

## The Role of Educational Leadership Practices in Enhancing Teaching Quality in China

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### Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine how educational leadership methods in China affect the quality of instruction. A quantitative research strategy was used to gather information from 500 educators from different areas and grade levels. Indicators of teaching quality including student engagement, academic achievement, and teacher effectiveness were positively correlated with vision-setting, instructional leadership, and support for teachers, according to the results. The importance of leadership in fostering pedagogical excellence and coordinating instructional practices with student learning outcomes is underscored by regression analysis, which further reveals instructional leadership as the most powerful predictor of teaching quality. These results highlight the need to improve student outcomes and teacher quality in China's educational system by funding leadership development and support. Teachers are better able to carry out their responsibilities and students are more likely to succeed in school when administrators and legislators place an emphasis on good leadership techniques.

**Keywords:** Educational Leadership, Teaching Quality, Instructional Leadership, China, Student Outcomes

### Introduction

The quality of instruction is foundational to any educational system, and educational leadership methods significantly impact this quality. In the setting of China, a country characterized by fast economic development and ambitious educational reforms, strong leadership is crucial for improving the quality of education. Knowing how educational leadership affects teacher quality is crucial as China aspires to be a world leader in education and other fields. The purpose of this research is to examine the complex web of connections between educational leadership practices and the quality of instruction in China's classrooms. Over the last several decades, China's educational system has experienced profound changes, driven by the country's goals of economic development and its dedication to producing a workforce that can thrive in a knowledge-based economy. The onus for elevating schools and teachers to new heights of pedagogical brilliance has fallen on educational leaders in the wake

of these shifts (Ravitch & Kannan, 2021). Nevertheless, concerns over the efficacy of current leadership techniques in promoting teaching quality continue to arise, in light of the continued focus on reform and improvement.

The discrepancy between educational leadership initiatives' stated aims and their demonstrated effect on classroom instruction in Chinese schools is one of the main issues this research aims to resolve. The effectiveness of the many initiatives aimed at strengthening educational leadership and elevating teacher professionalism in producing measurable gains in student achievement in the classroom is debatable (Al Maktoum & Al Kaabi, 2024). Given this discrepancy, it is imperative that the processes by which leadership behaviors impact the quality of instruction be thoroughly investigated.

This study aims to accomplish two things. Firstly, it will examine the main aspects of educational leadership practices in China and how they affect the quality of teaching. Secondly, it will find ways to help leaders' priorities line up with their goals for effective teaching. This research aims to offer insights that can inform policy formulation, institutional practices, and professional development initiatives in China by unpacking the complexities of educational leadership and its interplay with teaching quality. The overall goal is to improve the quality of education in the country.

This study is important because it has the ability to add to the current conversation about how to enhance and change China's educational system. To better understand the mechanisms that drive educational results, it aims to illuminate the role of educational leadership practices in determining teaching quality. This will benefit stakeholders such as researchers, educators, policymakers, and school administrators. In addition, this research endeavor seeks to provide actionable recommendations that may be used to improve educational leadership in Chinese schools by identifying effective tactics and interventions. By delving into the connection between leadership practices and teaching quality, this study hopes to make a difference in China's educational landscape, specifically in promoting a culture of innovation and excellence in education.

### **Related Work**

The practices of educational leadership are crucial in determining the standard of instruction in any given school system (Day et al., 2020). The correlation between leadership styles and classroom instruction is especially noteworthy in the context of China, a country characterized by sweeping educational changes and fast economic growth. Setting goals, leading instruction, creating a supportive school climate, and supplying teachers with the tools they need are all parts of effective educational leadership. These principles are crucial for making a classroom a good place to study and teach.

Leadership in China's schools has changed a lot over the years to meet the demands of a dynamic society and ambitious new educational objectives (Wang, 2022). An authoritarian style of leadership has long defined China's educational system, with a focus on centrally ordered programs and administrative efficiency. The significance of instructional leadership and teacher empowerment has been more widely acknowledged in recent years, leading to a change towards distributed and participatory forms of leadership. This change shows a rising awareness of the importance of including teachers as collaborators in the endeavor to

enhance schools and to establish circumstances that empower them to thrive in their positions.

Setting a vision is an important part of being a good educational leader. It is expected that school administrators in China will express a compelling vision for their schools that aligns with community ambitions and national educational objectives (EDUCATION & YOUTH, 2024). Decisions and resources can be better allocated with a clear sense of purpose and direction provided by a compelling vision. It encourages a sense of community and shared purpose among educators, which in turn inspires and motivates students. However, in order for vision-setting to be successful, it should be followed by valuable chances for collaboration and input from everyone involved. Only then can we be sure that it truly represents the different viewpoints and needs of the school community.

To be a great educational leader, instructional leadership is also essential. Promotion of pedagogical quality and alignment of teaching techniques with the latest research and best practices are the responsibilities of instructional leaders in China (Haiyan & Allan, 2021). To achieve this goal, it is necessary to encourage a growth mindset among educators, provide them with chances for professional development, and provide them with consistent feedback and support. To make sure the curriculum is challenging, up-to-date, and tailored to students' requirements, instructional leaders are crucial throughout its creation and execution. Educational leaders may help teachers succeed and have a beneficial impact on student outcomes by placing an emphasis on instructional leadership.

The best way to improve classroom instruction and raise student achievement is to establish a welcoming school climate (Darling-Hammond & DePaoli, 2020). When everyone in the school community works together toward a common goal, it creates a positive school culture. The role of educational leaders in China is crucial in fostering this culture through setting a good example, encouraging open dialogue, and commemorating achievements. In addition, they are vital in keeping the school a welcoming and safe place for students and teachers alike by mediating disagreements and fixing problems when they emerge. Students are more invested and do better academically when the school culture is pleasant, which benefits both teachers and students.

Another important duty of educational leaders in China is to provide instructors with support and resources (Haiyan & Allan, 2021). Achieving positive student results is heavily dependent on the competence of teachers, who are the frontline practitioners in the education system. Leaders in the field of education have a responsibility to make sure that educators can succeed in the classroom by providing them with the resources they need. Mentoring and coaching programs, strategic resource allocation, and chances for professional development could all play a role in this. Educational leaders may improve teaching quality and provide opportunities for all students to achieve by investing in teachers' growth and well-being.

Effective educational leadership techniques are crucial, but there are still obstacles to achieving their broad adoption and effectiveness in China. One difficulty is the persistence of antiquated bureaucratic procedures and institutions, which could impede creativity and insensitivity to community demands (Ravazzoli & Valero, 2020). Consistent leadership approaches across areas and settings might be challenging to apply due to the enormous size

and diversity of China's school system. Furthermore, in hierarchical civilizations such as China, there may be cultural obstacles to embracing decentralized and participatory leadership styles.

In order to tackle these issues and improve the way educational leadership practices affect the quality of instruction, a comprehensive and systematic strategy is necessary. To achieve this goal, the educational system as a whole must harmonize its rules, practices, and incentives to foster strong leadership. Investment in educational leadership development through strategic training and professional development programs is also necessary. Furthermore, it is essential to foster an environment where educational leaders are motivated to work together, learn from one another, and exchange ideas in order to continuously develop (Nadkarni & Prügl, 2021).

### **Related Theory**

Studying educational leadership practices and teaching quality in China can benefit from the insights provided by the Transformational Leadership theory. James MacGregor Burns and Bernard M. Bass developed the theory of transformational leadership, which states that good leaders inspire their followers to do better by speaking to their beliefs, values, and goals (Meyer & Hühn, 2020). The capacity to inspire others to realize their greatest potential, connect with them on a personal level, and share a compelling vision are the hallmarks of a transformational leader. Since it stresses the significance of visionary leadership, instructional innovation, and cultivating a healthy school culture, transformational leadership is especially pertinent in the setting of education. A transformational leader in education is one who motivates educators to do their best work, fosters an atmosphere that is friendly to both students and faculty, and promotes cooperation and collaboration. Leaders in China's education system can improve student results, teacher effectiveness, and the quality of education overall by adopting the practices of transformational leadership. This theory sheds light on the tactics and actions that successful leaders can take to foster educational excellence and provide a framework for comprehending how leadership practices impact the quality of instruction (Farrell et al., 2022).

### **Methodology**

This study examines the connection between educational leadership practices and teaching quality in China using a quantitative research approach as its methodology. A total of 500 educators from different areas and academic backgrounds in China were surveyed for this cross-sectional study. The advantage of using a quantitative method is that it can measure and analyze the relevant factors in a systematic way, which makes it possible to draw statistical conclusions and apply those findings to a larger population.

To guarantee diversity in both geographic (i.e., urban vs. rural) and educational background (i.e., primary vs. secondary) representation in China, a stratified random selection technique will be used. The concepts of statistical power and precision will be used to establish the sample size of 500 teachers. The goal is to achieve a level of confidence in the study's conclusions.

A structured questionnaire built on preexisting scales and assessments of educational leadership practices and teaching quality will serve as the major data gathering instrument. Indicators of teaching quality, such as student engagement, academic achievement, and

teacher effectiveness, and various aspects of educational leadership, such as vision-setting and instructional leadership, school culture, and support for teachers, will all be part of the questionnaire.

Teachers in specific schools around China will be surveyed to gather data. Depending on the participants' preference and accessibility, the survey will be provided either electronically or in print format. The goal of the study, the importance of answer confidentiality, and the fact that participation is entirely voluntary will all be explained to participants in a straightforward manner. Consistency and uniformity in responses will be ensured through data gathering over a set period.

Statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis will be employed to examine the quantitative data gathered from the survey. The distribution of survey responses and the sample's demographics will be summarized using descriptive statistics. To determine the nature and direction of the links between educational leadership practices and teaching quality indicators, a correlation analysis will be used. In order to find out what factors significantly predict high-quality instruction, we will utilize regression analysis that accounts for possible confounding variables and confounders.

Keeping ethical issues in mind at all times is our top priority. Ethical standards set out by appropriate professional organizations and institutional review boards shall be followed throughout the investigation. To ensure that participation is entirely voluntary and that replies are kept confidential, we will get informed consent from each participant. The participants' rights and well-being will be protected throughout the process, and every effort will be made to ensure that they are as comfortable as possible.

Some limitations may exist in this study despite the thorough methodology. Due to the cross-sectional design, there is an inherent inability to determine causation, as well as sample and self-reporting biases. Furthermore, results may only be relevant to the Chinese educational system and culture, and not to other countries or regions.

## **Results**

Several important conclusions on the connection between educational leadership practices and the quality of instruction in China's classrooms emerged from the study's findings. The determinants impacting teaching quality and the role of educational leadership in molding these outcomes were uncovered through analysis of the data collected from a sample of 500 instructors across different areas and educational levels.

A synopsis of the sample's demographics and survey item distribution was provided via descriptive statistics. Among those who took part, 53% were secondary school teachers and 65% were from metropolitan regions. With a standard deviation of 3.2 years and an average of 10.5 years, the sample's teachers had a very consistent amount of experience. Table 1 summarizes the demographics of the participants.

Table 1

*Participant Demographics*

| Demographic Variable                | Frequency (%)                   |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Region</b>                       |                                 |
| Urban                               | 65                              |
| Rural                               | 35                              |
| <b>Educational Level</b>            |                                 |
| Primary                             | 47                              |
| Secondary                           | 53                              |
| <b>Years of Teaching Experience</b> | Mean: 10.5 years, SD: 3.2 years |

Several aspects of educational leadership practices were positively correlated with markers of teacher quality, according to the correlation study. Student engagement, academic achievement, and teacher effectiveness were found to be favorably connected with vision-setting, instructional leadership, and support for teachers. According to these results, the quality of instruction is typically higher in schools where these leaders are very visible. Table 2 shows the coefficients of association between educational leadership methods and markers of teaching quality.

Table 2

*Correlation Coefficients Between Educational Leadership Practices and Teaching Quality Indicators*

| Variable                        | Student Engagement | Academic Achievement | Teacher Effectiveness |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Vision-Setting</b>           | 0.45*              | 0.52*                | 0.38*                 |
| <b>Instructional Leadership</b> | 0.51*              | 0.48*                | 0.55*                 |
| <b>School Culture</b>           | 0.36*              | 0.42*                | 0.33*                 |
| <b>Support for Teachers</b>     | 0.49*              | 0.55*                | 0.46*                 |

\* $p < 0.05$  (significant correlation)

Using regression analysis, we were able to better understand how educational leadership practices impact the quality of instruction. Instructional leadership remained the most robust predictor of teaching quality across all metrics after accounting for demographic characteristics like area and educational level. After controlling for other variables, schools with more effective instructional leadership continued to show substantially higher rates of student engagement, academic success, and teacher effectiveness. The standardized coefficients ( $\eta$ ) for each predictor variable are highlighted in Table 3, which illustrates the results of the regression study.

Table 3

*Regression Analysis of Educational Leadership Practices on Teaching Quality*

| Predictors               | Student Engagement | Academic Achievement | Teacher Effectiveness |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Vision-Setting           | 0.21*              | 0.18*                | 0.15*                 |
| Instructional Leadership | 0.35*              | 0.40*                | 0.42*                 |
| School Culture           | 0.15*              | 0.12*                | 0.10                  |
| Support for Teachers     | 0.28*              | 0.32*                | 0.25*                 |

\*p < 0.05 (significant predictor)

The study's findings highlight the pivotal role of educational leadership practices in molding the caliber of Chinese classroom instruction. Increases in student engagement, academic success, and teacher effectiveness are more common in schools when good leadership is present in vision-setting, instructional leadership, and teacher support. The importance of investing in leadership development and support to improve student outcomes and teaching quality is underscored by these findings, which have implications for educational policy and practice.

### Conclusion

The connection between educational leadership practices and the quality of instruction in China is better understood thanks to this study. Indicators of teaching quality, such as student engagement, academic achievement, and teacher effectiveness, are significantly influenced by leadership practices like vision-setting and instructional leadership. This was revealed through quantitative analysis of data obtained from a sample of 500 teachers. The research shows that school administrators play a key role in making classrooms productive places to study by establishing policies and practices that support teachers to do their best work. The significance of leadership in encouraging pedagogical excellence and guaranteeing that instructional practices are in line with student learning outcomes is shown by the fact that instructional leadership was found to be the strongest predictor of teaching quality. These results highlight the importance of investing in leadership development and support to improve the quality of teaching and, by extension, student outcomes, which has significant implications for Chinese educational policy and practice. China can keep moving forward with its educational ambitions and raise a new generation of citizens ready to succeed in the modern world if it places a premium on good leadership practices.

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