

ENHANCING JOB SATISFACTION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS IN SICHUAN, CHINA

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate factors impacting principal's transformational leadership, principal's transactional leadership, teamwork, training and development, and self-efficacy on teacher job satisfaction. The study used the item-objective congruence (IOC) index as validity and Cronbach's alpha ($n=30$) as reliability. The 80 valid questionnaires from Sichuan University of Science & Engineering were analyzed using multiple linear regression to verify the significant relationships among the variables. Subsequently, 30 teachers were selected to attend the strategic plan over 14 weeks. Then, paired samples t-tests were conducted to compare the quantitative results of post-strategic and pre-strategic planning. In a multiple linear regression study, the results line principal's transformational leadership, principal's transactional leadership, teamwork, training and development, and self-efficacy are five variables that have a significant effect on teachers' job satisfaction. Finally, the paired samples t-test showed a significant difference between the post-strategic plan stage and the pre-strategic plan stage in terms of teachers' job satisfaction. This study aims to improve teachers' job satisfaction regarding principals' leadership, teamwork, training and development, and self-efficacy to stabilize the teaching force and improve the overall quality of school operations.

Keywords: Teacher Job Satisfaction, Influencing Factors, Strategic Plan

Introduction

Education in China is a matter of great concern to both the Government and the public. The state attaches great importance to the development of education, to the quality of teaching in schools, and to the overall satisfaction and effectiveness of teachers. However, the progress of education in a country depends on the competence of the educators. If teachers are unsatisfied with their profession, their optimal performance ability will be greatly reduced.

If teachers have high job satisfaction, motivation, and efficiency, then teaching and learning in these schools will be effective. Educators with high job satisfaction are more motivated and committed to their students and the educational organization. Regardless of the organizational environment, employees who are both competitive and satisfied tend to

exhibit supportive behaviors toward their colleagues and supervisors, ultimately contributing to the organization's overall success. A positive correlation exists between teacher satisfaction and the provision of satisfactory and competent education in schools.

Teachers' job responsibility is to teach and educate people. As an integral part of the education system, they are, in turn, the cornerstone of a country's education system and have a crucial position in the progress of society and the future of the country. Teachers' job satisfaction is an important reflection of their educational work, school environment, personal development, etc. Therefore, teachers themselves attach great importance to their job satisfaction.

Teachers are role models and stakeholders in children's future. Teacher satisfaction is associated with the production of good students, and researchers have emphasized the impact of teachers' job well-being on student achievement; student development is the primary task of education, and the group most directly and closely related to the quality of student development is the teacher, whose perceptions of job satisfaction are relevant to student development.

Literature Review

1. Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Biggerstaff (2012) defined job satisfaction as teachers' attitudes and opinions regarding their working circumstances and the teaching profession. According to Zembylas and Papanastasiou (2004), teachers' work satisfaction levels are determined by the interplay between their teaching expectations and their perception of the advantages of teaching. An alternate reason is that teachers' job satisfaction is based on thoroughly assessing their attitudes and opinions regarding their current working conditions and the teaching profession. The job satisfaction of school teachers is widely recognized as an important determinant of educational system improvement, and many experts and scholars have paid attention to the study of it.

2. Principal's Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is related to ethics and can be described as a type of ethical leadership, where there is a strong interpersonal interaction with each other within the organization and both the leader and the employees strive to achieve the goals of the organization (Kanungo, 2001). Leaders who adopt a transformational leadership style demonstrate a willingness to articulate a compelling vision and effectively utilize it as a catalyst to inspire and motivate their colleagues. By fostering a culture of collaboration, communication, and dedication, these leaders encourage their team members to actively participate in their work, share ideas, and demonstrate commitment. This approach fosters enthusiasm and optimism among employees, enabling them to anticipate and pursue opportunities for growth and advancement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Thus, a hypothesis has

been stipulated:

H1: Principal's transformational leadership has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

3. Principals' Transactional Leadership

In exchange for benefits, leaders and employees engage in transactional leadership, where they negotiate with each other to identify ways to limit losses and maximize gains while still pursuing common goals (Burns, 1978). Transactional leadership is a type of barter leadership where leaders and subordinates get what they want by agreement for their benefit and purpose. For their interests and purposes (Sergiovanni, 1990). The work and performance of subordinates determine the leader's incentives for subordinates to be rewarded. Transactional leadership is transaction-based (Pillai et al., 1999). The study by Randelangi et al. (2022) surveyed 62 educators and found that leadership styles, especially transactional and transformational, significantly positively affected teachers' job satisfaction. The competence of leadership style is directly related to the level of performance. Thus, a hypothesis has been stipulated:

H2: Principal's transactional leadership has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction

4. Teamwork

Adair (1986) defines teams by comparing them to groups. He describes the difference between teams and groups by stating that everyone contributes and complements each other, whereas everyone's input is interchangeable in groups. According to Kalisch and Lee (2009), teams can be viewed as a collective group of individuals who come together to achieve a common goal. Teams are characterized by "two or more people working dynamically, interdependently, and adaptively toward a common, valued goal/objective/task" (Salas et al., 1992). According to Oliver (2008), the mere act of people coming together does not constitute a team. Instead, teams are characterized by individuals collaborating and interacting with each other in the work process. This collaborative process is considered an effective activity. Thus, a hypothesis has been stipulated:

H3: Teamwork has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

5. Training and Development

"Training is a systematic and organized activity aimed at improving the capabilities of an individual, including the individual's knowledge, skills and abilities (Nassazi, 2013). Training is a method that involves communication skills and procedural behaviors, the training focuses on the goals and the content is associated with the skills needed to achieve the goals, trained people will be able to control the way they behave and make them more self-disciplined and productive in their work (Elnaga & Imran, 2013) as it expands the efficiency of the individual, the group, and the organization (Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2013). Development depends on the skills acquired through training as the training process enables individuals to improve their

competencies and promote personal growth. Over time, individuals experience growth and development, which consists of a comprehensive process that helps to improve their ability to perform many tasks effectively (Nassazi, 2013). Appiah et al. (2013) state that training can be defined as an organized activity aimed at imparting information and/or instruction to improve the recipient's performance or to help him or her reach a desired level of knowledge or skill. Thus, a hypothesis has been stipulated:

H4: Training and Development has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

6. Self-efficacy

The term self-efficacy first appeared in the work of psychologist Bandura (1977), who argued that self-efficacy is a concept similar to self-confidence. It refers to people's perceptions and judgments of their ability to perform an important task in their self-regulatory system. Self-efficacy typically involves individuals' confidence in their abilities rather than their objective degree of competence. Individuals with a strong sense of self-efficacy show a marked absence of fear when encountering obstacles, demonstrate resilience in the face of adversity, and continually strive to overcome challenges in pursuing desired outcomes. Individuals with poor self-efficacy exhibit very different characteristics, as they tend to be apprehensive about challenging situations and tend to avoid and abandon effort (Bandura, 1994). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) defined teacher self-efficacy as the ability to move students who are not persistent or motivated learners to higher levels of learning. For example, the ability to engage all students, even those struggling with math, in classroom activities to maintain discipline is associated with teacher self-efficacy (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014). Thus, a hypothesis has been stipulated:

H5: Self-efficacy has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

Research Framework

This paper applies a modeling theory, Hackman and Wageman (1995) Total Quality Management (TQM), and three theoretical frameworks, The Previous Research Framework of “the effect of Transformational and Transactional Leadership on Teachers’ Job Satisfaction”- Bogler (2001), The Previous Research Framework of “the effect of Transformational and Transactional Leadership on Teachers’ Job Satisfaction” Glaveli et al. (2022), The Previous Research Framework of “the effect of Self-efficacy on Teachers’ Job Satisfaction” Ortan et al. (2021), The final conceptual framework of this paper is shown in Figure 1:

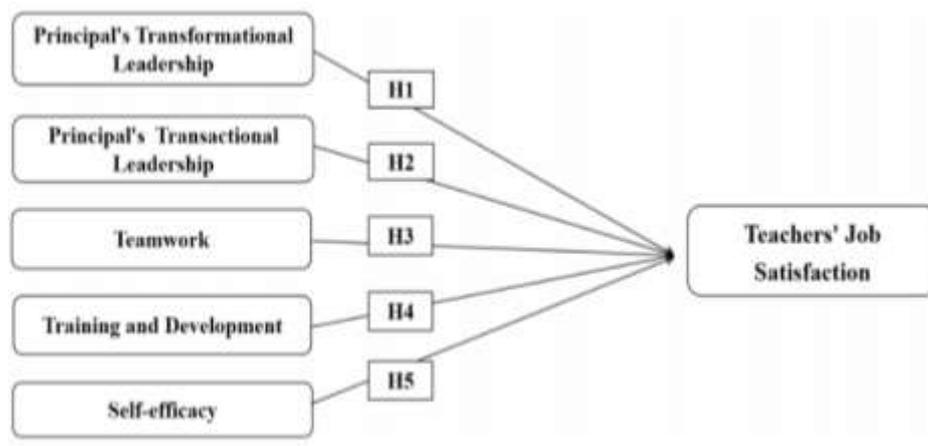


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

The hypotheses of the research variables based on the conceptual framework are;

H1: Principal's transformational leadership has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

H2: Principal's transactional leadership has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction

H3: Teamwork has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

H4: Training and Development has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

H5: Self-efficacy has a significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

Research Methodology

The research process is as follows:

Step 1: questionnaire production, based on the proposed conceptual framework, using IOC and a pilot test to test the content validity and reliability of the questionnaire, removal of non-compliant questions, and determination of the final questionnaire.

Step 2: pre-strategic plan data collection and analysis, questionnaires that passed the IOC and pilot test are sent to the study population (N=80), then the collected sample data were analyzed by MLR (Multiple et al.) to validate the proposed hypotheses based on p-value (p-value < 0. 05), t-value (T-value > 1.98), and VIF (VIF < 5), the hypotheses that met the requirements were retained, and those that did not were removed.

Step 3: Implementation of the strategic plan. A 14-week strategic plan was conducted for the experimental group population (N=30).

Step 4: Comparative analysis: The 30 people who participated in the program were surveyed again, and MLR (Multiple et al.) was conducted to compare the results before and after the strategic plan. This comprehensive process allowed for thoroughly examining the study's objectives and hypotheses.

Research Population, Sample Size, and Sampling Procedures

1. Research Population

The population of this study is the in-service teachers of Sichuan University of Science & Engineering. There are 20 colleges in our university, and four colleges were selected for this study (Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering, Faculty of Mechanical and Engineering, Faculty of Economics, and Faculty of Management). An online questionnaire was conducted on 100 faculty members from the four colleges. A total of 80 valid questionnaires were received, and were analyzed by the researcher through multiple linear regression analysis to test the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Then, the final research framework was determined based on the test results.

2. Sample size

In the preliminary stage of this study, 30 teachers were surveyed, and a pilot test determined the reliability. Subsequently, based on the number of variables, 80 teachers were identified as respondents to ensure the scientific validity of the study. The data of these 80 respondents were analyzed through multiple linear regression to verify the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Finally, 30 teachers were selected for the strategic plan.

3. Sampling Procedures

Multi-stage sampling was used in this study, and the procedure was as follows:

Sampling 1: Sampling for the POLIT TEST: 30 teachers were taken along with the questionnaire, and its purpose was to test its internal consistency and reliability.

Sampling 2: For the survey stage, 100 teachers were taken from 4 colleges of SUSE for the questionnaire, and finally, 80 valid questionnaires were analyzed for the study.

Sampling 3: Random selection of 30 teachers who volunteered to participate in the implementation of the strategic plan.

Research Instruments

1. Design of Questionnaire: The questionnaire was designed in the following three steps.

Step 1: Identify questionnaire sources from three published articles.

Step 2: Organize and present the questionnaire.

Step 3: Invite experts to administer the IOC.

2. Components of Questionnaire: The questionnaire is divided into two parts:

Part I: Basic Information. It includes the respondents' basic information such as gender, age, etc.

Part II: Questions on six brother variables. Transformational Leadership of Principals (5 questions), Transactional Leadership of Principals (5 questions), Teamwork (4 questions), Training and Development (4 questions), self-efficacy (7 questions), and teacher job satisfaction

(5 questions).

3. IOC Results: The researchers invited three longtime university educators to implement the IOC (Index of Item-Objective Coherence); all three experts were professors. During the IOC process, the experts labeled one as consistent, 0 as questionable, and -1 as inconsistent. After the questionnaire questions of the experts' IOC, all item values were greater than 0.5, so no items were removed.

4. Pilot survey and Pilot test results: The researchers randomly surveyed 30 teachers and invited these teachers to fill out the questionnaire and provide feedback. Then, the researcher implemented Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency reliability test on these 30 questionnaires, which should be equal to or greater than 0.7 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 1 Pilot Test Result

Variable	No. of Items	Sources	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Transformational Leadership	5	Bogler (2001)	0.844	Very Good
Transactional Leadership	5	Bogler (2001)	0.912	Excellent
Teamwork	4	Glaveli et al. (2022)	0.821	Very Good
Training and Development	4	Glaveli et al. (2022)	0.929	Excellent
Self-efficacy	7	Ortan et al. (2021)	0.903	Excellent
Teachers' Job Satisfaction	5	Ortan et al. (2021)	0.770	Good

Results and Discussion

1. Demographic Information

The profile of the population (n=80) surveyed by the researcher at the MLR stage (multiple linear regression) and the specifics of the 30 teachers who volunteered to participate in the strategic plan selected at a later stage are shown in Table 2:

Table 2: Demographic Profile

Entire Research Population (n=80)		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	48	60.00%
	Female	32	40.00%
Teaching years	Under 30 years old	17	21.25%
	Between 30 and 40 years old	39	48.75%
	Between 41 and 50 years old	14	17.50%
	Over 50 years old	10	12.50%
Title	Teaching assistant	18	22.50%
	Lecturer	41	51.25%
	Associate professor	15	18.75%
	Professor	6	7.50%
Total		80	100%
Strategic plan Participants (n=30)		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	21	70%
	Female	9	30%
Teaching years	Under 30 years old	5	16.67%
	Between 30 and 40 years old	18	60.00%
	Between 41 and 50 years old	5	16.67%
	Over 50 years old	2	6.66%
Title	Teaching assistant	7	23.33%
	Lecturer	16	53.33%
	Associate professor	5	16.67%
	Professor	2	6.67%
Total		30	100%

2. Results of multiple linear regression

To test the proposed hypotheses, the researcher analyzed the results of 80 questionnaires in multiple linear regression (MLR) and there are a total of five hypotheses in this study. The following conclusions were drawn from the data analysis: the p-value of all five independent variables was less than 0.05 (Vongurai, 2022), which indicates that there is a significant effect on the dependent variable; and the VIF (severity of multicollinearity score allowances) of all five independent variables was less than 5, which indicates that there is no multicollinear relationship between the variables. In addition, in the multiple linear regression model with the same set of five independent variables, R^2 is 0.511, with a value between 0 and 1, indicating that this model can explain the variance of teachers' job satisfaction.

Table 3 The multiple linear regression of five independent variables on teacher' job satisfaction

Variables	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t-value	P-value	VIF	R Square
Principal's transformational leadership	0.267	2.955	0.004*	1.240	0.511
Principal's transformational leadership	0.296	3.133	0.002*	1.353	
Teamwork	0.17	2.033	0.046*	1.063	
Training and Development	0.224	2.481	0.015*	1.237	
Self-efficacy	0.178	2.005	0.049*	1.191	

Note: p-value <0.05*

In summary, the results of the multiple linear regression analysis showed that the previous five hypotheses were supported, meaning that the five independent variables of the principal's transformational leadership, Principal transformational leadership Teamwork, Training and Development, and Self-efficacy which are the five independent variables have a significant effect on the dependent variable, Teacher Job Satisfaction. Therefore, the final hypotheses of this study are shown below. The strategic plan of this study will be conducted according to the following hypotheses.

H6: There is a significant mean difference in the principal's transformational leadership between Pre-Strategic and Post-Strategic Plan stages.

H7: There is a significant mean difference in the principal's transactional leadership between Pre-Strategic Plan and Post-Strategic Plan stages.

H8: There is a significant mean difference in Teamwork between the Pre-Strategic Plan and Post-Strategic Plan stages.

H9: There is a significant mean difference in Training and Development between the Pre-Strategic Plan and Post-Strategic Plan stages.

H10: There is a significant mean difference in self-efficacy between the stages of the pre-social plan and the post-social plan.

H11: There is a significant mean difference in Teachers' job satisfaction between the Pre-Strategic Plan and Post-Strategic Plan stages.

3. Strategic Plan Stage

Through the collection of preliminary questionnaires and the data analysis, it has been prepared for the next strategic plan, which the researcher implemented for 14 weeks in anticipation of increasing teachers' job satisfaction through the strategic plan. The specific arrangement is shown below:



Figure 2 SPI Activities

4. Results Comparison between Current Situation and Expect Situation

The researcher conducted a paired samples t-test analysis of the six variables of the study to determine if there was a difference in teachers' job satisfaction between the pre-strategic and post-strategic plan phases. The results of the paired samples t-test analysis are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Paired-Sample T-Test Results

Variables	Mean	SD	SE	P-value
Principal's transformational leadership				
Pre-strategic plan	3.680	0.950	0.0824	0.004*
Post-strategic plan	4.890	0.155	0.1042	
Principal's transactional leadership				
Pre-strategic plan	3.845	0.856	0.0956	0.002*
Post-strategic plan	4.670	0.629	0.0789	
Teamwork				
Pre-strategic plan	3.966	0.830	0.0873	0.046*
Post-strategic plan	4.790	0.383	0.0462	
Training and Development				
Pre-strategic plan	3.831	0.960	0.0814	0.015*
Post-strategic plan	4.680	0.601	0.0836	
Self-efficacy				
Pre-strategic plan	3.734	0.874	0.0878	0.049*
Post-strategic plan	4.860	0.294	0.0640	
Teachers' job satisfaction				
Pre-strategic plan	4.005	0.865	—	P<0.001
Post-strategic plan	4.950	0.101		

Note: p-value <0.05*

The results of the paired samples t-test analysis comparing the pre-strategic plan to the post-strategic plan can be seen in Table 4:

There was a significant increase in the principal's transformational leadership when comparing the post-strategic plan phase ($M=4.890$, $SD=0.155$, $SE=0.1042$) to the pre-strategic plan phase ($M=3.680$, $SD=0.950$, $SE=0.0824$), with a mean difference between the pre-and post-strategic plan phases of 1.121. Therefore, Hypothesis 6 was supported by a significant increase in the pre-and post-strategic plans of the principal's transformational leadership, having a significant mean difference.

There was a significant increase in the principal's transactional leadership when comparing the post-strategic plan phase ($M=4.670$, $SD=0.629$, $SE=0.0789$) to the pre-strategic plan phase ($M=3.845$, $SD=0.856$, $SE=0.0956$), with a mean difference between the pre-and post-strategic plan phases of 0.825. Therefore, Hypothesis 7 was supported by a significant increase in the pre- and post-strategic plans of the principal's transactional leadership, having a significant mean difference.

There was a significant increase in teamwork when comparing the post-strategic plan phase ($M=4.790$, $SD=0.383$, $SE=0.0462$) to the pre-strategic plan phase ($M=3.966$, $SD=0.830$, $SE=0.0873$), with a mean difference between the pre-and post-strategic plan phases of 0.824. Therefore, Hypothesis 8 was supported by a significant increase in the pre-strategic and post-strategic teamwork plans, which have a significant mean difference.

There was a significant increase in training and development when comparing the post-strategic plan phase ($M=4.680$, $SD=0.601$, $SE=0.0836$) to the pre-strategic plan phase ($M=3.831$, $SD=0.960$, $SE=0.0814$), with a mean difference between the pre-and post-strategic plan phases of 0.849. Therefore, Hypothesis 9 was supported by a significant increase in the pre-strategic and post-strategic training and development plans, which have a significant mean difference.

There was a significant increase in self-efficacy when comparing the post-strategic plan phase ($M=4.860$, $SD=0.294$, $SE=0.0640$) to the pre-strategic plan phase ($M=3.734$, $SD=0.874$, $SE=0.0878$), with a mean difference between the pre-and post-strategic plan phases of 1.126. Therefore, Hypothesis 10 was supported by a significant increase in the pre-strategic and post-strategic plans of self-efficacy, which have a significant mean difference.

There was a significant increase in teachers' job satisfaction when comparing the post-strategic plan phase ($M=4.950$, $SD=0.101$) to the pre-strategic plan phase ($M=4.005$, $SD=0.865$), with a mean difference between the pre-and post-strategic plan phases of 0.945. Therefore, Hypothesis 11 was supported by a significant increase in the pre- and post-strategic plans of teachers' job satisfaction, having a significant mean difference.

Based on the results of the paired samples t-test, the following two conclusions can be drawn: first, there is a significant mean difference between the six variables between the post-strategic plan phase and the pre-strategic plan phase, and second, the researcher found

that teachers' job satisfaction increased significantly between the pre-strategic plan phase and the post-strategic plan phase.

Conclusions, Recommendations, Limitations and Future Research

1. Conclusions

The study's results show that principals' transformational leadership, principals' transactional leadership, teamwork, training and development, and self-efficacy have significant effects on teachers' job satisfaction. Thus, we can know that by focusing on these five aspects, the job satisfaction of college teachers can be effectively improved.

The results of the comparison of paired samples t-test show that there is a significant difference between the post-strategic plan and pre-strategic plan phases in terms of teachers' job satisfaction. This suggests that implementing a 14-week strategic plan has a significant positive effect on teachers' job satisfaction.

In summary, this study demonstrates that universities can stabilize their faculty, enhance teaching quality, and improve the quality of student preparation by improving faculty job satisfaction. This study's scientific methodology, comprehensive analysis, and practical implications provide suggestions for factors that can improve teachers' job satisfaction.

2. Recommendations

China's higher education stage bears the task of cultivating high-quality talents of virtue and ability for the country. China has put forward the requirement of a strong nation of talent in the 20th National Congress. As universities cultivate high-quality talents, they shoulder an important responsibility, and the teacher community plays a key role in cultivating talents. The teacher community should be addressed. This paper draws a series of recommendations from the effects of headmaster leadership, teamwork, training and development, and self-efficacy on teachers' job satisfaction through implementing the strategic plan.

One of this study's recommendations starts from the headmaster leadership aspect. Principals should encourage teachers to give their opinions and suggestions, create an open communication atmosphere conducive to understanding teachers' needs and developmental needs, and make decisions that are more relevant to the actual situation of teachers, which is beneficial for more scientific and rational decision-making. Set clear, measurable goals so that teachers understand the direction and expectations of the school. Principals should support teachers by understanding and responding positively to their needs and concerns. In addition, school functions should proactively disseminate relevant school policies to facilitate teachers' in-depth understanding of the school situation and their making sound judgments.

Schools and secondary colleges should promote team building, organize regular activities, strengthen collaboration among teachers, and strengthen team spirit. At the same time, it is necessary to set common goals, ensure that the teaching team clearly understands

the common goals of the school or college, and inspire a sense of collective responsibility. Moreover, sharing is also part of team building. Encourage teachers to share successful experiences and teaching methods and promote the exchange of experiences.

Training and development play an important role in enhancing teacher satisfaction. Schools or colleges should fully map out teachers' situations, implement individual training plans, understand each teacher's professional development needs, and provide individualized training to teachers with the same needs. Training should not only provide primary training but also ongoing professional development support so that teachers can continue to improve their teaching and research skills. In addition, teachers can be encouraged to participate in various types of training through individual channels.

3. Limitations and Future Research

This study explored the effects of five factors, including leadership, on teachers' job satisfaction. There is some value in enhancing teachers' job satisfaction, however, there are some limitations of this study and these limitations can provide ideas for future research.

Study population and sample: This study was conducted in only four colleges of one university; the selection of the study population may be affected, and in the future, a wider range of teachers with richer backgrounds can be selected for the study so that the research results can be more general.

Selection of Independent Variables: The factors affecting teachers' job satisfaction are not limited to the five variables in this study, but future research can select a wider range of variables, and the research framework should be improved according to the actual situation so as to make the research more comprehensive and in-depth.

Strategic plan: the plan of this study is limited to the specific context of SUSE, which has some limitations, and future research should explore the effectiveness of different strategies on teachers' job satisfaction.

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