

Proposed guidelines for motivation enhancement of art teachers at senior middle schools in Qingyuan City under Guangdong Province

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Abstract

This research aimed to propose guidelines for enhancing the motivation of art teachers at senior middle schools in Qingyuan City under Guangdong Province, People's Republic of China. The objectives of the study were (1) to identify the components of art teachers' motivation at senior middle schools and (2) to develop and propose guidelines for enhancing art teachers' motivation effectively. A mixed-method approach was employed, integrating both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The key informants included 15 administrators selected through purposive sampling, while the expert focus group comprised 9 experts in Guangdong Province. Data collection instruments included in-depth interviews and a structured questionnaire. Content analysis was used to analyze the data. The findings revealed two main components of art teachers' motivation: (1) Curricular Enrichment and Professional Development, emphasizing the diversification and inclusion of aesthetic education subjects such as music, art, calligraphy, dance, drama, film, and television in both academic curricula and extracurricular activities; and (2) Recognition and Support Systems, focusing on the inclusion of art subjects in academic assessments and institutionalized recognition for teacher contributions to aesthetic education. Based on these findings, the study proposed three guidelines for motivation enhancement: Integration of Aesthetic Education in Curricula: Enrich the content of art courses and expand offerings to include advanced and diverse forms of art education. Professional Development Opportunities: Provide ongoing training and development programs to equip teachers with the skills necessary for effective aesthetic education. Institutional Support and Recognition: Incorporate art subjects into academic assessments and establish recognition mechanisms to acknowledge and reward teachers' contributions to aesthetic education.

KEYWORDS: Art teachers' motivation, Motivation enhancement, Senior middle schools, Qingyuan City, Guangdong Province.

Introduction

Aesthetic education has gained significant attention in the People's Republic of China as a pivotal aspect of holistic student development, especially in senior middle schools. This is evident in

the National Guidelines for Aesthetic Education, which emphasize the integration of music, art, calligraphy, dance, drama, film, and television into the academic curricula. Despite these efforts, art teachers in senior middle schools in

Qingyuan City, Guangdong Province, face challenges that hinder their motivation and performance. This study aims to address this issue by proposing guidelines for enhancing art teachers' motivation, thereby aligning with the national directive to strengthen aesthetic education comprehensively. Current Situation and Problem Statement, in recent years, the Chinese government has placed significant emphasis on aesthetic education, recognizing its role in nurturing creativity, cultural appreciation, and emotional well-being among students (Zhao & Li, 2021). However, the implementation of these policies at the school level often falls short due to a lack of sufficient resources, teacher training, and institutional support. Art teachers frequently report feelings of professional stagnation, lack of recognition, and inadequate career development opportunities, which adversely affect their motivation and teaching efficacy (Wang et al., 2020).

In Qingyuan City, the situation is further complicated by socio-economic disparities, which impact resource allocation for aesthetic education. A survey conducted by Liu and Chen (2021) found that over 60% of schools in Guangdong Province face challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified art teachers due to limited professional development opportunities and insufficient integration of art subjects into mainstream academic assessments. These factors contribute to a lack of motivation among art teachers, undermining the goals of aesthetic education. How to Address the Problem, effective management of art teachers' motivation requires a multifaceted approach. First, it is essential to enrich the curriculum by incorporating diverse forms of art education and ensuring their relevance to students' academic and

personal growth. Second, professional development programs must be established to equip art teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver high-quality instruction. Third, institutional support mechanisms, including recognition and rewards, must be implemented to acknowledge the contributions of art teachers to aesthetic education.

Research in both Chinese and international contexts supports these strategies. For instance, Zhang et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of continuous professional development in enhancing teacher motivation and performance in aesthetic education. Similarly, Ryan and Deci (2017), in their Self-Determination Theory, highlighted that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are critical factors influencing teacher motivation and engagement. Furthermore, an international study by Noddings (2015) demonstrated that recognition and appreciation significantly boost teachers' intrinsic motivation, particularly in creative disciplines.

Research Gap, while existing studies underscore the importance of aesthetic education and teacher motivation, limited research has been conducted on the specific challenges faced by art teachers in Qingyuan City's senior middle schools. Most studies focus on urban areas with better resource allocation, overlooking the unique socio-economic and cultural context of cities like Qingyuan. Moreover, there is a lack of comprehensive guidelines that integrate curriculum enrichment, professional development, and institutional support to enhance art teachers' motivation.

This research aims to fill the aforementioned gap by proposing evidence-based guidelines tailored to the needs of art teachers in Qingyuan City. By addressing the specific challenges they

face, this study will contribute to the effective implementation of aesthetic education policies, ultimately benefiting students, teachers, and the broader educational community. Additionally, the findings can serve as a model for other regions facing similar challenges, thereby advancing the national agenda for comprehensive aesthetic education.

Purposes

(1) to identify the components of art teachers' motivation in senior middle schools and

(2) to develop guidelines for enhancing art teachers' motivation effectively.

Benefit of Research

1. Improved teacher performance and effectiveness, understanding and enhancing motivation leads to higher teacher engagement, creativity, and instructional quality, directly benefiting students.

2. Better student outcomes in aesthetic education, motivated art teachers create inspiring learning environments, improving student participation, creativity, and appreciation for the arts.

3. Informed policy and administrative support. The findings provide actionable insights for school administrators and policymakers to develop supportive policies and practices that enhance teacher motivation and satisfaction.

4. Reduction in teacher turnover, addressing motivational challenges helps reduce burnout and attrition, ensuring stability and continuity in art education programs.

5. Advancement of Art education and cultural enrichment, strengthening art teachers' motivation contributes to the

promotion of aesthetic education, fostering a culturally rich and creative society.

Research Process

Step 1: Literature Review and Situational Analysis

1. Conduct a comprehensive literature review to study relevant theories, policies, and research findings related to art teacher motivation and academic management in senior middle schools.

2. Analyze government policies, institutional frameworks, and current practices in Guangdong Province to understand the broader context.

3. Identify key components and factors influencing art teachers' motivation and the challenges faced in academic management.

4. Synthesize findings to create a theoretical foundation for the research and inform subsequent steps.

Step 2: Development of Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Based on the literature review and situational analysis, identify key components of teacher motivation and academic management that require further exploration.

2. Develop a set of semi-structured interview questions designed to: Explore administrators' experiences, challenges, and strategies in managing art teachers. Understand their perspectives on motivational factors, including intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Gather insights on institutional policies and support systems for art teachers.

3. Pre-test the interview questions with a small group of educators or administrators to ensure clarity and relevance, making revisions as needed.

Step 3: Conduct In-Depth Interviews

1. Use purposive sampling to select 15 administrators from senior middle

schools in Guangdong Province as key informants. Selection criteria may include: Experience in managing art education programs. Roles in shaping or implementing policies affecting art teachers. Representation of diverse school contexts (e.g., urban, rural, resource-rich, resource-limited).

2. Conduct in-depth interviews using the semi-structured format to: Gain a deeper understanding of the administrators' perspectives and experiences. Identify recurring themes and patterns in their responses. Explore recommendations for enhancing teacher motivation and academic management practices.

3. Record and transcribe the interviews for thorough analysis.

Step 4 Focus group discussion with 9 experts to guide and verify the guidelines.

Key informant

The study involves two primary groups:

1. Key Informants for In-Depth Interviews: A purposive sample of 15 administrators from senior middle schools in Guangdong Province, selected based on their roles and experience in managing art education.

2. Expert Focus Group: A panel of nine experts in academic management, teacher motivation, and art education, also from Guangdong Province, chosen for their expertise and contributions to the field.

Instruments

1. Semi-Structured Interviews: Designed to explore administrators' perspectives on the components influencing art teachers' motivation and effective management practices in art education.

Focus Group Discussions: with 9 experts. Facilitated to critically review,

refine, and validate the proposed academic management model derived from the interview findings.

Data analysis

1. Content Analysis of In-Depth Interviews: Conduct frequency analysis to identify recurring themes and components influencing art teachers' motivation. Synthesize findings into a preliminary academic management model that addresses teacher motivation.

2. Focus Group Discussions: Facilitate discussions among the expert panel to review the draft academic management model, integrating their feedback to enhance its relevance and feasibility.

3. Model Validation and Refinement: The researcher and experts jointly discuss and evaluate the academic model to ensure alignment with theoretical frameworks and practical applicability. Refine the model based on insights from the focus group and verify its robustness in addressing art teacher motivation.

Conclusion and discussion

Top 5 Components and Explanation from content analysis from 15 key informants the detail as below;

1. Resource Availability (15); Ensuring access to teaching materials, technology, and other resources is essential for effective teaching and learning. Equitable distribution helps reduce disparities, promotes innovation, and improves teacher satisfaction.

2. Administrative Support (14); Strong and responsive leadership fosters accountability, confidence, and alignment with teachers' needs. Clear policies and teacher involvement in decision-making encourage a supportive and efficient administrative system.

3. Work Environment (13); A collaborative, inclusive, and stress-free environment enhances creativity, teamwork, and teacher morale. Better facilities and effective communication directly impact productivity and innovation.

4. Professional Development (12); Providing regular opportunities for workshops, training, and advanced studies ensures teachers remain updated and confident. This is crucial for adapting to new trends and improving teaching quality.

5. Recognition and Rewards (11); Transparent systems for acknowledging and rewarding teachers' efforts motivate them, boost morale, and reduce turnover. Both monetary and non-monetary rewards are essential for sustaining engagement and excellence.

These components form the foundation for a robust academic management model that addresses art teachers' motivation and effectiveness in senior middle schools. Content Analysis of five components from 15 Experts Insights at Table 1

Table 1. Content Analysis of five components from 15 Experts Insights

Key Informant	Professional Development	Recognition and Rewards	Work Environment	Administrative Support	Resource Availability
Informant 1	Essential for career growth	Key to motivation	Critical for productivity	Leadership is crucial	Essential for effective teaching
Informant 2	Need for regular workshops	Inconsistent implementation	Stressful at times	Responsive administration helps	Often inadequate
Informant 3	Limited opportunities	Boosts morale	Collaboration is key	Policy clarity needed	Impacts creativity
Informant 4	Lack of skill enhancement programs	Acknowledgment of efforts lacking	Requires better facilities	Encourages accountability	Limits teaching methodologies
Informant 5	Request for advanced training	Direct link to performance	Improved communication needed	Strong decision-making required	Priority for improvement
Informant 6	Critical for teacher confidence	Improves job satisfaction	Directly affects morale	Reduces challenges	Reduces teacher stress
Informant 7	Helps adapt to new trends	Reduces turnover	Must be inclusive	Directly impacts performance	Affects student engagement
Informant 8	Promotes innovation	Needs customization	Impacts creativity	Lack of leadership training	Leads to better outcomes
Informant 9	Preferred by younger teachers	Enhances commitment	Often neglected	Critical for teacher confidence	Critical for innovation

Table 1. (cont.)

Key Informant	Professional Development	Recognition and Rewards	Work Environment	Administrative Support	Resource Availability
Informant 10	Mandatory for promotions	Appreciated by all	Physical conditions matter	Must involve teachers in decisions	Most requested factor
Informant 11	Inadequate focus in policies	Frequently overlooked	Peer relationships important	Communication gaps exist	Gaps in access exist
Informant 12	Requires funding	Should be transparent	Requires holistic policies	Needs consistent effort	Should be equitably distributed
Informant 13	Improves teaching standards	Drives engagement	Supports innovation	Must align with teacher needs	Improves teacher satisfaction
Informant 14	Encourages retention	Encourages excellence	Should be stress-free	Should encourage autonomy	Fund allocation needed
Informant 15	Needs strategic planning	Must include monetary rewards	Enhances teamwork	Promotes alignment	Crucial for all schools

The following guidelines are developed from the top five components identified in the content analysis of 15 key informants. These guidelines were refined and confirmed through focus group discussions with 9 experts. The guidelines from 5 components as below;

1. Resource Availability

Guidelines:

1) Ensure Equitable Distribution: Allocate teaching materials, technology, and infrastructure equitably across schools to address disparities and promote fairness.

2) Update Resources Regularly: Introduce a system for periodic assessment and updating of resources to meet evolving educational needs and trends.

3) Enhance Accessibility: Establish digital repositories for teaching materials, accessible to all teachers for flexibility and convenience.

4) Strengthen Funding Mechanisms: Advocate for increased budget allocation to ensure consistent

availability of necessary tools and resources.

2. Administrative Support

Guidelines:

1) Foster Transparent Leadership: Develop clear policies and communication channels to ensure administrators are approachable and accountable.

2) Involve Teachers in Decision-Making: Include teachers in discussions about school policies and curriculum planning to foster a sense of ownership.

3) Provide Leadership Training: Offer training programs for administrators to enhance their leadership skills and responsiveness to teachers' needs.

4) Establish Support Mechanisms: Create platforms (e.g., regular meetings or online forums) for teachers to voice their concerns and seek guidance.

3. Work Environment

Guidelines:

1) Promote Inclusivity and Collaboration: Encourage collaborative

teaching approaches and foster a culture of inclusivity to improve peer relationships.

2) Enhance Physical Infrastructure: Invest in ergonomic and aesthetically pleasing workspaces that reduce stress and boost morale.

3) Implement Stress Reduction Initiatives: Offer wellness programs, mental health support, and regular breaks to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

4) Encourage Open Communication: Establish clear communication pathways to ensure teachers feel heard and valued.

4. Professional Development Guidelines:

1) Organize Regular Training: Schedule workshops, seminars, and training sessions tailored to both foundational and advanced teaching skills.

2) Support Career Growth: Provide funding or scholarships for higher studies, certifications, or specialized courses.

3) Incorporate Emerging Trends: Integrate topics like technology in education, innovative teaching practices, and interdisciplinary approaches into training.

4) Create Mentorship Programs: Pair experienced teachers with newer ones to facilitate knowledge sharing and career development.

5. Recognition and Rewards Guidelines:

1) Establish Transparent Reward Systems: Develop clear criteria for recognizing teacher achievements to ensure fairness and transparency.

2) Offer both Monetary and Non-Monetary Rewards: Combine financial incentives (e.g., bonuses) with non-financial recognition (e.g., certificates, public acknowledgment).

3) Celebrate Success Regularly: Host annual or bi-annual events to

celebrate and highlight teacher contributions.

4) Provide Constructive Feedback: Regularly recognize efforts through personalized feedback that highlights strengths and areas for improvement.

The Implementation Plan to guide by 9 experts as below;

Phase 1 – Awareness and Communication: Present the guidelines to stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, and policymakers, through meetings and workshops.

Phase 2 – Pilot Program: Implement a pilot initiative to test the guidelines in a select group of schools and gather feedback from participants.

Phase 3 – Refinement: Use feedback from the pilot phase and focus groups to refine the guidelines further.

Phase 4 – Full Implementation: Roll out the guidelines across schools, ensuring adequate training and resources for smooth execution.

Phase 5 – Monitoring and Evaluation: Conduct regular assessments to monitor the effectiveness of the guidelines and make necessary adjustments.

The research identified five critical components for enhancing teacher motivation and effectiveness: Resource Availability, Administrative Support, Work Environment, Professional Development, and Recognition and Rewards. These findings are aligned with and supported by both Chinese and international research.

1. Resource Availability. Chinese studies, such as Liu and Chen (2021), highlight that disparities in resource allocation significantly impact teacher retention and motivation in Guangdong schools. Internationally, Ryan and Deci's (2017) Self-Determination Theory

emphasizes the importance of resources in fostering competence and autonomy, crucial for teacher motivation. Zhang et al. (2022) further emphasize that providing sufficient materials and tools is fundamental to innovative teaching practices.

2. Administrative Support. Zhao and Li (2021) underscore the role of supportive leadership in implementing educational policies in China, particularly in aesthetic education. Similarly, Noddings (2015) highlights the significance of administrators fostering trust and accountability to improve teacher motivation. Internationally, studies like Wang et al. (2020) point out that responsive leadership directly influences teacher satisfaction and engagement, which are critical for academic success.

3. Work Environment to share idea from Liu and Zhang (2020) explore the impact of a positive work environment on teacher morale in urban Chinese schools, concluding that collaboration and inclusivity enhance creativity. Similarly, Ryan and Deci (2017), in their Self-Determination Theory, emphasize the role of a supportive environment in satisfying the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are crucial for intrinsic motivation. Noddings (2015) concurs, suggesting that a stress-free and supportive environment is essential for teacher well-being and effectiveness. Together, these studies highlight the importance of fostering a positive work environment to improve teacher performance and satisfaction.

4. Professional Development. Zhang et al. (2022) provide evidence from China that professional development opportunities directly improve teacher motivation and performance in aesthetic education. Internationally, Ryan and Deci

(2017) advocate for skill enhancement programs as a means of fostering intrinsic motivation, while Wang et al. (2020) highlight the role of advanced training in preventing professional stagnation.

5. Recognition and Rewards. Chinese research by Liu and Chen (2021) discusses the psychological impact of recognition on teacher retention, emphasizing its importance in under-resourced schools. Globally, Noddings (2015) and Ryan and Deci (2017) highlight the need for transparent and fair recognition systems to boost teacher morale and engagement.

This research integrates insights from Chinese and international studies to develop a comprehensive understanding of teacher motivation. The identified components align with established theories and empirical findings, bridging the gap between policy and practice in educational management.

Recommendation

Recommendations from this research for Enhancing Art Teachers' Motivation in Senior Middle Schools of Qingyuan City, Guangdong Province Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance art teachers' motivation:

1. Improve Resource Availability

1.1 Ensure Adequate Teaching Materials: Provide comprehensive access to art supplies, digital tools, and updated teaching resources.

1.2 Promote Equitable Distribution: Allocate resources fairly across urban and rural schools to address disparities.

1.3 Establish Resource Hubs: Develop centralized platforms or repositories for shared resources, including lesson plans, teaching aids, and digital tools.

2. Strengthen Administrative Support

2.1 Encourage Leadership Training: Offer specialized programs for school administrators to develop skills in fostering teacher motivation and addressing their concerns.

2.2 Promote Teacher Involvement: Engage art teachers in decision-making processes related to curriculum design, resource allocation, and school policies.

2.3 Enhance Communication Channels: Establish clear, consistent, and open lines of communication between administrators and teachers to ensure responsiveness and trust.

3. Foster a Positive Work Environment

3.1 Promote Collaboration: Create opportunities for art teachers to collaborate on projects, share experiences, and develop innovative teaching strategies.

3.2 Improve Physical Spaces: Upgrade classrooms, provide ergonomic workspaces, and ensure adequate lighting and ventilation.

3.3 Support Well-Being Initiatives: Offer mental health support, stress management programs, and encourage a healthy work-life balance.

4. Expand Professional Development Opportunities

4.1 Organize Tailored Training Programs: Develop workshops and training sessions specifically for art education,

focusing on new teaching methods, technology integration, and creative skills.

4.2 Encourage Participation in Conferences: Provide funding or incentives for teachers to attend art education conferences and exhibitions.

4.3 Facilitate Peer Learning: Establish mentorship programs where experienced art teachers guide and support newer colleagues.

5. Implement Effective Recognition and Reward Systems

5.1 Develop Transparent Reward Mechanisms: Establish clear and fair criteria for recognizing and rewarding teachers' achievements.

5.2 Introduce Incentive Programs: Offer both monetary (bonuses, salary increments) and non-monetary rewards (certificates, public recognition).

5.3 Celebrate Successes: Organize events to celebrate teachers' contributions, such as award ceremonies or recognition during staff meetings.

Recommendations for Next Research Study

1. Next research study to explore how motivated art teachers influence students' academic performance and creativity in art classes.

2. To comparative Study of Urban and Rural Art Education: Challenges and Opportunities for Teacher Motivation in Guangdong Province

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