

Development of a Training Program for Enhancing Instructor Academic Leadership in Private Universities of Henan Province, China

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Abstract

In response to the evolving landscape of higher education in China, this research critically examined the need for robust academic leadership development initiatives within Henan's private universities, focusing on equipping instructors with the necessary skills and competencies to navigate complex challenges and shape future directions. The research aimed to (1) explore the desirable instructor academic leadership; (2) assess the current level of instructor academic leadership; (3) determine to what degree, the instructor academic leadership is impacted by personal factors and organizational factors; (4) develop a training program for enhancing instructor academic leadership; (5) measure the effectiveness of the training program and compare the differences of the instructor academic leadership before and after they attended the designed training program. Based on the systematic literature review and preliminary interview, a questionnaire was developed to survey instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China. Totally 493 full-time instructors from four private universities in Henan province were selected by convenience sampling as the target sample. Based on these qualitative and quantitative analysis, a training model for enhancing the instructor academic leadership was designed, and a training program was implemented for four months. The research findings showed that: (1) instructor academic leadership mainly consisted of three parts: instructor academic leadership, personal factors, and organizational factors; (2) instructor academic leadership was at a moderate level in this research; (3) The instructor's personal factors and organizational factors had significant impact on the instructor academic leadership; (4) the training model was validated effective; (5) the instructor academic leadership after implementing the training program was

improved. The training program was also recommended to be implemented in other private universities.

Keywords: instructor academic leadership; personal factors; organizational factors; training program; instructors in private universities of Henan Province

Introduction

The theory of instructors' leadership originated from the educational reform movement in the 1980s in the United States. Its purpose was to stimulate instructors' sense of ownership and promote instructors' active participation in the leadership and development of educational reforms (Zhao, 2021). With the growing trend of globalization, the development of higher education in various countries was seeking new breakthroughs to promote the modernization of the country's higher education governance system and governance capabilities. Higher education institutions have to develop a strong academic leadership team that can participate in the process of change and transformation to effectively address the complex educational, social, political, and economic concerns of society (Gallos and Bolman, 2021). The research on instructors' leadership has been booming in the United States, Britain, Australia, Canada, and other European and American countries for more than four decades. In recent years, it has also been concerned by Chinese education experts and scholars. Sun (2009) explored the medieval origins of academic leadership, which introduced the concept of academic leadership to China for the first time. However, due to historical and practical reasons, instructor academic leadership was still in a state of relatively weakening and virtualization in China, especially in Chinese private universities (Pan & Hou, 2014; Zhao, 2021).

China's private higher education could be traced back to the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period (770 BC – 221 BC), among which the most prominent was the private school founded by Confucius. At the beginning of the founding of the People's Republic of China (1949–1978), all private colleges and universities were changed to public ones. It was not until the reform and opening up (1978–2004) that private education sprung up in China. In 2004, the State Council of the People's Republic of China promulgated the *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Promotion of Private Education* (LPRCPPE) (State Council of the PRC, 2021). Since then, private higher education in China had developed rapidly (Huang, 2019; Que, Wang & Wang, 2019), and private universities in Henan Province also developed rapidly and achieved remarkable

results. Nevertheless, there were still many difficulties in the development of private institutions of higher learning, such as weak capacity of instructors, the insufficient space for instructors' development, and the unstable teaching stuff, which lead to the obvious lack of competitiveness compared with public institutions (Zhang, 2020). Therefore, it is quite urgent to provide private university instructors with learning opportunities to improve their comprehensive ability. As one of the core qualities of instructors, instructor academic leadership played an important role in the professional development of instructors and the improvement of education quality (Zhao, 2021). According to the official website of the Education Department of Henan Province (2022), there were many training sessions for undergraduate university instructors every year. However, trainings on instructor academic leadership could be barely found. Thus, those presently observed in instructor academic leadership was reaching a critical stage, and there was a pressing need for a systematic and professional academic leadership training for instructors in private universities in Henan Province. According to the *2021 Statistical Bulletin on the Development of Education in Henan Province* (The Education Department of Henan Province, 2022), there were 56 undergraduate-level general universities in Henan Province, of which 19 were private undergraduate universities. Among these private undergraduate universities, the Huanghe Science and Technology University, Zhengzhou Shengda University, Sias University, and Zhengzhou Technology and Business University were similar in terms of university running scale and the number of full-time instructors (The Education Department of Henan Province, 2020). They came out in front of the private universities at the undergraduate level in Henan Province. This research was also carried out with these universities as pilot. To promote the development of private higher education in Henan Province, it is necessary to conduct comprehensive and systematic training on instructor academic leadership in private universities in Henan Province. This study aimed to develop a model to enhance the instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China.

Academic leadership is one of the major factors that can address the challenges of 21st century and subsequently enhance the quality of higher education. The aim of this research was to firstly explore the desirable instructor academic leadership and assess the current level of instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan province, then determine to what the degree the instructor academic leadership are impacted by personal factors and organizational factors, and finally develop a training program for enhancing instructor academic leadership and measure the effectiveness of the training program and compare the differences of the instructor

academic leadership before and after they attended the designed training program. A questionnaire was developed to assess the instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province based on a systemic literature review and preliminary interviews. A convenience sampling method was employed to choose a total of 493 full-time instructors from four private universities in Henan province as the sample for this research. Following both qualitative and quantitative analysis, a training model was developed to enhance the instructor academic leadership. Subsequently, a training program was executed over a period of four months, from July to November 2023.

Based on the previous studies, this research explored instructor academic leadership that contributed to the improvement in private universities of Henan province by analyzing the personal factors and organizational factors that impacted instructor academic leadership. Improving instructor academic leadership could assist private universities in Henan Province build a professional instructor team with strong academic skills and academic soft power. Besides, it will not only help instructors enhance their strengths and careers, but also boost learning effectiveness, establish a pleasant academic atmosphere, and guide students to a wider academic path. What's more, it is hoped that the research will also have reference value for researchers engaged in the improvement of academic leadership in private universities in the future.

Research Objectives

According to the above research statement, this research proposed the following five research objectives:

1. To explore the desirable instructor academic leadership for the higher education institution.
2. To assess the current level of instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China.
3. To determine to what the degree, the instructor academic leadership are impacted by personal factors and organizational factors in private universities of Henan Province, China.
4. To develop a training program for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China.
5. To measure the effectiveness of a training program and compare the differences of the instructor academic leadership before and after they attended the designed training program in one private university.

Literature Review

Definition of Academic Leadership

Academic leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the success of educational institutions. Leadership had always been regarded as one of the most desirable qualities in human culture (Akhter & Haque, 2012). Rost (1993) gave his definition that leadership was an influence relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real changes that represent their shared goals. Yukl (2013) put forward that leadership was a process that affected an organization team's efforts towards common goals. He also mentioned that leadership could be articulated as traits, behaviors, influence, interaction patterns, role relationships, and occupation of an administrative position.

Education was crucial for society's future, and we played a crucial role as capable educational administrators in that future (Dale, 2011). Buchen (2000) argued that the only leadership that would make a difference was that of teachers. Gaither (2002) put forward that the placement of competent academic leaders in key positions in higher education institutions is critical to their continued success. When defining the connotation of academic leadership, some western scholars focused on the process of social influence to achieve common academic goals. Academic leadership was described by Ramsden (1998) as a real and regular practice of assisting, supervising, encouraging, and developing academic colleagues. He believed that "academically inclined" people shared the values of academics and were good academic leaders. Middlehurst (1999) believed that academic leadership could be regarded as a process of social influence, guiding academic peers and academic teams to achieve specific research goals. The reason why academic leaders exerted influence on academic peers and academic team members was mainly due to the leader's personality traits, academic identity, situational factors and so on.

Major Theories on Instructor Academic Leadership

As early as 1962, American scholar Frederick Rudolph discussed the issue of American university instructors with the title of "academic man", which was an earlier academic discussion on the professional nature of university instructors. Starting from the system of higher education, Clark (1983) analyzed the academic occupation and academic profession of university instructors and used the analytical method of organizational behavior to systematically explain university instructors as a social division of labor, with the dual attributes of academic occupation and academic profession. The international education community generally agreed that the quality of instructor academic leadership was a key factor in determining university effectiveness and

students' academic performance (Gaither, 2002; Zhang, 2008; Pan & Hou, 2014). Berg and Zoellick (2019) supposed four key dimensions of Teacher Leadership as source of legitimacy, the support to accomplish the work, the objective of teachers' influence, and the method of influence. Akuegwu and Nwi-ue (2017) defined academic leadership as the capacity to create innovative ideas and new academic directions, as well as the ability to inspire others by serving as an example, being self-aware and reflective, being decisive and visionary, and planning and managing finances.

Academic leadership aims to advance academic excellence. According to Joyce and O'Boyle (2013) academic leadership included the fundamental academic responsibilities of teaching/learning, research, and scholarship together with a larger emphasis on academic ideals and identity. Northouse (2019) put forward the behavioral model of leadership, in which two dimensions were postulated: organizational tasks and people related tasks. Before 2021, few systematic generalizations and summaries of academic leadership frameworks had been made (Niewiesk & Garrity-Rokous, 2021), so they developed an academic leadership framework for university instructors based on Northouse's model, including six parts: values and behaviors, developing people, decision making, goal setting, organization, and oversight.

The Challenges of Instructor Academic Leadership

Recent years have witnessed significant changes in higher education in response to the globalization, rapid economic development, the renewal of communication and IT, and the growing demand for better quality and higher levels of education and certificates (Rishi, 2016; Joyce & O'Boyle, 2013; Bolden et al., 2012). In addition to the core functions of research, teaching and service, universities now need to meet the demands of organizational, financial, student access, changing technology and society (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018; Ruben et al., 2017; Rishi 2016). There were also growing challenges for university leaders, including preserving the universities' reputation and winning public support, as well as addressing the complexities of financial, technological, ideological dilemmas, student management, etc. This role has gone far beyond academic and administrative roles (Ruben, De Lisi, & Gigliotti, 2017). Universities worldwide also face the intensity of global talent competition and society's increasing requirement for innovative students. (Zomer & Benneworth, 2011; Scott et al., 2008). For China, the rapid increase in demand for higher education, the shortage of resource supply and distribution, and the shortage of qualified instructors are all hot issues that need to be solved urgently (Min, 2015).

The rapid development of modern society has forced universities to deal with various challenges and pressures from all sides (Zhu & Zayim-Kurtay, 2018). However, many academic leaders still lack the required competencies and skills (Parrish, 2015), and they have limited practical experience and relatively weak academic leadership in academic roles and managerial responsibilities (Garwe, 2014). Therefore, a comprehensive and in-depth systematic training of academic leadership for university leaders is crucial (Zhu & Zayim-Kurtay, 2018; Jooste et al., 2018; Scott et al., 2008).

Instructor Academic Leadership

Instructor academic leadership has a decisive impact on improving the quality of education and creating an excellent learning environment (Radwan, Ghavifekr, & Abdul Razak, 2021; Scott et al., 2008). The academic leadership competence includes a broad range of skills, knowledge, and behaviors that enable instructors to effectively lead within their institutions, drive student success, and contribute to the growth and development of their academic disciplines (Niewiesk & Garrity-Rokous, 2021). Based on key findings from previous influential studies, academic leadership could be categorized into four dimensions: academic credibility, academic performance, academic collaboration, and professionalism (Niewiesk & Garrity-Rokous, 2021; Shahmandi et al., 2011).

Academic credibility reflected the degree to which an instructor was knowledgeable and trustworthy in his field (Zhu & Zayim-Kurtay, 2018). It could be divided into regular teaching (Pani, 2017), ethical standards (Bolden et al., 2012; Radwan et al., 2021), self-development (Hamidifar & Ebrahimi, 2016), and trust and respect (Pani, 2017; Dinh et al., 2020;). Academic performance was an important indicator of instructor academic leadership (Bolden et al., 2012), which including research conduct (Macfarlane, 2011), research publication (Scott et al., 2008), academic assistance (Uslu, 2020; Karadağ, 2017), and high evaluations (Niewiesk & Garrity-Rokous, 2021). Academic collaboration involved instructors engaging with peers, students, and stakeholders in academic activities aimed at advancing knowledge and institutional development (Zhu & Zayim-Kurtay, 2018), and it consisted of colleague interaction (Radwan et al., 2021), educational networks (Uslu, 2020), knowledge exchange (Zhu & Zayim-Kurtay, 2018), and constructive feedback (Scott et al., 2008). Professionalism was reflected in instructors following professional norms and expectations and committing to excellence in teaching, research, and service activities (Hamidifar & Ebrahimi, 2016; Bolden et al., 2012), which included pedagogical trends (Parker & Baporikar, 2013), student engagement (Uslu, 2020), performance

monitoring (Scott et al., 2008; Bolden et al., 2012), and goal achievement support (Dinh et al., 2020).

Personal Factors of Instructors

In Karadağ (2017)'s study, he put forward that the behaviors of academic leadership were affected by personal factors and organizational factors in higher education institution. Niewiesk and Garrity-Rokous (2021) further stated that to develop a generally applicable framework for academic leadership, we should focus on the Behavioral Model of Leadership (Northouse, 2019) which proposed two dimensions for academic leadership: organizational factors and personal factors. Previous literature review provided a foundation for understanding how instructors' personal factors contribute to academic leadership. Instructors' personal factors such as emotional competencies, cognitive capabilities, teamwork attitudes, self-directed leadership, and motivation were essential for effective academic leadership (Shahmandi et al., 2011; Akhter, 2012).

Research had shown that instructors with strong emotional competencies were more likely to create a positive learning environment, engage students, and exhibit effective leadership (Shahmandi et al., 2011), encompassing personal progress (Detsky, 2011; Dinh et al., 2020), commitment (Rishi, 2016; Bolden et al., 2012), relationship building (Cassie et al., 2007; Hamidifar & Ebrahimi, 2016), and work productivity (Karadağ, 2017). Effective academic instructors also possessed a range of cognitive capabilities (Scott et al., 2008; Radwan et al., 2021) which included problem-solving (Pani, 2017), opportunity evaluation (Bryman, 2007), resilience (Niewiesk & Garrity-Rokous, 2021; Radwan et al., 2021), and calm under pressure (Detsky, 2011). Academic instructors should possess strong teamwork attitudes to facilitate collaboration and cooperation among colleagues and other stakeholders (Zhu & Zayim-Kurtay, 2018; Shahmandi et al., 2011), and it possessed team decision-making (Dinh et al., 2020), team planning (Parker & Baporikar, 2013), team performance (Zhu & Zayim-Kurtay, 2018), and collaborative preference (Dinh et al., 2020; Rishi, 2016). Self-directed leadership was the ability of academic leaders to take responsibility for their actions, make informed decisions, and guide their teams towards desired outcomes (Shahmandi et al., 2011; Kouzes & Posner, 2007), and it involved self-assessment (Scott et al., 2008; Karadağ, 2017), organizational skills (Zhu & Zayim-Kurtay, 2018), foresight (Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Parker & Baporikar, 2013), and self-direction (Karadağ, 2017). Motivation played a crucial role in the success of academic leaders (Karadağ, 2017; Akhter & Haque, 2012), and its components were personal challenging goals (Zhu & Zayim-Kurtay, 2018),

results-oriented (Uslu, 2020), persistent effort (Pani, 2017), and learning from failures (Niewiesk & Garrity-Rokous, 2021).

Organizational Factors of Instructors

The primary goal of organizational behavior research was to understand the factors that influence individual and group performance, satisfaction, and motivation within the workplace (Yukl & Gardner, 2020). Over the past few decades, there has been a significant growth in research exploring various aspects of organizational behavior, such as motivation, leadership, decision-making, communication, and teamwork (Robbins & Judge, 2020). Over the past few decades, there has been a significant growth in research exploring various aspects of organizational behavior, such as motivation, leadership, decision-making, communication, and teamwork (Robbins & Judge, 2020). Based on the previous studies, organizational factors mainly included organizational culture, sustainability, setting direction, professional development, and decision making.

Research had shown that a strong, positive organizational culture could have a significant impact on instructor academic leadership, as it shaped their attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions (Hamidifar & Ebrahimi, 2016; Robbins and Judge, 2020), namely curriculum Design (Macfarlane, 2011; Rishi, 2016), stakeholder input (Yukl & Gardner, 2020), technology infrastructure (Hamidifar & Ebrahimi, 2016), and balanced workload (Karadağ, 2017). Research had indicated that instructors played a critical role in promoting sustainability within their organizations by adopting sustainable teaching practices, fostering environmental awareness, and engaging in research and service activities (Uslu, 2020; Yukl & Gardner, 2020), notably goal setting (Niewiesk & Garrity-Rokous, 2021), empowerment and delegation (Karadağ, 2017), funding and revenue generation (Zhu & Zayim-Kurtay, 2018), and quality assurance (Uslu, 2020). Setting direction was a critical aspect of academic leadership, as it involved establishing a clear vision, mission, and goals for an educational institution or program (Robbins & Judge, 2020; Hamidifar & Ebrahimi, 2016), specifically collaborative vision (Desky, 2011), strategic planning (Yukl & Gardner, 2020), institutional goal alignment (Shahmandi et al., 2011), and research encouragement (Macfarlane, 2011). Effective professional development programs could have a significant impact on instructor academic leadership by improving their teaching practices, enhancing their capacity to innovate, and increasing their ability to adapt to changes in the educational landscape (Karadağ, 2017), which include professional development opportunities (Uslu, 2020), financial support (Parker & Baporikar, 2013), technology support (Cassie et al., 2007), and leadership training (Pani, 2017).

Effective academic leaders possessed strong decision-making skills, which enabled them to make informed choices, allocate resources efficiently, and manage the risks and uncertainties associated with their decisions (Dinh et al., 2020), which referred to Data-driven decisions (Niewiesk & Garrity-Rokous, 2021), Inclusive decision-making (Bolden et al., 2012), Independent decisions (Rishi, 2016), and Ethical considerations (Bolden et al., 2012).

Preliminary Study on the Instructor Academic Leadership in Private Universities of Henan Province, China

Based on the systematic literature review above, the researcher implemented a preliminary interview with eight private university leaders and instructors in March to April 2023. They were all from private universities of Henan Province, China. The purpose of choosing these eight instructors and leaders from different private universities, each in a different position and with a different work experience, was to better understand their perspectives on academic leadership from a variety of angles, as well as their thoughts on the personal factors and organizational factors that affected academic leadership. The results of the survey were generally consistent with the findings of the literature review above, in that the instructors interviewed expressed a desire to receive training on enhancing instructor academic leadership to promote professional development, organizational culture and academic excellence.

Conceptual Framework

This research mainly aimed to improve the instructor academic leadership by exploring the personal factors and organizational factors that affect the instructor academic leadership based on the systemic literature review about instructor academic leadership, and thus developed a model for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan province, China.

The conceptual framework of this research was composed of three significant stages. Firstly, the researcher explored personal factors (including emotional competencies, cognitive capabilities, teamwork attitudes, self-directed leadership, and motivation) and organizational factors (including organizational culture, sustainability, setting direction, professional development, and empowerment for decision making) that affecting instructor academic leadership through systemic literature review. Meanwhile, preliminary interview with eight leaders and instructors from the four selected universities was also conducted to assist the investigation of the current instructor academic leadership practices in private universities in Henan Province. Secondly, a questionnaire of instructor academic leadership was developed by the researcher and validated by

six professional experts with PhD degree in educational fields. After that, it was distributed to target instructors from the four selected universities. Thirdly, the instructor academic leadership training model was developed, and then a training program was utilized at Zhengzhou Technology and Business University. The instructor academic leadership was compared before and after the training and analyzed to determine the proposed model's effectiveness. The conceptual framework is illustrated as follows (See Figure 1).

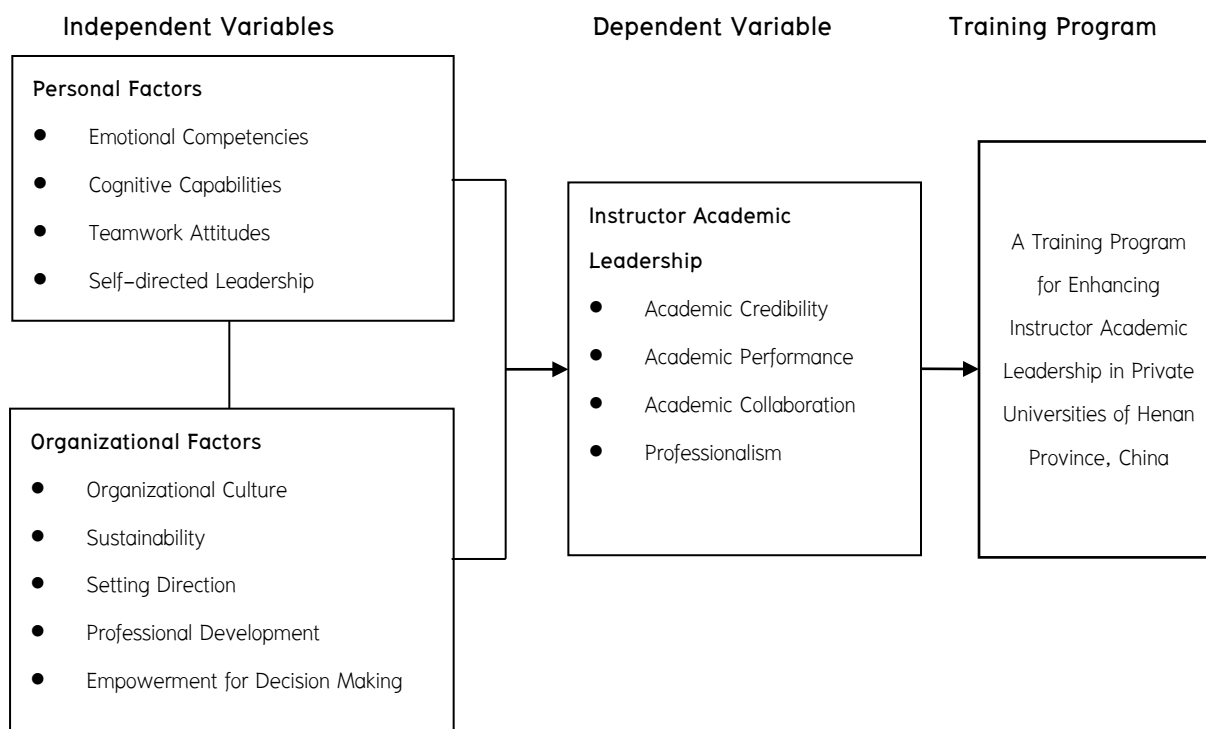


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

Population and Sample

The research was conducted in private universities in Henan Province, Middle China. Among them, four universities were selected as the target sample, and they were Huanghe Science and Technology University, Zhengzhou Shengda University, Zhengzhou SIAS University, and Zhengzhou Technology and Business University. These four universities were similar in terms of university running scale and the number of full-time instructors in Henan Province. Besides, they came out in front of the private universities at the undergraduate level in Henan Province (The Education Department of Henan Province, 2020, 2022). All the instructors in these four

universities were selected as the participants for this study. Meanwhile, the developed training program was conducted at Zhengzhou Technology and Business University.

The sampling method was convenience sampling, that was, all instructors in these four universities were directly studied until the number of samples meet the requirement. Totally 493 instructors participated in the survey successfully. Finally, 42 instructors at Zhengzhou Technology and Business University were selected to conduct paired t-test to measure the effects and compare the differences of the instructor academic leadership before and after they attended the designed training program.

Questionnaire Design

Based on a comprehensive systematic literature review and pre-liminary interview, this questionnaire was designed by the researcher and validated by the IOC experts, and that was *Questionnaire on Instructor academic leadership in Private Universities of Henan Province, China*. This questionnaire consisted of three parts: instructors' personal factors, instructors' organizational factors, and instructor academic leadership. and the details were shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Instructor Academic Leadership Scale

No.	Dimensions	Questions	Items
Part I Personal Factors of Instructors			
1	Emotional Competencies	1–4	4
2	Cognitive Capabilities	5–8	4
3	Teamwork Attitudes	9–12	4
4	Self-directed Leadership	13–16	4
5	Motivation	17–20	4
Part II Organizational Factors of Instructors			
1	Organizational Culture	21–24	4
2	Sustainability	25–28	4
3	Setting Direction	29–32	4
4	Professional Development	33–36	4
5	Empowerment for Decision Making	37–40	4
Part III Instructor academic leadership			
1	Academic Credibility	41–44	4
2	Academic Performance	45–48	4
3	Academic Collaboration	49–52	4
4	Professionalism	53–56	4
Total		56	

Data Collection Methods

The questionnaire was conducted electronically. Questionnaire link with an informed consent form were sent out to ten administrators or leaders in each target university, and the leaders helped to distribute the questionnaire link and the informed consent form to full-time instructors. Each instructor was invited to complete the questionnaire link individually in accordance with the instructions provided in the informed consent form, which also briefly outlined the questionnaire's goals, guiding principles, and procedures. The questionnaires were gathered automatically to the researcher. The instructors were asked to finish the completed questionnaire within 2 weeks. The researcher conducted follow-up questionnaire surveys through phone, email, or on-site visits for instructors who did not answer to the initial survey within the limited time provided. From July to November 2023, a total number of 537 questionnaires were successfully collected, and 493 questionnaires were valid, with a valid return rate of 91.81%.

Data Analysis

In this study, data was collected through questionnaires, and these data were processed by SPSS 26.0. The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative methods including systemic literature review, preliminary interview, frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, multiple regression, development and validation of the training model, paired t-test to analyze the related research objectives, and an interview was also conducted to assist the measurement.

Research Results

Objective 1. To explore the desirable instructor academic leadership for the higher education institution.

The researcher used systematic literature review, including journals, books, and online articles published in acceptable journals in recent 16 years, to explore the desirable instructor academic leadership for the higher education institution. What's more, the researcher also implemented a preliminary interview with eight leaders and instructors from different private universities in Henan province, to better understand their perspectives on instructor academic leadership from a variety of angles, as a supplement to the systematic literature review. Through the systematic literature review and preliminary interview, the research summarized three parts about the desirable instructor academic leadership components, and they were: instructor academic leadership, personal factors of instructors, and organizational factors of instructors. Research findings showed that instructor academic leadership could be categorized into four

dimensions: academic credibility, academic performance, academic collaboration, and professionalism; organizational factors of instructors could be divided into five dimensions: organizational culture, sustainability, setting direction, professional development, and empowerment for decision making; organizational factors of instructors could be divided into five dimensions: organizational culture, sustainability, setting direction, professional development, and empowerment for decision making. Table 2 showed the results of the systematic literature review and preliminary interview on instructor academic leadership.

Table 2 Systematic Literature Review and Preliminary Interview on Instructor Academic Leadership

Variables	Dimensions	Percentage
Instructor academic leadership (Dependent Variable)	Academic Credibility	26%
	Academic Performance	26%
	Academic Collaboration	25%
	Professionalism	23%
Personal Factors (Independent Variable-1)	Emotional Competencies	21%
	Cognitive Capabilities	19%
	Teamwork Attitudes	25%
	Self-Directed Leadership	17%
	Motivation	18%
Organizational Factors (Independent Variable-2)	Organizational Culture	19%
	Sustainability	21%
	Setting Direction	24%
	Professional Development	21%
	Empowerment for Decision Making	15%

Objective 2. To assess the current level of instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan province, China.

To collect the data for objective two, 537 questionnaires were distributed to four private universities of Henan province with the help of the administrators or leaders in each university, and 493 of them were valid. A descriptive statistical analysis of mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the current level of instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan province, including personal factors, organizational factors, and instructor academic leadership. Table 3 showed the current level of instructor academic leadership in the four private universities in Henan province.

Table 3 The Current Level of Instructor Academic Leadership at the Four Private Universities in Henan Province

No.	Dimensions	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1	Academic Credibility	3.45	0.706	Moderate
2	Academic Performance	3.41	0.769	Moderate
3	Academic Collaboration	3.50	0.780	Moderate
4	Professionalism	3.36	0.787	Moderate
Total		3.43	0.713	Moderate

As could be seen in Table 3, the overall mean score of the current level of instructor academic leadership was 3.43, which was at a moderate level, and all dimensions were also at moderate level. Among the four dimensions, the professionalism was relatively the lowest ($M=3.36$, $SD=0.787$), which should be paid more attention to when developing the training program for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China. After that were academic performance ($M=3.41$, $SD=0.706$) and academic credibility ($M=3.45$, $SD=0.769$). Even if academic collaboration was the highest, its mean score only reached 3.50, which still had space to improve.

Objective 3. To determine to what the degree the instructor academic leadership are impacted by personal factors and organizational factors in private universities of Henan Province, China.

For this objective, the correlation analysis was used to test the correlation of each dimension of personal factors and organizational factors of instructor academic leadership. After that, multiple regression analysis was used to determine to what the degree, the instructor academic leadership are impacted by personal factors and organizational factors in private universities of Henan Province.

H1: The instructor's personal factors and organizational factors have significant impact on the instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province.

Table 4 Correlation Analysis of Each Dimension of Instructor Academic Leadership and Personal Factors and Organizational Factors

	EC	CC	TA	SDL	M	OC	S	SD	PD	EDM	AC	AP	ACo	P
EC	-													
CC	.786**	-												
TA	.692**	.677**	-											
SDL	.593**	.762**	.658**	-										
M	.672**	.784**	.644**	.848**	-									
OC	.341**	.327**	.348**	.303**	.374**	-								
S	.345**	.371**	.359**	.279**	.356**	.748**	-							
SD	.365**	.255**	.307**	.362**	.370**	.701**	.621**	-						
PD	.273**	.359**	.316**	.266**	.373**	.672**	.628**	.829**	-					
EDM	.368**	.340**	.318**	.214**	.354**	.895**	.746**	.727**	.849**	-				
AC	.632**	.624**	.635**	.617**	.631**	.821**	.763**	.738**	.697**	.631**	-			
AP	.631**	.593**	.587**	.704**	.673**	.751**	.738**	.612**	.703**	.641**	.850**	-		
ACo	.626**	.633**	.597**	.609**	.607**	.703**	.739**	.762**	.818**	.746**	.811**	.836**	-	
P	.638**	.676**	.650**	.589**	.648**	.702**	.744**	.751**	.713**	.615**	.790**	.839**	.896**	-

a. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

b. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

c. List of acronyms and abbreviations:

Personal Factors:

EC=Emotional Competencies

CC=Cognitive Capabilities

TA=Teamwork Attitudes

SDL=Self-directed

Leadership

M=Motivation

Organizational Factors:

OC=Organizational Culture

S=Sustainability

SD=Setting Direction

PD=Professional Development

EDM=Empowerment for Decision

Making

Instructor Academic Leadership:

AC=Academic Credibility

AP=Academic Performance

ACo=Academic Collaboration

P=Professionalism

According to Table 4, both personal factors and organizational factors were significantly correlated with instructor academic leadership ($p < 0.05$). However, to some extent, the correlation between organizational factors and instructor academic leadership was slightly higher than the correlation between personal factors and instructor academic leadership, so the researcher should pay more attention to the organizational factors when developing the training program.

Besides, among personal factors, M and SDL had the highest correlation, followed by CC, and CC was the most correlated to EC, followed by TA. Among organizational factors, OC and EDM had the highest correlation, followed by S, and the highest correlation with PD was also EDM, followed by SD.

Table 5 Multiple Regression Analysis of the Personal Factors on Each Dimension of Instructor Academic Leadership

Personal Factors	IAL dimensions	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Sig. F Change	β	t	Sig
EC	Academic Credibility	.879 ^a	0.825	0.792	0.000**	0.137	1.973	0.018**
CC						0.342	3.228	0.000**
TA						0.125	2.210	0.012**
SDL						0.237	2.114	0.007**
M						0.253	2.396	0.004**
EC	Academic Performance	.824 ^a	0.796	0.762	0.000**	0.229	1.981	0.020**
CC						0.343	3.211	0.002**
TA						0.101	2.104	0.013**
SDL						0.543	4.645	0.000**
M						0.451	4.022	0.000**
EC	Academic Collaboration	.812 ^a	0.772	0.748	0.000**	0.257	1.971	0.012**
CC						0.331	2.218	0.010**
TA						0.157	1.809	0.022**
SDL						0.340	2.417	0.011**
M						0.342	2.503	0.007**
EC	Professionalism	.817 ^a	0.786	0.734	0.006**	0.409	3.482	0.001**
CC						0.519	4.784	0.000**
TA						0.380	3.079	0.003**
SDL						0.264	2.454	0.009**
M						0.245	2.326	0.020*

a. N=493 b. *p<0.05, **p<0.01

According to table 5, since the R² for the model of each dimension were over 75%, so the model fitted well and was highly interpretable. What's more, all β value of each dimension were all over zero and all p-value of the multiple regression coefficients were less than 0.05, so the personal factors had a significant impact on instructor academic leadership (four dimensions: academic credibility, academic performance, academic collaboration, and professionalism).

The β values of personal factors were ranked from highest to lowest: SDL ($\beta=0.543$), CC ($\beta=0.519$), M ($\beta=0.451$), EC ($\beta=0.409$), TA ($\beta=0.380$), and these factors were mainly distributed on the impacts on academic performance and professionalism, indicating that the

personal factors had intensive impact on the two dimensions of instructor academic leadership: academic performance and professionalism.

Table 6 Multiple Regression Analysis of the Organizational Factors on Each Dimension of Instructor Academic Leadership

Organizational Factors	IAL dimensions	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Sig. Change	F	β	t	Sig
OC	Academic	.818 ^a	0.765	0.749	0.000**	0.608	3.580	0.000**	
S	Credibility					0.573	3.152	0.006**	
SD						0.381	2.413	0.010**	
PD						0.260	1.989	0.019**	
EDM						0.267	1.990	0.020**	
OC	Academic	.860 ^a	0.785	0.753	0.000**	0.409	3.196	0.002**	
S	Performance					0.232	2.137	0.017**	
SD						0.268	1.961	0.018**	
PD						0.524	3.456	0.000**	
EDM						0.399	1.982	0.001**	
OC	Academic	.879 ^a	0.852	0.833	0.000**	0.236	2.155	0.007**	
S	Collaboration					0.045	2.161	0.002**	
SD						0.457	2.457	0.016**	
PD						0.638	3.140	0.000**	
EDM						0.414	2.354	0.009**	
OC	Professionalism	.891 ^a	0.868	0.850	0.000**	0.347	2.118	0.014**	
S						0.326	2.180	0.021**	
SD						0.136	2.589	0.017**	
PD						0.400	3.250	0.000**	
EDM						0.412	1.378	0.007**	

a. N=493 b.*p<0.05, **p<0.01

According to Table 6, the model fitted well and was highly interpretable because the R² for the model of each dimension were greater than 75%. Furthermore, all β value of each dimension were greater than zero and all p-value of the multiple regression coefficients were less than 0.05, indicating that organizational factors had a significant impact on instructor academic leadership (four dimensions: academic credibility, academic performance, academic collaboration, and professionalism).

The β values of organizational factors were ranked from highest to lowest: PD ($\beta=0.638$), OC ($\beta=0.608$), S ($\beta=0.573$), SD ($\beta=0.457$), EDM ($\beta=0.414$), and these factors were mainly distributed on the impacts on academic credibility and academic collaboration,

indicating that the organizational factors had intensive impact on the two dimensions of instructor academic leadership: academic credibility and academic collaboration.

Based on the findings of Table 4.16 to Table 4.20, the hypothesis 1 was validated true.

Objective 4. To develop a training program for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China.

Based on the research findings from objective one to objective three, the researcher proposed a training program for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China, according to the following steps:

(1) Based on the previous qualitative and quantitative analysis results, the researcher proposed a training model for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China.

(2) Eleven experts with doctoral degrees in education and intensive experiences in the field of education were invited to help review and validate the training program.

(3) Following the training model's refinement in response to experts' feedback, the researcher determined the training model for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China.

(4) An implementation of the training program was proposed based on the training model. Various of activities, like in-person workshops, online courses, or online/onsite seminars, conferences, were held in Zhengzhou Technology and Business University.

According to the precious comments from the experts, the researcher modified the training model as follows:

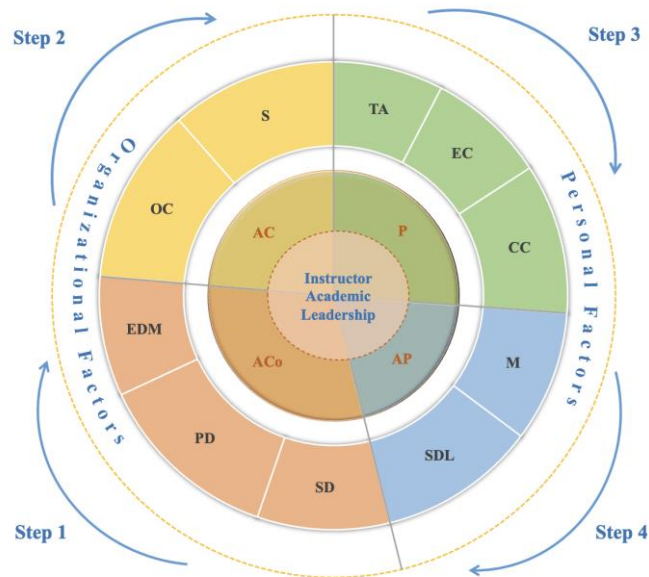


Figure 2 The training model for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China

Objective 5. To measure the effectiveness of a training program and compare the differences of the instructor academic leadership before and after they attended the designed training program in one private university.

For this objective, the researcher implemented the training program at School of Humanities and Law of Zhengzhou Technology and Business University. 42 instructors were invited to join this training program. With the help of head leaders, the researcher invited ten professional experts related to the training activities to do the presentation. After the training program, paired T-test was made to compare the differences of the instructor academic leadership before and after they attended the designed training program. What's more, interview was also taken to assist the test.

H2: There is significant difference between the instructor academic leadership before and after they attended the designed training program in one private university.

Table 7 Paired T-test on the Instructor Academic Leadership before and after the Training Program

		Mean	SD	Sig
Instructor Academic Leadership	Pre-testing	3.34	0.463	0.000***
	Post-testing	3.72	0.442	

N=42, *** $p < 0.005$

Table 7 showed that the mean of instructor academic leadership was 3.34, and it increased to 3.72 after the training program was implemented, and the p value was 0.000, indicating that the training program was effective and H2 was validated true.

Discussions

The researcher integrated the results of this research with the literature review to assess the consistency with previous studies in this section.

Instructor Academic Leadership

This research found that instructor academic leadership could be categorized into four dimensions: academic credibility, academic performance, academic collaboration, and professionalism based on the systematic literature review and preliminary interview. The overall mean score of the current level of instructor academic leadership at the four private universities in Henan province was at a moderate level, and all dimensions were also at moderate level. Among the four dimensions, the professionalism was relatively the lowest, which should be paid more attention to when developing the training program for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China. After that were academic performance and academic credibility. Even if academic collaboration was the highest, its mean score only reached 3.50, which still had space to improve. The results indicated that instructors in private universities of Henan province had eager to improve their instructor academic leadership to promote professional development, organizational culture, and academic excellence.

In accordance with the findings of Hamidifar & Ebrahimi (2016), the demonstration of professionalism was evident in instructors adhering to professional norms and expectations, as well as dedicating themselves to achieving high standards in their teaching, research, and service endeavors. According to Bolden et al. (2012), instructor academic leadership was determined by many factors related to their academic performance. Zhu and Zayim-Kurtay (2018) highlighted that academic credibility pertained to the extent to which an instructor had expertise and reliability within their own discipline. Uslu (2020) stated that instructors who demonstrated outstanding academic cooperation skills were more likely to receive recognition from their colleagues, hence fostering a constructive and amicable academic environment.

In conclusion, each dimension of instructor academic leadership played a critical role in fostering effective instructor academic leadership and contributing to the overall success of higher

education institutions. By understanding and focusing on these dimensions, instructors could enhance their academic leadership and better serve their students, colleagues, and institutions.

Personal Factors and Organizational Factors of Instructors

Through in-depth literature review and preliminary interview, the personal factors of instructors could be classified into emotional competencies, cognitive capabilities, teamwork attitudes, self-directed leadership, and motivation, while the organizational factors of instructors could be divided into organizational culture, sustainability, setting direction, professional development, and empowerment for decision making. Data analysis results showed that both personal factors and organizational factors were significantly correlated with instructor academic leadership. However, to some extent, the correlation between organizational factors and instructor academic leadership was slightly higher than the correlation between personal factors and instructor academic leadership, so the researcher should pay more attention to the organizational factors when developing the training program. What's more, according to β value, personal factors had intensive impact on the two dimensions of instructor academic leadership: academic performance and professionalism, while organizational factors had intensive impact on another two dimensions of instructor academic leadership: academic credibility and academic collaboration.

According to Northouse (2019), the behavioral model of leadership proposed two dimensions: organizational tasks and people-related tasks, which were consistent with this research. Pan and Hou (2014) also pointed out that the construction and improvement of university instructor academic leadership relied on factors such as university instructors' individual cognition and group identification. Karadağ (2017) claimed in his study that the behaviors of academic leadership in higher education institutions are influenced by both personal and organizational variables. Niewiesk and Garrity-Rokous (2021) further addressed that the development of a comprehensive framework for academic leadership necessitated a focus on Northouse' Behavioral Model of Leadership. Nevertheless, the current body of research lacks evidence supporting the notion that organizational factors exert a greater influence on academic leadership compared to personal factors. This research introduced a novel perspective by examining the academic leadership of private university instructors in Henan Province, highlighting the significance of organizational factors in this context.

Training Model Development and Training Program Implementation

In order to systematically cultivate academic leadership competency, McDaniel (2002) developed the Higher Education Leadership Competency Model in collaboration with university

presidents, past American Council on Education (ACE) Fellows, and other relevant stakeholders. Northouse (2019) proposed the behavioral model of leadership, which encompassed two key dimensions: organizational tasks and people-related tasks. Niewiesk and Garrity-Rokous (2021) expanded upon Northouse's (2019) approach by proposing an academic leadership framework specifically tailored for university instructors.

Based on the previous studies, this research proposed a new training model for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, and it was suggested to be implemented in the following steps: academic collaboration, academic credibility, professionalism, and academic performance. Based on the above training model, the training program was proposed and implemented at School of Humanities and Law of Zhengzhou Technology and Business University for four months. With the help of head leaders, around 42 instructors were invited to attend this training program, and eleven professional experts related were also invited to do the presentation during the training activities. The results showed that the training program was effective. This training model, which focused on enhancing the instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan province, was a refinement and development of previous research.

Knowledge from Research

The body of knowledge from this research is shown in Table 8.

Table 8 The Body of Knowledge from this Research

Research Objectives	Source of Data or Sample	Data Collection Method	Data Analysis	Results
1. To explore the desirable instructor academic leadership for the higher education institution.	Literature Review, journals, and online articles published in acceptable journals (in recent 16 years).	Literature Review	Systematic Literature Review Qualitative	The instructor academic leadership could be divided into three parts: instructor academic leadership, personal factors, and organizational factors.
2. To assess the current level of instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China.	All instructors from four private universities of Henan Province, China	Instructor academic leadership Questionnaire:	Mean, Standard Deviation Quantitative	The current level of instructor academic leadership was at a moderate level
3. To determine to what the degree, the instructor academic leadership are impacted by personal factors and organizational factors in private universities of Henan Province, China.		Part I Personal Factors; Part II Organizational Factors; Part III Instructor Academic Leadership	Correlation, Multiple Regression Quantitative	The instructor's personal factors and organizational factors have significant impact on the instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province
4. To develop a training program for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province, China.	Result from research objectives 1–3	Development and validation of a training program	Development and validation of the training model	A training model for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan Province was proposed and validated.
5. To measure the effectiveness of a training program and compare the differences of the instructor academic leadership before and after they attended the designed training program in one private university.	Selected instructors from Zhengzhou Technology and Business University (ZTBU) Around 42	Instructor Academic Leadership Questionnaire: Part III Instructor Academic Leadership	Paired t–test Interview Qualitative & Quantitative	The training program was effective and there is significant difference between the instructor academic leadership before and after they attended the designed training program in ZTBU.

Conclusion

This research developed a training program for enhancing instructor academic leadership in private universities of Henan province, China, taking four private universities as the research object. According to the research objectives, the research findings showed that: (1) instructor

academic leadership mainly consisted of three parts: instructor academic leadership, personal factors, and organizational factors; (2) instructor academic leadership was at a moderate level in this research; (3) The instructor's personal factors and organizational factors had significant impact on the instructor academic leadership; (4) the training model was validated effective; (5) the instructor academic leadership after implementing the training program was improved.

Suggestions

Although the current research generated important findings, it is crucial to acknowledge several limitations related to the research. Meanwhile, suggestions are also provided for future research.

Firstly, the sample of this research mainly consisted of 493 respondents from four private universities in Henan Province, which may limit the extrapolation of the findings. Future research could consider expanding the sample to include more regions and different types of colleges and universities to increase the representativeness of the research.

Secondly, the questionnaire developed in this research was mainly for private universities in Henan Province and may not be applicable to other provinces or public universities. Future research may consider including other provinces or public universities to develop a more comprehensive questionnaire.

Thirdly, the data collection in this research was limited to one single semester, which may miss long-term developments of instructor academic leadership. Future research may consider extending the duration of research time periods, such as several academic years, to ascertain the long-term impact of instructor academic leadership in higher educational institutions.

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