=0.730), whereas PTL (f^2=0.212) and OC (f^2=0.152) exerted medium effects on CJS, based on Cohen's guidelines [42]. Therefore, H1, H2, and H3 were supported.

Table 6. Path coefficients, t-values, effect sizes (f^2), and hypothesis verifications

Hypothesized path	β	t	p	f^2	Result
PTL→CJS	0.35	7.735	***	0.212	Supported
PTL→OC	0.526	13.692	***	0.730	Supported
OC→CJS	0.267	5.881	***	0.152	Supported

***p<0.001

4.3.2. Testing the mediation model of organizational climate

Mediation was evaluated by estimating the extent to which the influence of PTL on CJS operated through OC. Statistical inference was based on bootstrap estimation using 5,000 resamples together with bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals (CI). The corresponding effect estimates are presented in Table 7.

The bootstrapping results revealed a significant total effect of PTL on CJS (effect=0.518, 95% CI [0.433, 0.599]). OC exerted a significant indirect effect (effect=0.149, 95% CI [0.096, 0.205]), while the direct effect of PTL on CJS remained significant (effect=0.369, 95% CI [0.276, 0.463]). The absence of zero within any CI provided empirical support for the statistical significance of both pathways and confirmed the relevance of OC in explaining part of the influence of PTL on CJS. Because both pathways remained significant after the inclusion of the mediator, the mediation pattern is more appropriately interpreted as partial rather than complete. The results suggest that PTL directly enhances CJS while also exerting an indirect effect through fostering a supportive and positive OC. Therefore, H4 was supported.

Table 7. Total effect, direct effect, and indirect effect

Item	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	Effect ratio (%)
Indirect effect	0.149	0.028	0.096	0.205	28.76
Direct effect	0.369	0.048	0.276	0.463	71.24
Total effect	0.518	0.041	0.433	0.599	100

Note: BootSE: bootstrap standard error; BootLLCI: bootstrap lower limit of the confidence interval; BootULCI: bootstrap upper limit of the confidence interval.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. The impact of president's transformational leadership on counselors' job satisfaction

Leadership appears to play a particularly important role in private universities, where counselors often work under heavy administrative pressure and complex professional expectations. Counselors who perceived stronger transformational leadership from university presidents generally reported higher levels of job satisfaction. In practice, leadership behaviors such as providing support, recognizing contributions, and communicating institutional goals may help counselors feel more valued and connected to their work. This is especially important in private universities, where organizational pressure and role ambiguity are often more visible. Similar patterns have been reported in previous higher education research. Studies conducted in both Chinese and international contexts found that transformational leadership positively influences employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment [43]–[45]. Zuo *et al*. [46] showed that transformational leadership improves teachers' job satisfaction by strengthening psychological capital and organizational justice perceptions. However, leadership effectiveness may still depend on institutional culture and organizational conditions. In resource-constrained environments, supportive leadership may become even more important for maintaining counselors' motivation and job satisfaction.

5.2. The impact of president's transformational leadership and organizational climate

In the present study, transformational leadership was closely associated with a more positive OC. This suggests that presidents do more than manage institutional operations; they also shape how counselors experience the organizational environment. In private universities, where organizational systems may still be developing, leadership behaviors often become a visible source of stability and direction. Counselors are more likely to perceive the workplace positively when leaders encourage communication, provide recognition, and promote shared institutional goals. Previous study similarly reported that transformational leadership strengthens OC and organizational functioning in educational settings [29]. Research has also linked transformational leadership with stronger workplace relationships and organizational citizenship behaviors among educators [47]. Rather than relying only on formal authority, transformational leaders appear to influence the everyday atmosphere of the institution by strengthening trust, participation, and cooperation. Still, OC is unlikely to depend on leadership alone. Institutional resources, governance structures, and management practices may also influence how counselors perceive their working environment.

5.3. The impact of organizational climate on counselors' job satisfaction

The findings show that counselors working in more supportive organizational environments tended to report higher levels of job satisfaction. In private universities, OC appears to function as more than a background condition. It directly shapes how counselors interpret their daily work experiences, interpersonal relationships, and professional value. When counselors perceive fairness, support, and cooperation within the institution, they are more likely to maintain positive attitudes toward their work despite institutional pressure and demanding responsibilities. This result is consistent with previous research linking positive OCs with

stronger job satisfaction among educational professionals [24], [48]. Earlier studies also found that OC contributes to employees' emotional well-being and feelings of security and belonging [49]. Similar conclusions have been reported among teachers working in collaborative and supportive educational environments [50]. Nevertheless, divergent institutional cultures and varying degrees of systemic stability can significantly alter how OC manifests its impact across campuses. In private universities facing greater structural pressure, OC may become an especially important source of professional support.

5.4. The mediation effect of organizational climate

One important finding of this study is that OC partially explained how transformational leadership influenced CJS. In other words, leadership did not affect counselors only through direct interaction. Its influence was also reflected in the organizational environment presidents helped create. Counselors who perceived supportive leadership were more likely to experience a positive OC, which then contributed to higher job satisfaction.

This pattern has also been observed in previous studies examining the relationship between transformational leadership, OC, and employee attitudes [10], [11], [27]. Research in educational settings further suggests that climates characterized by trust, support, and collaboration positively contribute to employees' work experiences and satisfaction [51]–[53]. In the context of private universities, where counselors often face institutional pressure and role complexity, the OC may serve as an important psychological buffer. At the same time, OC should not be viewed as the only mechanism linking leadership and job satisfaction. Other factors, including workload, organizational support, and professional identity, may also influence counselors' attitudes toward their work.

5.5. Educational implications for higher education

The findings of this study carry several implications for higher education institutions, particularly private universities. Theoretically, the study extends current higher education leadership research by demonstrating that OC functions as an important mechanism linking transformational leadership and CJS within the context of Chinese private universities. The findings also highlight the importance of examining counselors as a distinct professional group in higher education research, given their dual educational and administrative responsibilities. From a practical perspective, the study suggests that counselor job satisfaction should be treated as an organizational rather than purely individual issue. Leadership practices, organizational communication, and workplace support systems appear to work together in shaping counselors' professional experiences and long-term engagement. Under conditions of high workload and institutional pressure, supportive OCs may help improve CJS, organizational commitment, and professional sustainability. The findings therefore suggest that universities should strengthen leadership development, communication mechanisms, and organizational support practices for counselors.

5.6. Limitations

The findings reported in this study should be considered in light of several methodological and contextual constraints. First, the reliance on cross-sectional observations restricts conclusions regarding the causal sequence underlying the identified relationships, despite the significant associations observed among the study constructs. Longitudinal designs may therefore provide a clearer understanding of how these relationships evolve over time. Second, the sample was limited to counselors from private universities in Guangdong Province, China. The findings should therefore be interpreted with caution when applied to public universities or other regional contexts. Third, data collection depended exclusively on participants' self-evaluations via survey instruments. Although procedures were implemented to reduce common method bias, response bias cannot be completely excluded. Finally, OC was the only mediating variable examined. A broader range of organizational and individual mechanisms may be incorporated in future studies to clarify the processes underlying these relationships.

6. CONCLUSION

PTL was found to influence CJS not only directly but also indirectly through its impact on OC within private universities in Guangdong Province, China. The results therefore emphasize the importance of considering both leadership behavior and organizational context when seeking to understand counselors' workplace experiences and attitudes toward their work. The study adds to the growing body of transformational leadership research by extending empirical evidence to the setting of Chinese private higher education and by clarifying the role of OC as an intervening mechanism. From a practical perspective, strengthening transformational leadership practices and creating supportive organizational environments may contribute to higher levels of counselor satisfaction, stronger organizational functioning, and more sustainable institutional development. At the same time, the conclusions should be interpreted within the

boundaries imposed by the research context and theoretical framework. Future research could extend this model to different higher education contexts and examine additional organizational or individual factors that may further explain how transformational leadership influences CJS.

FUNDING INFORMATION

Authors state no funding involved.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

This journal uses the Contributor Roles Taxonomy (CRediT) to recognize individual author contributions, reduce authorship disputes, and facilitate collaboration.

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
Yan Zhou	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Bity Salwana Alias	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Aida Hanim A. Hamid		✓								✓	✓	✓	✓	

C : **C**onceptualization
M : **M**ethodology
So : **So**ftware
Va : **Va**lidation
Fo : **Fo**rmal analysis
I : **I**nvestigation
R : **R**esources
D : **D**ata Curation
O : Writing - **O**riginal Draft
E : Writing - Review & **E**diting
Vi : **Vi**sualization
Su : **Su**pervision
P : **P**roject administration
Fu : **Fu**nding acquisition

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Authors state no conflict of interest.

INFORMED CONSENT

Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in this study prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, anonymity, confidentiality, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, [BSA], upon reasonable request. The data are not publicly available due to privacy and ethical restrictions, as they contain information that could potentially identify research participants.

REFERENCES

[1] T. Y. Sun, Y. Luo, and M. Yoon, "The impact of presidents' transformational leadership on faculty occupational well-being—parallel mediating roles of teaching efficacy and job crafting," *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 16, p. 1468563, Jun. 2025, doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1468563.

[2] D. Bou, R. Sam, and S. Kheuy, "Transformational leadership style in higher education: scoping literature review," *Journal of General Education and Humanities*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 13–34, Feb. 2025, doi: 10.58421/gehu.v4i1.313.

[3] F. Amiri, M. Baghbani, S. Hannani, and N. A. Azadi, "Impact of organizational climate on the self-efficacy of operating room personnel," *Annals of Medicine & Surgery*, vol. 85, no. 6, pp. 2414–2419, Jun. 2023, doi: 10.1097/ms9.0000000000000368.

[4] C. C. Chen, T. Y. Liu, and H. C. Chen, "Relationship between transformational leadership, work engagement, and organisational citizenship behaviour: the moderating effect of work engagement," *Educational Studies*, vol. 51, no. 5, pp. 915–934, Sep. 2025, doi: 10.1080/03055698.2024.2369899.

[5] A. K. B. I. Razack and M. Vetrivel, "A study on organizational climate metropolitan transport corporation (Chennai) limited," *International Journal of Health Sciences*, vol. 5, no. S2, pp. 5944–5951, Apr. 2022, doi: 10.53730/ijhs.v6ns2.6546.

[6] J. Chonody, D. Kondrat, K. Godinez, and A. Kotzian, "Job satisfaction amongst social work faculty: the role of relationships," *Journal of Social Work Education*, vol. 59, no. 3, pp. 803–817, Jul. 2023, doi: 10.1080/10437797.2021.2019638.

[7] L. Kim, P. Pongsakornrungsilp, S. Pongsakornrungsilp, N. Horam, and V. Kumar, "Key determinants of job satisfaction among university lecturers," *Social Sciences*, vol. 12, no. 3, p. 153, Mar. 2023, doi: 10.3390/socsci12030153.

[8] J. Ding, "Psychological empowerment and turnover intention among university counselors: emotional exhaustion as a mediator and emotion regulation as a moderator," *Current Psychology*, vol. 41, no. 12, pp. 8280–8286, 2022, doi: 10.1007/s12144-021-02079-7.

[9] J. Chen and S. N. Muktar, "To stay or leave: a career dilemma faced by Chinese college counselors," *International Journal of Chinese Education*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 1–16, Sep. 2022, doi: 10.1177/2212585X221138573.

[10] B. Y. Utami, Nelitawati, and H. Al-Kadri, "The influence of principal transformational leadership on teacher performance and learning quality in schools," *International Journal of Educational Dynamics*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 555–559, Jun. 2024, doi: 10.24036/ijeds.v6i2.488.

[11] M. Z. Y. Putra, "The effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction: a systematic literature review," *Jurnal Syntax Transformation*, vol. 5, no. 6, pp. 892–898, Jun. 2024, doi: 10.46799/jst.v5i6.971.
[12] R. P. Norabuena-Figueroa, H. M. Rodríguez-Orellana, E. D. Norabuena-Figueroa, and A. Deroncele-Acosta, "Organizational climate as a key to positive mental health and academic engagement in university students: a structural equation modeling approach," *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education*, vol. 15, no. 2, p. 17, Feb. 2025, doi: 10.3390/ejihpe15020017.
[13] B. M. Bass, *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York, NY: Free Press, 1985.
[14] A. W. Wijayanti, M. Harsono, A. L. Riani, and J. Suyono, "The impact of workplace spirituality on educational staff's knowledge sharing intentions at private universities: a mediation-moderation model," *International Review of Management and Marketing*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 46–52, Jan. 2025, doi: 10.32479/irmm.17335.
[15] K. Lewin, "Frontiers in group dynamics: concept, method and reality in social science; social equilibria and social change," *Human Relations*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 5–41, Jun. 1947, doi: 10.1177/001872674700100103.
[16] F. Herzberg, "One more time: how do you motivate employees?," in *Job Satisfaction—A Reader*, M. M. Gruneberg, Ed., London, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 1976, pp. 17–32, doi: 10.1007/978-1-349-02701-9_2.
[17] M. A. Adeoye, H. Baharun, and I. Munawwaroh, "Transformational leadership in education: harmonizing accountability, innovation and global citizenship," *Kharisma*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 14–30, Jan. 2025, doi: 10.59373/kharisma.v4i1.68.
[18] N. Duran, "ESOL teachers' perceptions and knowledge to assist multilingual learners: a qualitative case study," Ph.D. dissertation, American College of Education, Indianapolis, Indiana, United States, 2024.
[19] Y. Owusu-Agyeman and E. Moroeroe, "Transformational leadership styles and change processes in higher education," in *Transformational Leadership Styles for Global Leaders: Management and Communication Strategies*. D. A. M. Roache, Ed., Hershey, PA: IGI Global Scientific Publishing, 2023, pp. 20–36, doi: 10.4018/979-8-3693-1380-0.ch002.
[20] L. Zhang, A. G. Tekleab, M. Piszczek, and Y. Qiu, "Does after-hours work-related information and communication technology use promote work engagement? A preliminary daily dairy study," *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 157, p. 113551, Mar. 2023, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.113551.
[21] Hardianto, Hidayat, A. Wulandari, Sulastri, and Nofriser, "Revitalizing educational leadership: a comprehensive literature review of transformational leadership in Indonesia academic settings," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 98–106, Mar. 2024, doi: 10.35445/alishlah.v16i1.4768.
[22] P. Liu and B. S. Alias, "Teacher motivation and commitment through transformational leadership in China's vocational schools," *Journal of Ecohumanism*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 1771–1779, Aug. 2024, doi: 10.62754/joe.v3i4.3708.
[23] N. Sinha and P. Rathi, "How organizational climate affects the job satisfaction," *International Journal of Scientific Research in Engineering and Management (IJSREM)*, vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 1–5, Apr. 2024, doi: 10.55041/ijsrem32312.
[24] S. Santana and C. Pérez-Rico, "Dynamics of organizational climate and job satisfaction in healthcare service practice and research: a protocol for a systematic review," *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 14, p. 1186567, Jul. 2023, doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1186567.
[25] E. Listiyorini and K. Kasmir, "Impact of the culture of the organization, the working environment contacted with laboral stress and the variable of intervening in the wide of vocational training and productivity," *Indonesian Journal of Business Analytics*, vol. 3, no. 6, pp. 2285–2304, 2023, doi: 10.55927/ijba.v3i6.7198.
[26] W. Otrębski, "The correlation between organizational (school) climate and teacher job satisfaction—the type of educational institution moderating role," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, vol. 19, no. 11, p. 6520, May 2022, doi: 10.3390/ijerph19116520.
[27] T. F. Thika, Aslamiah, and Suhaimi, "The influence of school principals' transformational leadership, organizational climate, organizational commitment on the performance of public primary educational teachers," *Esteem Journal of English Education Study Programme*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 698–710, Aug. 2024, doi: 10.31851/esteem.v7i2.16611.
[28] S. I. Amalou, "Organizational climate and performance in higher education: a bibliometric analyses using dimensions database," *Majapahit Journal of Islamic Finance and Management*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 1–24, Jun. 2024, doi: 10.31538/mjifm.v4i1.55.
[29] H. Meng, "Analysis of the relationship between transformational leadership and educational management in higher education based on deep learning," *Computational Intelligence and Neuroscience*, vol. 2022, pp. 1–8, Jun. 2022, doi: 10.1155/2022/5287922.
[30] H. Khun-Inkeeree, M. F. M. Yaakob, W. R. WanHanafi, M. R. Yusof, and M. S. Omar-Fauzee, "Working on primary school teachers' preconceptions of organizational climate and job satisfaction," *International Journal of Instruction*, vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 567–582, Jul. 2021, doi: 10.29333/iji.2021.14333a.
[31] D. Sirait, Suriansyah, Ngadimun, and Suhaimi, "The influence of principal transformational leadership, work culture and work environment on teacher performance in state senior high schools throughout Banjarbaru City," *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy (JAEP)*, vol. 5, no. 12, pp. 391–400, 2021.
[32] T. Dicke, H. W. Marsh, P. D. Parker, J. Guo, P. Riley, and J. Waldeyer, "Job satisfaction of teachers and their principals in relation to climate and student achievement," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 112, no. 5, pp. 1061–1073, Jul. 2020, doi: 10.1037/edu0000409.
[33] R. V. Krejcie and D. W. Morgan, "Determining sample size for research activities," *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, vol. 30, no. 3, pp. 607–610, Sep. 1970, doi: 10.1177/001316447003000308.
[34] C. Li and K. Shi, "The structure and measurement of transformational leadership in China," *Frontiers of Business Research in China*, vol. 2, no. 4, pp. 571–590, Dec. 2008, doi: 10.1007/s11782-008-0032-5.
[35] G. W. Bock, R. W. Zmud, Y. G. Kim, and J. N. Lee, "Behavioral intention formation in knowledge sharing: Examining the roles of extrinsic motivators, social-psychological forces, and organizational climate," *MIS Quarterly: Management Information Systems*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 87–111, Mar. 2005, doi: 10.2307/25148669.
[36] D. J. Weiss, R. Dawis, G. England, and L. Lofquist, *Manual for the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire*. Minneapolis, MN: Industrial Relations Center, University of Minnesota, 1967.
[37] J. C. Anderson and D. W. Gerbing, "Structural equation modeling in practice: a review and recommended two-step approach," *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 103, no. 3, pp. 411–423, May 1988, doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.103.3.411.
[38] R. B. Kline, "The mediation myth," *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, vol. 37, no. 4, pp. 202–213, Jul. 2015, doi: 10.1080/01973533.2015.1049349.
[39] L. T. Hu and P. M. Bentler, "Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: conventional criteria versus new alternatives," *Structural Equation Modeling*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 1–55, Jan. 1999, doi: 10.1080/10705519909540118.
[40] J. Henseler, C. M. Ringle, and M. Sarstedt, "A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling," *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 43, no. 1, p. 115, 2015, doi: 10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8.
[41] R. B. Kline, *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling*, 5th ed. New York, NY: Guilford Press, 2023.
[42] J. Cohen, *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*, 2nd ed. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1988.

[43] A. Kaya, "The association between transformational leadership and teachers' creativity: professional resilience and job satisfaction as mediators," *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 15, p. 1514621, Dec. 2024, doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1514621.
[44] A. Samad, M. Muchiri, and S. Shahid, "Investigating leadership and employee well-being in higher education," *Personnel Review*, vol. 51, no. 1, pp. 57–76, Mar. 2022, doi: 10.1108/PR-05-2020-0340.
[45] Tshewang and D. R. Chetri, "Relationship between principals' transformational leadership practices and teachers' job satisfaction in Phuentsholing Municipality," *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, vol. 41, no. 3, pp. 1–13, Mar. 2023, doi: 10.9734/ajess/2023/v41i3894.
[46] C. Zuo, C. Wongvanichtawee, and J. Chollathanrattanapong, "The effects of the transformational leadership model on teachers' organizational justice and job satisfaction in private universities in Shandong Province," *International Journal of Asian Business and Information Management*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 1–15, Apr. 2024, doi: 10.4018/IJABIM.341796.
[47] D. Wirtadipura and Wahyudi, "Transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behavior: moderating the organizational climate," *Jurnal Teknologi dan Manajemen Industri Terapan*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 420–428, May 2025, doi: 10.55826/jtmit.v4i2.689.
[48] C. R. Marcelo and V. J. Dalisay, "Organizational climate, job satisfaction, and service quality among selected local coffee shops in the City of Lipa," *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, vol. 49, no. 3, pp. 297–320, Nov. 2025, doi: 10.70838/pemj.490302.
[49] Hikmat, D. Munandar, and I. Izzatusholekha, "Looking at the impacts of transformational leadership skills and organizational climate on job satisfaction and business performance," *Edukasi: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 121–134, Dec. 2023, doi: 10.19109/ejpp.v10i2.20423.
[50] J. Fang and Z. Qi, "The influence of school climate on teachers' job satisfaction: the mediating role of teachers' self-efficacy," *PLoS ONE*, vol. 18, no. 10, p. e0287555, Oct. 2023, doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0287555.
[51] S. A. Boamah, "The impact of transformational leadership on nurse faculty satisfaction and burnout during the COVID-19 pandemic: a moderated mediated analysis," *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, vol. 78, no. 9, p. 2815, 2022, doi: 10.1111/jan.15198.
[52] A. A. Chaudhary, N. Z. Ali, N. Maqsood, A. Nasarullah, and R. J. F. Calimlim, "The influence of emotional intelligence in educational leadership and school climate," *Journal of Education and Social Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 453–461, Jun. 2024, doi: 10.52223/jess.2024.5225.
[53] S. A. Estherita, S. Vasantha, and S. Sudha, "Influence of transformational leadership on organisational culture with a mediating effect of innovative work behaviour: a systematic review," *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, vol. 11, no. 12, p. e2699, Dec. 2023, doi: 10.55908/sdgs.v11i12.2699.

BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS



Yan Zhou is currently pursuing her Ph.D. studies in Educational Management at the Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. She previously obtained her bachelor's degree in International Economics and Trade and her master's degree in Social Work. Her doctoral research is supported by the focus on higher education development in China, particularly emphasizing the role of counselors in private universities. Her main research interests lie in transformational leadership, organizational climate, and counselor job satisfaction. She can be contacted at email: 742308254@qq.com.



Bity Salwana Alias is a chairman of the Center for Leadership and Education Policy Studies. She holds a diploma in international trade from the "Kolej Agama Sultan Zainal Abidin", a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Universiti Islam Antarabangsa (UIA), a post-graduate teaching diploma from the Technical College, a master's degree in Educational Administration from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), and a Doctorate of Philosophy also from UKM. Started serving as a teacher at SMK Damansara Utama from 1995 to 1999. Then at "SMK Jalan Tiga" and "SMK Jalan Empat" from 1999 to 2005. Served in the planning and research division of education policy, commentary on education Malaysia in 2009 to 2018 after graduating from Doctor of Philosophy as Assistant Director in the Research and Evaluation Sector. Started serving as associate professor at UKM from 2018 to now. The study specializes in the field of administration and noble values including for unity and integrity. She can be contacted at email: bity@ukm.edu.my.



Aida Hanim A. Hamid is a senior lecturer at the Center for Leadership and Education Policy Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. She is also the Director of the Industry and Community Network Center (I-KOM), at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. She obtained a master's degree in educational management, at the University of Nottingham (Malaysia Campus) in 2012 and obtained a Ph.D. at the University of Bristol, United Kingdom in 2017 in the field of education policy. Her areas of expertise are educational administration, educational leadership, teacher professionalism, teaching and learning, and teaching pedagogy. She can be contacted at email: aidahanim@ukm.edu.my.