# PROFESSIONAL MORALITY MANAGEMENT MODEL FOR TEACHERS IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN HAINAN PROVINCE

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**Abstract**

This study aims to construct a normative management model for teachers' professional morality in private universities in Hainan Province, with the overarching goal of addressing the ethical and professional challenges precipitated by marketization and institutional transformation. The specific objectives were to: 1) assess the current state of professional morality management among teachers in Hainan's private universities; 2) identify the underlying dimensions of professional morality management through exploratory factor analysis (EFA); and 3) develop a normative management model for teachers' professional morality, tailored to the context of private higher education in Hainan.The empirical phase adopted a mixed-methods design. Quantitative data were collected from surveys of 500 teachers at private universities in Hainan Province, while qualitative data were gathered through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with nine administrative leaders. The data collection instruments included a structured questionnaire and an interview protocol. Exploratory factor analysis was utilized to uncover the latent structure of the construct, and thematic content analysis was applied to interpret the interview data and contextualize the quantitative findings. Together, these analyses informed the proposed normative management model for teachers' professional morality. The survey instrument was structured around seven empirically derived dimensions: teaching behavior morality, teacher–student moral risk, academic integrity, compliance with management systems, adaptation to the private university environment, enhancement of moral competence, and conflict of interest management. These identified factors provide the theoretical and empirical foundation for the proposed management model.

**Keywords**: Teacher Moral Management; Private Universities; Normative Model

**Introduction**

The construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port and the rapid expansion of private higher education have increasingly drawn scholarly and policy attention to the professional morality of teachers in private universities. Although widespread moral misconduct is not common, its negative impacts—on student development, institutional reputation, and public trust—can be profound (Wang & Liu, 2023). Professional morality in teaching lies at the heart of both effective knowledge transmission and the educational principle of "Lide Shuren" (fostering virtue through education); thus, its quality directly influences the standards and sustainable development of higher education (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Theoretical studies suggest that enhancing the professional morality of teachers in private universities requires coordinated efforts across institutional regulations, evaluation mechanisms, and ongoing professional development (Zhang & Li, 2022). At the organizational level, moral conduct should be integrated into faculty evaluations, promotions, and performance reviews (Chen, 2021); at the institutional level, sustained oversight and incentive structures are essential (Li et al., 2023); and at the individual level, teachers must strengthen their professional identity and moral awareness (Wang & Liu, 2023).

Empirically, private universities in Hainan and other regions have begun incorporating moral accountability into frameworks such as professional title reforms and performance management systems (Hainan Provincial Department of Education, 2022). Concurrently, moral education programs and enhanced counselor development initiatives have been implemented (Yang, 2023). Despite these efforts, systematic empirical research remains limited, particularly mixed-methods studies that assess policy effectiveness, institutional mechanisms, and teachers' subjective experiences (Gao & Zhou, 2024).

In summary, although preliminary progress has been made in establishing moral frameworks within Hainan’s private higher education sector, challenges persist in translating policy into practice within this distinctive regional context. Future research should prioritize rigorous empirical analysis of policy implementation efficacy, institutional governance logic, and teachers’ perceptual experiences to propose pragmatic, evidence-based improvements.

**Research Objectives**

The objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To study the level of professional morality management for teachers in private universities in Hainan Province;

2. To study the exploratory factor analysis of the professional morality management for teachers in private universities in Hainan Province;

3. To propose professional morality management model for teachers in private universities in Hainan Province.

Scope of the Research

**Population Scope**

The sampling method combined purposive and random sampling the respondents included teachers from 10 private universities in Hainan Province. A total of 500 were collected through stratified random sampling.

**Variable Scope**

The questionnaire was mainly based on literature, documents, relevant research, and in-depth interviews with teachers from 3private universities. At the same time, 120 research variables were finally determined. Through exploratory factor analysis conducted on 120 initial items, a total of 39 items with substandard loadings or cross-loadings were removed, resulting in 81 retained items. Seven common factors were extracted from the final item set. The extracted factors are as follows: Teaching Behavior Morality (16 items), Teacher–Student Moral Risk (15 items), Academic Moral Integrity (13 items), Management System Compliance (12 items), Private College Adaptation (10 items), Moral Competence Enhancement (9 items), and Conflict of Interest Management (6 items). These factors not only reflect the multidimensional structure of teacher morality management but also delineate the specific behavioral and institutional domains necessary for fulfilling the moral exemplar role expected of instructors in Hainan's private universities.

**Time Scope**

The study spanned a period of one year, encompassing questionnaire design, distribution, and collection, the conduct of semi-structured interviews, as well as statistical analysis and interpretation of the results.

**Research Methodology**

1. Research Design

Guided by a mixed-methods approach that integrated quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, this study utilized exploratory factor analysis. The findings informed the development of a systematic professional morality management model for faculty in private universities.

2. Research Steps

The research process followed four main steps:

This study adopts a mixed method, combining quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews to construct a systematic model for the professional management of private university teachers;

Researchers used Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to analyze the data;

Questionnaires were distributed to a group of private universities in Hainan Province,

and in-depth analysis of the variables was conducted through semi-structured interview.

3. Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed online for teachers from 10 private universities in Hainan. A total of 500 responses were collected and deemed valid after data screening. The respondents were teachers from 10 private universities in Hainan Province.

The sampling method combined purposive and random sampling to ensure representation. Before the final survey, the researcher sent a letter from the10 private universities in Hainan Province asking permission to collect survey data. Once each school granted permission, teachers were randomly selected and contacted with Wechat social media and given a questionnaire QR code to participate.

4. Data Analysis

1. Survey data were collected from 500 faculty members in private universities in Hainan Province. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize demographic variables, ensuring sample representativeness across gender, age, degree, title, and teaching experience.

2. The instrument was designed around seven dimensions: teaching behavior morality, teacher–student moral risk, academic integrity, compliance with management systems, adaptation to the private university environment, enhancement of moral competence, and conflict of interest management. All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale. Reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha, while construct validity was examined with the KMO measure and Bartlett's test.

3. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed with principal axis factoring and Varimax rotation. Items with loadings below 0.40 were removed. Results confirmed a seven-factor solution, explaining over 70% of the variance.

Additionally, To validate the analysis results of the survey questionnaire, the researcher conducted key informant interviews with nine selected experts. This analysis aims to address Objective 3, which is to propose professional morality management model for teachers in private universities in Hainan Province.

**Research Results**

1. Results of the analysis of basic information for sample. The demographic frequency and number analysis of sample were analyzed as follows:1) gender 2) age 3) working experiences 4) highest education level 5) professional title.

**Table1:** Results of frequency and percentage analysis of respondents' demographic.

**Results of The Demographic Frequency Number Analysis**

| General Basic Information | Subgroup | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Gender | Male | 231 | 46.20 |
| | Female | 269 | 53.80 |
| | **Total** | **500** | **100.00** |
| 2. Age | 25 years old and below | 38 | 7.60 |
| | 26-35 years old | 204 | 40.80 |
| | 36-45 years old | 143 | 28.60 |
| | 46-55 years old | 89 | 17.80 |
| | 56 years old and above | 26 | 5.20 |
| | **Total** | **500** | **100.00** |
| 3. Working Experiences | 5 years and below | 226 | 45.20 |
| | 6-10 years | 138 | 27.60 |
| | 11 years and above | 136 | 27.20 |
| | **Total** | **500** | **100.00** |
| 4. Highest Education Level | Doctor | 41 | 8.20 |
| | Master | 319 | 63.8 |
| | Bachelor | 138 | 27.60 |
| | Other | 2 | 0.40 |
| | **Total** | **500** | **100.00** |
| 5. Professional Title | Assistant | 152 | 30.40 |
| | Lecturer | 208 | 41.60 |
| | Associate professor | 111 | 22.20 |
| | Professor | 29 | 5.80 |
| | **Total** | **500** | **100.00** |

2. Results of the level of professional morality management for teachers in private universities in Hainan Province.

1. A 120-item questionnaire was used to evaluate each participant's opinions concerning quality management. A five-level educator opinion scale was used, the evaluation was conducted by nine educational experts from five private institutions of higher education,

which rank among the province's leading private universities in terms of faculty size and possess relatively long-standing histories. Each of the 120 items was then evaluated using the index of item-objective congruence (IOC) value. The questionnaire's aim, item clarity, comprehensiveness, completeness, meaningfulness, and significance for each item were evaluated. The IOC values for the study were 0.8 to 1.00.

The questionnaire's reliability was evaluated using 30 individuals who did not participate in the subsequent survey. The assessment of the 30 individual's questionnaire try-out reliability used Cronbach's alpha $\alpha$=0.957.The KMO value was 0.95, demonstrating a high level of sampling adequacy. Additionally, Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded a chi-square value of 42160.295, with a degree of freedom of 7140 and a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.001$), and can proceed with further validity evaluation.

**Table 2:** KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity values

| **Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy** | | **0.95** |
|---|---|---|
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx.Chi-Square | 42160.295 |
| | df | 7140 |
| | Sig. | .000 |

2. During the exploratory factor analysis, the authors also applied the principal component analysis method and extracted seven factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. The results showed that the total variance explained by these seven common factors exceeded the highest standard of 60%, specifically reaching 71.91%. Therefore, it is concluded that the survey questionnaire in this study has good structural validity.

**Table 3:** Total Variance Explained

| Componen | Total | Initial Eigenvalues | | Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings | | | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | %of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | %of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | %of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1 | 26.418 | 32.615 | 32.615 | 26.418 | 32.615 | 32.615 | 12.431 | 15.347 | 15.347 |
| 2 | 9.021 | 11.137 | 43.751 | 9.021 | 11.137 | 43.751 | 11.336 | 13.996 | 29.343 |
| 3 | 6.427 | 7.934 | 51.685 | 6.427 | 7.934 | 51.685 | 9.484 | 11.709 | 41.052 |
| 4 | 6.035 | 7.451 | 59.136 | 6.035 | 7.451 | 59.136 | 8.679 | 10.715 | 51.766 |
| 5 | 4.465 | 5.512 | 64.648 | 4.465 | 5.512 | 64.648 | 6.787 | 8.379 | 60.145 |

| Componen | Total | Initial Eigenvalues | | Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings | | | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | %of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | %of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | %of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 6 | 3.654 | 4.511 | 69.159 | 3.654 | 4.511 | 69.159 | 6.065 | 7.488 | 67.633 |
| 7 | 2.224 | 2.745 | 71.905 | 2.224 | 2.745 | 71.905 | 3.460 | 4.271 | 71.905 |

3. When evaluating this value, weights are assigned to each component of the 81items after rotation. An orthogonal rotation using the Varimax method was applied to enhance interpretability. The rotation has converged after 6 iterations.

**Table 4**: Rotated Component Matrix

| Item | Component | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 (16) | 2 (15) | 3 (13) | 4 (12) | 5 (10) | 6 (9) | 7 (6) |
| 07 | 0.87 | | | | | | |
| 14 | 0.87 | | | | | | |
| 22 | 0.87 | | | | | | |
| 03 | 0.86 | | | | | | |
| 11 | 0.86 | | | | | | |
| 19 | 0.86 | | | | | | |
| 20 | 0.86 | | | | | | |
| 12 | 0.86 | | | | | | |
| 05 | 0.85 | | | | | | |
| 09 | 0.85 | | | | | | |
| 01 | 0.84 | | | | | | |
| 10 | 0.84 | | | | | | |
| 2 | 0.83 | | | | | | |
| 21 | 0.83 | | | | | | |
| 13 | 0.82 | | | | | | |
| 8 | 0.82 | | | | | | |
| 26 | | 0.86 | | | | | |
| 41 | | 0.85 | | | | | |
| 30 | | 0.84 | | | | | |
| 40 | | 0.83 | | | | | |
| 37 | | 0.83 | | | | | |
| 29 | | 0.82 | | | | | |
| 39 | | 0.82 | | | | | |
| 35 | | 0.82 | | | | | |

| Item | Component | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 (16) | 2 (15) | 3 (13) | 4 (12) | 5 (10) | 6 (9) | 7 (6) |
| 33 | | 0.82 | | | | | |
| 23 | | 0.81 | | | | | |
| 32 | | 0.81 | | | | | |
| 38 | | 0.80 | | | | | |
| 25 | | 0.80 | | | | | |
| 31 | | 0.80 | | | | | |
| 36 | | 0.79 | | | | | |
| 58 | | | 0.84 | | | | |
| 54 | | | 0.82 | | | | |
| 57 | | | 0.82 | | | | |
| 43 | | | 0.82 | | | | |
| 53 | | | 0.81 | | | | |
| 49 | | | 0.81 | | | | |
| 45 | | | 0.80 | | | | |
| 46 | | | 0.80 | | | | |
| 48 | | | 0.80 | | | | |
| 51 | | | 0.79 | | | | |
| 50 | | | 0.77 | | | | |
| 56 | | | 0.77 | | | | |
| 55 | | | 0.76 | | | | |
| 67 | | | | 0.85 | | | |
| 75 | | | | 0.83 | | | |
| 70 | | | | 0.81 | | | |
| 72 | | | | 0.80 | | | |
| 66 | | | | 0.79 | | | |
| 63 | | | | 0.79 | | | |
| 76 | | | | 0.78 | | | |
| 62 | | | | 0.78 | | | |
| 69 | | | | 0.78 | | | |
| 61 | | | | 0.78 | | | |
| 71 | | | | 0.78 | | | |
| 68 | | | | 0.77 | | | |
| 89 | | | | | 0.79 | | |
| 77 | | | | | 0.78 | | |
| 85 | | | | | 0.77 | | |
| 79 | | | | | 0.77 | | |
| 84 | | | | | 0.77 | | |
| 82 | | | | | 0.77 | | |
| 86 | | | | | 0.76 | | |

| Item | Component | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 (16) | 2 (15) | 3 (13) | 4 (12) | 5 (10) | 6 (9) | 7 (6) |
| 87 | | | | | 0.75 | | |
| 80 | | | | | 0.73 | | |
| 83 | | | | | 0.73 | | |
| 91 | | | | | | 0.78 | |
| 92 | | | | | | 0.77 | |
| 100 | | | | | | 0.76 | |
| 93 | | | | | | 0.76 | |
| 101 | | | | | | 0.76 | |
| 96 | | | | | | 0.76 | |
| 97 | | | | | | 0.75 | |
| 94 | | | | | | 0.74 | |
| 102 | | | | | | 0.72 | |
| 107 | | | | | | | 0.71 |
| 106 | | | | | | | 0.71 |
| 104 | | | | | | | 0.70 |
| 110 | | | | | | | 0.66 |
| 105 | | | | | | | 0.66 |
| 103 | | | | | | | 0.63 |

4. In conjunction with the scree plot analysis, this method helps identify the optimal number of factors by locating the "inflection point," where the rate of variance explained by additional factors begins to decline significantly. As illustrated in Figure 1, the ideal principal components are those appearing before this inflection point, as they contribute meaningfully to the explained variance.

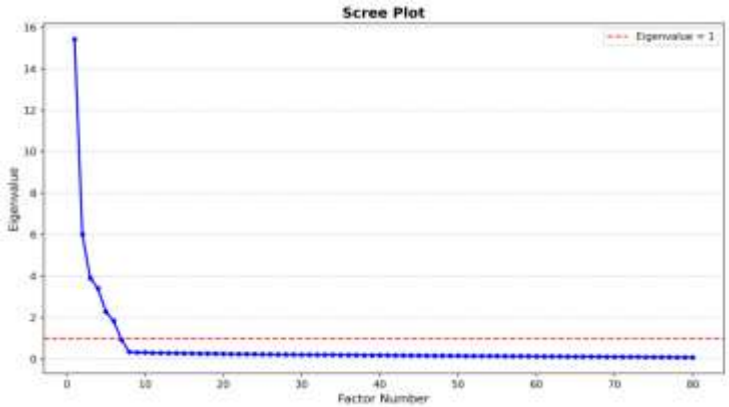



**Figure 1:** Scree Plot

3. Results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis of the component on code of professional morality management model for teachers in private universities in Hainan Province.

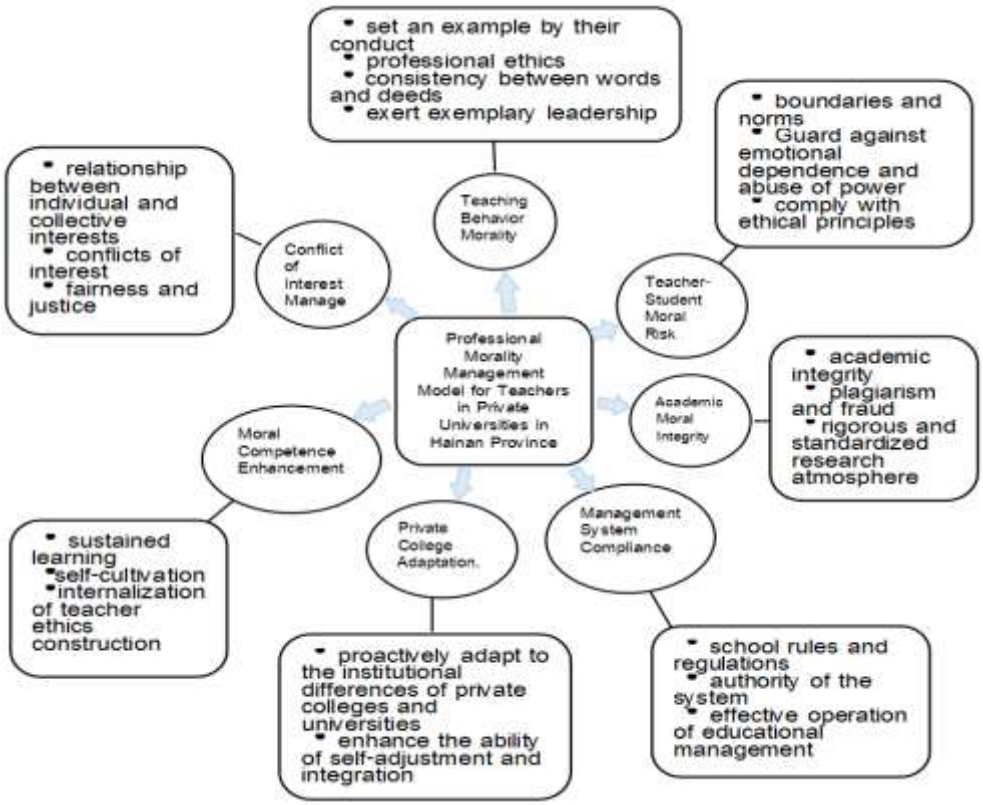



**Figure 2:** The professional morality management model for teachers in private universities in Hainan province.

4. Results of key informants interview on code of Results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis of the component on code of professional morality management model for teachers in private universities in Hainan Province **:** Nine experts concluded that teacher moral management in Hainan's private universities should integrate seven dimensions—behavioral morality, teacher–student interaction, academic integrity, institutional compliance, environmental adaptation, moral competence, and conflict-of-interest governance—forming a multidimensional framework that strengthens educational quality and supports sustainable institutional development.

## Discussion

This study focuses on faculty members in private universities in Hainan Province and explores the construction of a normative model for teacher moral management. Based on questionnaire surveys and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), seven core factors were identified: teaching behavior morality, moral risks in teacher–student interaction, academic integrity, compliance with management systems, adaptation to the private university environment, enhancement of teachers' moral literacy, and conflict of interest management. Expert

interviews and qualitative thematic analysis further elaborated on the theoretical and practical implications of these factors.

The study involves a sample of 500 teachers, with data collected through a questionnaire using purposive and random sampling. The researcher employs exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to analyze the data, aiming to construct a framework for teachers' professional morality management. Study the level of teachers 'professional morality management for private universities in Hainan Province, it is found that all 120 items on the teachers' professional morality management for private universities in Hainan Province variable items have an arithmetic mean value ($\bar{x}$) equal to3.24(moderate level) . The standard deviation (S.D.) is equal to 0.68. When considering each item, it is found that the level of importance is high level in 120 items at a moderate level. The mean ($\bar{x}$) is between2.40- 4.05, and the standard deviation (S.D.) is between 0.41-0.89. Through the exploratory factor analysis of 120 variable items, there were 81items left ,a total of 39 items with substandard conditions were excluded. During the exploratory factor analysis, the authors also applied the principal component analysis method and extracted seven factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. Seven core factors were identified: teaching behavior morality, moral risks in teacher–student interaction, academic integrity, compliance with management systems, adaptation to the private university environment, enhancement of teachers' moral literacy, and conflict of interest management. The results showed that the total variance explained by these 7 common factors exceeded the highest standard of 60%, specifically reaching71.91%, the variance explanatory rates of the 7factors are 15.35% ,14.00% ,11.71% ,10.72% ,8.38%, 7.49% ,4.27% respectively.

Conclusion of the teachers professional morality management model. This part is about the research objective 3, which to propose the teachers professional morality management model for private universities in Hainan province. Firstly, conclusions regarding model integration and application. The moral management model for teaching staff in Hainan's private higher education institutions developed in this study systematically integrates three dimensions: institutional embedding, cultural adaptation, and behavioural practice. It has been successfully applied throughout the entire recruitment, appraisal, and development process for teaching staff. During recruitment, candidates are screened using an moral Sensitivity Assessment Tool" (incorporating factors such as cross-border conflict of interest identification and cultural-moral judgement). Performance appraisals incorporate metrics including "moral risk prevention in teacher-student interactions" and "academic integrity practices" into the evaluation framework. At the professional development level, customized modules such as "morality of Free Trade Port Policies" and "Collaborative Teaching of Li and Miao Cultures" were developed. Practice demonstrates that this model effectively enhances the standardisation and consistency of faculty moral conduct, aligning with private universities'

dual development needs of internationalisation and localisation. Secondly, conclusions regarding capability shortfall improvements. Research indicates that current faculty exhibit significant deficiencies in areas such as dynamic interest declarations, cross-cultural moral decision-making, and digital morality applications (e.g., AI teaching data compliance). Three intervention strategies significantly addressed these issues: firstly, establishing cross-border morality workshops (jointly developing localised case studies with Southeast Asian universities) to enhance integration of international norms and ethnic morality; secondly, implementing university-industry morality co-construction mechanisms (e.g., conflict-of-interest reviews for collaborative projects) to improve conflict mediation in practical scenarios; thirdly, establishing an morality innovation fund (supporting faculty development of morality teaching toolkits).Thirdly, research value and future directions. This study innovatively constructs a quantitative model for faculty morality management in private higher education institutions, filling a gap in educational morality governance within the context of special free trade port policies and multi-ethnic cultures. Through EFA-validated dimensions, it provides empirical evidence for the Hainan Provincial Department of Education in formulating the Guidelines for Moral Conduct of Faculty in Private Higher Education Institutions.

Overall, the moral management model for private higher education institutions in Hainan Province developed herein effectively enhances teachers' moral decision-making and behavioural compliance through a tripartite synergistic mechanism of “institutional-cultural-behavioural” dimensions. Empirical evidence demonstrates that this model significantly enhances moral adaptability in cross-border collaborations, high-risk behaviour interception rates, and cultural integration capabilities. It offers a replicable and scalable governance paradigm for faculty development within private higher education institutions under the free trade port framework, while providing crucial practical foundations for innovating the national moral governance system in private education.

**For Further Research**

This study has achieved significant progress in theoretical development and empirical validation, though further refinement remains possible. To complement the quantitative approach-which may overlook underlying motivations and cultural contexts—and to chart a pathway for subsequent research, we recommend in-depth exploration in the following areas:

First, Qualitative Deepening and Dynamic Tracking. Employing mixed-methods research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017), in-depth interviews and narrative inquiry could be used to examine the emotional dimensions and implicit cultural norms that shape teachers' moral decision-making. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to track the evolution of teachers' moral cognition in response to policy iterations and technological transformation (Meneses & Márquez, 2016). Second, Addressing Emerging Socio-Technological Challenges. It is essential to integrate emerging variables such as AI ethics (e.g., algorithmic fairness and data

privacy; Jobin et al., 2019) and technology-mediated moral education (Krause & Smedema, 2021) into the research framework. Doing so would enhance the theory's contemporary relevance and explanatory power. Third, Innovative Research Methods and Theoretical Perspectives. Future studies could employ action research (Mertler, 2019) and qualitative comparative analysis (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009) to explore the complex causal configurations influencing moral behavior. Interdisciplinary perspectives, such as those from cultural-historical activity theory (Engeström, 2018), could also help illuminate teachers' moral development within technology-mediated environments and multi-actor systems.These recommendations aim to advance the research focus from "factor identification" to "process-mechanism exploration," and from "model construction" to "contextualized deep understanding."

Lastly, external factors—such as shifts in economic conditions or the broader policy system—may also influence the research context. Although not examined in detail in this study, future research should take these macro-level dynamics into account to develop a more accurate and responsive model for professional morality management in educational settings.

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