SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE INFLUENCE ON EMPLOYEE WORK ENGAGEMENT IN CHINA'S K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of The Center for Leadership Studies

Northwest University

In Partial Fulfillment

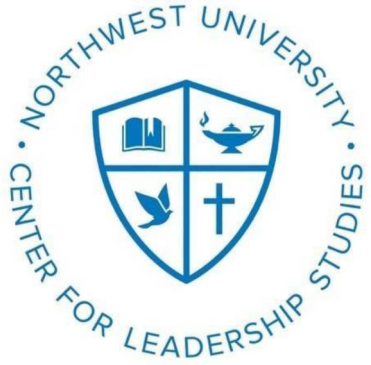
Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy in Organizational Leadership

By

Jingyan Liang

October 2022



Approval Signatures:

Thomas Alsbury 10/17/2022

Dissertation Chair: Thomas Alsbury Ed.D. Date

10/17/2022

Committee Member: Kent Mankins Ph.D. Date

Rowlanda Cawthon 10/17/2022

Committee Member: Rowlanda Cawthon Ed.D. Date

Valerie Rance 10/17/2022

Dean/Director of the Center for Leadership Studies: Valerie Rance Ph.D. Date

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to convey my gratitude to Dr. Thomas Lee Alsbury, my committee chair, an experienced and exceptional mentor who supported my research and provided insightful comments on my academic path. His rigorous intellectual approach and broad vision inspired me to take a step toward developing a full, cross-cultural academic life with a global outlook. Even when he was busy with personal matters, he still followed my research with care by providing valuable guidance at every stage of the dissertation's writing-up process. He sent me emails early in the morning and late at night. Although we only met on Zoom, I experienced my chair's capable, precise, and devoted personality. Without his enlightening instruction, impressive kindness, and patience, I could not have completed my dissertation.

Second, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Rowlanda N. Cawthon for her outstanding work as a committee member and course professor. She is a powerful and influential female leader and scholar who inspired me to pursue my initial desire to conduct research and encouraged me to be proud of my female research throughout this academic journey. I also wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Kent Mankins, who served on my committee board, for contributing his tremendous expertise. His positive and timely feedback urged me to continue on my life and academic path. His profound knowledge of English triggered my love for this beautiful language and pushed me to learn it better.

Third, I want to acknowledge Dr. Earl Creps, Dean of the Center for Leadership Studies, for inspiring me to pursue the doctorate and cooperate with school's professors to develop my study program. I would also like to thank Isabel Kenney, Program

Coordinator, for providing timely and significant assistance on problems linked to my international student status and course schedule, as well as Li Lowry, Director of the International Education Office, for encouraging me to be enthusiastic about studying abroad and praising my progress throughout the years I lived in the United States. Li also provided me with professional language editing resources.

Fourth, I am grateful to my aunt, Hongmei Wei, and to her employment groups for providing sufficient valid school resources and participants for my research. They navigated the research discussions with creative ideas and provided me with spiritual comfort when I was stressed by my studies. I also wish to sincerely thank my friends and peers, who gave their help and time by listening to me and helping me work out my problems during the difficult process of writing the dissertation.

Fifth, I am deeply indebted to my beloved parents, Yongyu Liang and Hongzhi Yang, as well as my fiancé, Guanqiang Liu, for their love, deep confidence in me, and unwavering support throughout these years, and for consistently offering spiritual encouragement and financial support. Without their assistance, I would not have been able to finish my dissertation or get through challenging times. Their affection follows me no matter where I go.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abstract

The homogenization of educational leadership styles raises the question of whether there is a single best leadership style or whether flexibility and adaptability of leadership styles are more effective, becoming a topic worthy of study in leadership science. Previous existing research purported that a situational leadership approach influenced employees' work satisfaction, self-efficacy, and job performance without taking gender into account, and there was a particular deficiency in the implementation of situational leadership in Chinese K-12 public schools. Therefore, the purpose of this research study was to examine the relationships between the use of situational leadership, any effects on employee work engagement, and influences of gender in Chinese K-12 public schools.

In this quantitative study, situational leadership non-self-assessment and the Utrecht work engagement scale surveys were used to determine the level of teacher work engagement and the leaders' use of situational leadership respectively. Leader's self-assessment of situational leadership level was tested by situational leadership II survey. Findings indicated that the use of situational leadership was a successful leadership style regardless of the gender of the teachers. A statistically significant correlation was found between (a) teachers' work engagement and leaders' use of situational leadership; (b) teacher's gender and age, and work engagement; (c) the gender of teachers and their impressions of the leadership style of their leaders; and (d) gender, age, the position of the leader, and the use of situational leadership, were strongly associated.

The level of use of situational leadership was related to teachers' work engagement and the leader's personality (e.g., gender, position, and age) and was not related to the teacher's personality (e.g., gender and age). In order for the leadership

model to be universally applicable and effective in China, it needs to be interpreted, analyzed, and implemented in different ways in the future. This study provides a theoretical foundation for the development of leadership and teacher engagement in Chinese K-12 public schools and offers recommendations for policymakers, decision makers, educators, and principals to improve leadership effectiveness and teacher's work engagement.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Organizations, departments, and teams are all impacted by a leader's style, thus, leaders seeking the best results should avoid relying on a single style of leadership (J. Chen & Silverthorne, 2005). Because no one style of leadership works for everyone (Avery & Ryan, 2002; J. Chen & Silverthorne, 2005), leaders must assess their followers' level of preparedness before selecting an approach. Walker and Dimmock (2010) noted that educational leadership was contextual and may signify various things in different sociocultural contexts. In the past 10 years, leadership in Western educational contexts progressively evolved away from official leaders and toward more collaborative arrangements, and the extant study literature is mostly focused on this trend (David, 2016; Lu & Smith, 2022). There is a dearth of research on whether Western-derived leadership methods can be successfully deployed in Asian contexts, notably in mainland China (Ha et al., 2019; Lu & Smith, 2022).

In global research, many organizations' top leadership roles are unevenly distributed between men and women (Alan et al., 2019; Appelbaum et al., 2018; Eklund et al., 2017; Fecher, 2007; Kairys, 2018). Inequities exist in schools, too (Fecher, 2007). Because of the predominance of men in school leadership roles, females are now a minority in such positions (Fecher, 2007). Because of their gender, women have had to fight against discrimination and barriers to advancement, partly because school leaders are subjected to preconceived notions and expectations (Emmerik et al., 2010; Fecher,

2007; Kairys, 2018). Even while school administrators of both genders may be in the same position, their pathways to leadership and experiences may be vastly different. However, gender disparities in the experience of middle school leaders are largely unstudied (Fecher, 2007; Flabbi et al., 2019; Kairys, 2018).

In recent years, the Chinese Ministry of Education placed a premium on educational quality (Lai et al., 2017). Principals were required to play a critical role in steering their schools' direction, ensuring that curricular change was implemented, and encouraging school-based teacher development (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Lai et al., 2017). Historically, the leadership style of the Chinese educational system was principal-centered and patriarchal (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Lai et al., 2017). The patriarchal culture's impact continues to shape men and women's roles in schools, notably in school leadership (Bush & Haiyan, 2013). Therefore, while exploring the leadership style, the role brought by the gender difference is also worth studying. Chinese women have always been expected to adhere to the three obedience and four virtues of traditional Chinese culture, and as a result, women are often requested to forego employment in favor of home responsibilities (Feng, 2020). Males, on the other hand, are expected to seek careers and achieve leadership positions in public offices, according to Chinese traditional culture (Feng, 2020; Ha et al., 2019; Lai et al., 2017). Currently most women in the K-12 public school system labor in supporting positions and do so in the shadow of males (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Ha et al., 2019; Zhao & Jones, 2017; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). A top leadership role for a woman in a Chinese company is still very unusual (Zhao & Jones, 2017). Additionally, the application of traditional leadership styles to present and future educational environments prompted academic reflection and debate in

China (Gu et al., 2020; Lai et al., 2017; Lu & Smith, 2022). However, no current studies on situational leadership style exist in China, particularly using gender as a covariate.

Blanchard and Hersey's (1976) situational leadership concept can be employed in the strategy of developing leadership effectiveness in light of globalization and the high-tech era. Blanchard and Hersey were the first to propose a leadership and maturity level hypothesis. Blanchard and Hersey's situational leadership theory (SLT) is well known in the field of management leadership theory. J. Chen and Silverthorne (2005) describe situational leadership as a form of leadership in which the follower determines the most acceptable leader behavior. According to SLT, a good leader adapts their leadership style to the capacity and willingness of subordinates to complete a particular job (Hersey et al., 1979). SLT has been linked to leadership effectiveness, employee job happiness, work stress, and employee performance in previous studies (Cairns et al., 1998; Vries et al., 2002). According to Avery and Ryan (2002), although SLT stresses the link between leadership and work performance, little research has been conducted in this area. Thus, this study used SLT in Chinese mainland K-12 educational public schools to examine the relationships between SLT and work performance using gender as a covariate.

Background

Early definitions of leadership focused on a person's capacity to influence others and community groups (Gates et al., 1976; Greenwood, 1996). Leadership is now described as a person's capacity to empower, encourage, and influence others in order to achieve organizational success and effectiveness (Al-Khamaiseh et al., 2020; Eklund et al., 2017; Grove, 2008; Wuryani et al., 2020). A few research studies test situational theories of leadership specific to the relationships between situational leadership effectiveness, gender, and work engagement (Vries et al., 2002). Additionally, research

on gender disparities in leadership and the number of variations in female and male conduct has continued to expand since the beginning of the twenty-first century (Eklund et al., 2017). Researchers highlight a need to determine whether a link exists between leadership attributes and actions. According to Eklund et al. (2017), the key distinctions in leadership style include (a) social behavior, (b) intellect, and (c) temperament. Also mentioned are: (a) obedience, (b) dominance, (c) competitiveness, (d) activity level, (e) fear and anxiety, and (f) technological sensitivity are also mentioned (Jogulu & Wood, 2016; Rhee & Sigler, 2015). There is evidence that female-male differences in management talents, attitudes, and work-related behaviors have an effect on the leaders' choice of leadership style (Alan et al., 2019; Appelbaum et al., 2018; Eklund et al., 2017; Emmerik et al., 2010; Fecher, 2007; Johnson et al., 2008; Kairys, 2018; Parveen & Tariq, 2014).

In China, researchers investigated the reform of educational leadership processes and emphasize the limits of leadership research in different cultural settings (Busher, 2006; Gu et al., 2020; Ha et al., 2019; Lai et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2012; Wong, 2001). A review of the literature on gender leadership characteristics (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014; Powell, 2020), includes an overview of leadership from a cultural perspective (Rajasekar & Beh, 2013), different theories of leadership styles (Appelbaum et al., 2018; Basaran & Kiral, 2020; Bell, 1993; Blase & Blase 2004), and barriers to female leadership (Eagly, 2020; Ellemers, 2018). The contemporary literature addresses fundamental characteristics of modern Chinese culture, notably patriarchal leadership approaches (Rajasekar & Beh, 2013). Rajasekar and Beh (2013) examined the complexities and potential growth of contemporary leadership in a globalized China by

summarizing historical and modern leadership development in China and contrasted it with major Western conceptions of leadership. Thus far, no study in China examined gender and work participation in the framework of Western leadership theory, especially in relation to use of SLT. Although scholars in the area of study offer numerous leadership ideas in China (Busher, 2006; Gu et al., 2020; Ha et al., 2019; Lai et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2012; Wibowo, 2017), few studies assess the effect of leadership style and gender.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that underpins this study is SLT, and was established by Blanchard and Hersey in 1969 (Blanchard, 1997). The life cycle idea of leadership was the name given to this theory when it was originally proposed. SLT was further developed in the mid-1970s and rebranded in the mid-1980s (Blanchard, 1997). According to the SLT, there is no one best way to lead across the board (Blanchard, 1997; Cairns et al., 1998; Graeff, 1997). Based on the four quadrants of SLT, leaders can either prioritize high-task, low-relationship behavior (Style 1: Telling/Directing); high-task, high-relationship behavior (Style 2: Selling/Coaching); low-task, high-relationship behavior (Style 3: Participating/Facilitating); or high-task, low-relationship behavior (Style 4: Delegating/Observing).

The necessity to incorporate SLT into the area of K-12 education in China is a result of a recent educational reform that has compelled teachers and school leaders to make adjustments to the school's purpose, teachers' work methods, and school leaders' leadership styles. Therefore, the application of SLT to the actual educational workplace is instructional and timely. The enormous private education industry in China was struck a "fatal blow" when sweeping regulations were implemented in July by the China State

Council, including a ban on curriculum-based tutoring companies collecting funding through stock listings (Fitch Ratings, 2021; Global Times, 2021). The policy effectively forced qualified teachers back into public education (Fitch Ratings, 2021; Global Times, 2021; Kologrivaya & Shleifer, 2021). The leadership mechanisms of public education under the policy were bound to be affected by the policy, and required adaption of the leadership model used by school leaders.

The goal of this study was to discover the application of SLT among leaders of both genders, as well as to investigate the elements that impact the leadership effectiveness of educational leaders in China based on feedback on employee work engagement. The major goals were to determine if high levels of employee work engagement were related to leaders who used SLT, as well as whether gender was a relevant variable for leadership effectiveness. In summary, the theoretical framework illustrates the potential relevance of K-12 educational leaders adopting SLT and the usefulness of gender leadership effectiveness research.

Gender Characteristics in Chinese K-12 Public Schools

The difference between school leadership in China's K-12 public schools and other nations, especially countries in the West such as the United States, emerged because of different cultural backgrounds (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Ha et al., 2019; Law, 2009; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). Internal and external differences in the school environment in China influences the majority of leaders within the school society (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Ha et al., 2019; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). The general beliefs surrounding aspects, such as gender, in selecting educational leaders are some of the most essential aspects needing to be studied to determine their influence on educational leadership in

China (Ha et al., 2019; Li, 2020). In addition, leaders in education systems in China, especially in K-12 public schools, continue to face inequality in terms of gender imbalance (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Li, 2020).

Despite the fact that women continue to hold few leadership offices in the majority of the countries in the world, China presents a distinct case especially in leadership offices held in K-12 public schools (Feng, 2020; Ha et al., 2019; Li, 2020). The major gender inequity in China began with the ideology of the Han Dynasty occurring from 207 B.C. to 202 A.D. (Feng, 2020; Wong, 2001), and the Confucianism ideologies and concepts dominating the selection of organizational leaders as well as in social situations. The traditions inherited over the years make it difficult for women to occupy public office especially in education (Feng, 2020; Lai et al., 2017; Wong, 2001). In the traditional aspect of the Chinese heritage, women were mandated to adhere to the three obedience's and four virtues (Feng, 2020; Wong, 2001). In the three obedience's, women in the Chinese culture need to obey the biological father before marriage, the husband during marriage, and sons in case the woman attains widowhood (Feng, 2020). The four virtues women need to adhere to in the Chinese cultural environment entail efficiency in needlework, physical charm, fidelity, and propriety in speech (Feng, 2020; Wong, 2001). The traditional culture in China in relation to pursuing career in the society and holding office in the public space was a man's mandate (Feng, 2020; Ha et al., 2019; Lai et al., 2017).

Men, in China, become the most essential aspect of the society and backbone of the family making all the crucial decisions in the homestead (Feng, 2020; Lai et al., 2017). The woman, with the privilege to work in waged occupation during the historical

ages in China, can only take lesser roles in the workplace (Feng, 2020; Lai et al., 2017). The traditional way of thinking, culture inclination, and orientation make it especially difficult for women to occupy public offices. Despite the fact that China has evolved and become one of the biggest employers of women in the world, the majority of women still occupy lesser roles in the workplace (Radu et al., 2017). Likewise, the majority of women working in the K-12 public schools occupy supporting roles and work in the shadow of men (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Ha et al., 2019; Zhao & Jones, 2017; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). Finding women in a senior leadership position in a Chinese organization continues to be rare (Zhao & Jones, 2017). This study includes an analysis of the effects of gender on the K-12 public school leaders' use of situational leadership style and the association with teacher engagement as an indicator of leader effectiveness.

Teacher Work Engagement

Work engagement by employees is considered a good measure of effectiveness from an organizational point of view (Burke, 1999), because more engaged workers deliver increased desired output in their jobs. Engaged workers work for longer hours and strive harder to achieve organizational targets (Hassan, 2019). Research suggests that followers pay more attention to concepts such as meaningful work, authenticity, and social responsibility (Hakanen et al., 2006; Hassan, 2019). Thus, leaders need to be prepared with leadership perspectives, visions, and models that equip them to meet the challenge of improving worker engagement in the evolving organizational landscape (Shuck & Herd, 2012). Management and leadership play a significant role in employee engagement, but it is equally important for employees to be enthusiastic for the work they perform (Zahed-Babelan et al., 2019). In fact, the impact of diminished job resources on

organizational commitment were found to be mediated by work engagement (Hakanen et al., 2006). Research from Van Beek et al. (2011) based on self-determination theory. Research explored the correlations between workaholism, engagement at work, and burnout among Chinese health care employees while controlling for workplace demand and resources (Van Beek et al., 2011). The study showed an association between high levels of work engagement and intrinsic regulation, which in turn allows leaders to make professional decisions and lead effectively. Beyond mastering the job's tasks, employees need to feel pride in what is being accomplished and share in the excitement when goals are achieved. The more employees feel they are building their own skill sets, competence, and control of their work product, the more likely they are to demonstrate high levels of engagement (Wiley, 2010). According to the study by Zeng et al. (2019), who evaluated Chinese mainland secondary school teachers, teachers' well-being and development attitude were demonstrated to be connected to their degree of work engagement. Teachers who demonstrated a development attitude and a sense of well-being in their students were more engaged in their job, influenced by the level of collaboration with school administrators (Zeng et al., 2019). Consequently, this study includes teachers' work performance in terms of work engagement, and solicited teacher feedback on leadership effectiveness, to measure any significant association between those variables.

Statement of the Problem

According to Gu et al. (2020), the leadership styles of administrators in educational institutions determine the behavior of teachers in the institution. Some studies define the most essential role of school leaders as guiding and directing teachers on the appropriate means to complete assigned tasks and duties (Burns & Martin, 2020; Fox et

al., 2015; Göksoy, 2015; Gurr, 2008; Hassan, 2019; Przybylski et al., 2018). Employees in educational organizations are assets the institution strives to retain for longer periods to ensure maximum utilization (Wibowo, 2017). Leaders aspire to learn to efficiently use available resources in the organization to ensure better results (Emmerik et al., 2010; Faizan et al., 2018; Greenwood, 1996). According to Zhao and Jones (2017), the ability of a leader to perform at their place of work depends on the surrounding environment and support received from the teaching staff. Gender is identified as a significant variable in studies on effective leadership (Appelbaum et al., 2018; Bolden et al., 2003; Eagly & Carli, 2003; Eklund et al., 2017; Sudha et al., 2016). The majority of cultures around the world favor the ideology of a man occupying a higher office in the organization (Fritz & Van Knippenberg, 2017). Subsequently, Chinese society, in particular, denies women the opportunity to become better leaders because of historical injustices (Feng, 2020; Gu et al., 2020; Lai et al., 2017).

Gender has become a sensitive topic, and according to recent literature directly influences the effectiveness of leadership in educational institutions (Alan et al., 2019; Appelbaum et al., 2018; Bolden et al., 2003; Eagly & Carli, 2003; Eklund et al., 2017; Sudha et al., 2016). The two main identified genders in China, male and female, are found to influence the selection of leader in China's K-12 public schools (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Ha et al., 2019; Walker et al., 2012). Social stereotypes in the Chinese society assume male to be more effective at leadership compared to women (Thompson & Glasø, 2015). Although the performance of female leaders in China's K-12 public schools was found to depend on the level of available resources, the majority of the members in the society believe public schools headed by men tend to perform better than schools headed

by women (Gu et al., 2020; Zhao & Jones, 2017). This stereotyping is a result of traditional Chinese society that embraces the concept of men as the head of the family (Feng, 2020). This study includes a measure of the effects of gender roles on a school leaders use of situational leadership.

Gaps in Research

The primary gap in research literature surrounding the topics of interest in this study include a lack of research on leader effectiveness and gender specifically focused on situational leadership. For the gaps of leadership effectiveness and genders, researchers focused on transformational and transactional leadership theories in their studies of leadership effectiveness in relation to gender (Beri & Aibu, 2018; Sims et al., 2020; Wing-Wah, 2013). For example, Ghana's technical and commercial institutions studied the efficiency of transactional and transformational leadership styles to see how managers may effectively conduct their leadership obligations (Beri & Aibu, 2018). Women outperformed men in business and academia, but men outperformed their female counterparts in management and senior posts, according to the results of the poll (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). Males saw themselves as leaders at all levels of management, while women viewed themselves as leaders at lower and higher levels. Research on gender and leadership theory does not imply that a single leadership theory could be employed for efficiency in the same company (Appelbaum et al., 2018; Bell, 1993; Eklund et al., 2017; Emmerik et al., 2010; Flabbi et al., 2019; Medina, 2015; Thompson & Glasø, 2015).

An empirical test of the influence of situational leadership effectiveness on employee engagement has not been developed (Lestari et al., 2020; Reed 2019, Thompson & Glasø, 2015; Wuryani et al. 2020). Authentic leadership (Basaran & Kiral,

2020; Walumbwa et al., 2010), invitational leadership (Burns & Martin, 2020), distributed leadership (Göksoy, 2015), transformational leadership (Tims et al., 2011), and instructional leadership (Zahed-Babelan et al., 2019) were all found in the literature, but situational leadership was rarely discussed (Reed, 2019).

A Gap in Situational Leadership Research in China

Few studies in China concentrate on situational leadership in the work place, or discuss its impact in China. No study could be found that conducted research in Chinese K-12 public schools focused on SLT during COVID-19. Luo and Liu (2014) examined how the pairings of 182 supervisors with their subordinates affected their use of situational leadership. Their first objective was to learn more about SLTs potential uses in a developing economy with a culture that is distinct from the West. The results showed that organizational citizenship behavior improved with congruence between leadership style and personnel preparedness (Luo & Liu, 2014). X. Zhang (2019) emphasized that situational leadership is a management technique that assesses a leader's effectiveness not just in setting priorities for getting work done but also in keeping everybody on the same page and emphasizing collaboration. They found effective leaders strike a balance between being task-oriented and being relationship-oriented, a theoretical foundation of SLT (X. Zhang, 2019). X. Zhang's finding indicate that top Chinese managers increasingly prioritize relationships over tasks. As a result, they concluded that businesses needed to address the training of all managers as a whole, since adjusting individual managers was not enough. Silverthorne and Wang (2010) investigated a large construction firm where managers had a wide range of duties, and studied situational leadership using the LEAD-Self tool to assess how leaders described their own leadership

abilities and style. Their findings supported the applicability of the SLT in Taiwan, and found a strong correlation between leaders' self-perceptions and those of their peers, superiors, and subordinates. Additionally, they found that leadership adaptability was directly related to productivity as measured by absenteeism, turnover rates, profits, and (to a lesser extent) quality (Silverthorne & Wang, 2010). Lee (2007) conducted research focused on the connection between situational leadership styles and employee happiness in Taiwanese firms with operations in China. Data showed that the two most successful forms of situational leadership were sales and teamwork (Lee, 2007).

A common finding from existing literature on Chinese leaders is that an excessively large number of authoritarian managers tend to get to the top of organizations (Lai et al., 2017; Przybylski et al., 2018; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). This is especially true of upper-level management and is a direct outcome of the competitive nature of advancement (Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). In the educational research area, C. Zhu and Caliskan (2022) argued that the heroic leadership paradigm was still prevalent in Chinese universities, despite changes aimed at improving the quality of higher education and adopting some Western conceptions of leadership (C. Zhu & Caliskan, 2022). Consequently, it may be difficult to implement educational leadership in the context of traditional Chinese society as C. Zhu and Caliskan stated. Lai et al. (2017) investigated two secondary schools in Beijing, finding that principals were more likely to use a top-down leadership approach as their primary mode of leadership.

Purpose of the Study

Effective leadership in any educational organization, including China's K-12 public schools requires the ability to communicate, inspire, and guide teachers to

complete their assigned duties according to the required instructions (Gu et al., 2020; Lai et al., 2017; Przybylski et al., 2018; Walker et al., 2012; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). Leaders in China's K-12 public schools were given the mandate to develop strategies and measures to ensure students consistently improve performance (Lai et al., 2017). Studies indicate the ability of teachers and staff to offer effective services to students depended on the ability of the school leader to motivate and encourage the staff to deliver (F. Chen, 2005; Göksoy, 2015; Przybylski et al., 2018). Leaders in the public schools took on the arduous task of regularly reviewing the performance of teachers to ensure each member in the organization delivers according to expectation (Gurr, 2008; Lai et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2012).

The purpose of this study was to measure the presence of a significant association between the leaders' level of use of situational leadership and the level of work engagement of teachers, including any effects of leader or teacher gender on the association.

Research Questions

The study was comparable to Reed's (2019) research who discovered that the use of situational leadership resulted in significant impacts on employee turnover and correlated with corporate management and employee behavior. In some studies, the use of situational leadership resulted in a positive and substantial impact on employee motivation (Hoy & Tarter, 1986; Lestari et al., 2020; Wuryani et al., 2020). Many studies examined the influence of leadership styles on a wide range of employee job outcomes critical to an organization's productivity and performance, for example, job satisfaction, dedication, performance, and motivation were just a few of the results that emerged (Hakanen et al., 2006; Rahmadani et al., 2020; Zeng et al., 2019).

The role of gender in determining the leadership style in China's K-12 public schools continues to be a concerning issue to the government (Feng, 2020; Law, 2009). According to a study by Parveen and Tariq (2014), women in the society required the same opportunity as the male especially in occupying offices in the education sector. The stereotyping of women against holding offices in the public schools continues to deprive the women in the entire society of attaining these occupational privileges. The use of gender to select leaders for educational positions increased prejudice against women in China and around the world (Alan et al., 2019; Bolden et al., 2003; Eagly & Carli, 2003; Eklund et al., 2017; Sudha et al., 2016).

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant relationship between the level of situational leadership used by the school head and the teachers' level of work engagement in K-12 public schools in China?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' gender and the level of use of situational leadership by school heads in K-12 public schools in China?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the leaders' gender and their level of use of situational leadership in K-12 public schools in China?

Significance of the Problem

This study focused on situational leadership exploring the need for leaders to motivate employees to do their best job. It is widely accepted that employee commitment to their jobs is a useful indicator of an organization's overall effectiveness (Burke, 1999). Employee participation was shown to moderate the impact of a loss in work resources and organizational commitment (Hakanen et al., 2006). As a result, the concept of

situational leadership advocates modifying leadership style dependent on the level of involvement of the leader in the action at hand.

In addition, gender, analyzed in this study, may play an important role when determining the correlation between leadership effectiveness and job participation. Gender-based leadership obstacles it is suggested, may be overcome by implementing educational reform in China (Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). However, there seems to be little hope of successful school leadership in China because of the wide disparity in senior ranks and administrative functions between the public and private sectors (Ha et al., 2019). Contrary to the principle of gender equality, men and women in China were granted distinct educational places because of differences in gender role behavior (Rajasekar & Beh, 2013). In order to have a clear image of leadership effectiveness, it is helpful to look at the skills of educational leaders of all genders in various settings (Hoy & Tarter, 1986; Lestari et al., 2020).

Studies on successful educational leadership styles have been widely researched (Avery et al., 2002; Cairns et al., 1998; David, 2016; Luo & Liu, 2014; Parveen & Tariq, 2014; Reed, 2019; Silverthorne & Wang, 2010; Thompson & Glasø, 2015; Wuryani et al., 2020; Yoshioka, 2006). Hofstede (1993) believed that research findings from American studies was not always relevant to other countries owing to cultural and moral distinctions. According to a study of China's many cultures and beliefs, Chinese people were more conservative in their interpersonal interactions, more respectful of their superiors, and more concerned with the right conduct of others than Americans (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Hofstede, 1993). Differences include an inclination of women for servant leadership and the difficulties of establishing fairness in the distribution of women and

men's labor in schooling (Gu et al., 2020; Ha et al., 2019). As a result, a distinctive leadership style was required in China, influenced by a gender-divided setting, to meet the demands of employee work engagement.

Definitions

Throughout this investigation, the following terms were used. The definitions are provided to aid in the comprehension and contextualization of the study.

Public schools. Public schools are institutions of higher learning supported by the local, state, and/or federal governments. The majority of public school programs provide general education options for students in kindergarten through Grade 12, as well as extracurricular activities for students in many of these programs.

In China, education is largely administered through the state-run public education system, which is subordinate to the Ministry of Education. All residents are required to attend school for a minimum of nine years, referred to as nine-year compulsory education, which is government-funded.

Work engagement. This refers to an employee's emotional commitment to the business and its aims (Kahn, 1990). When workers are engage, they exert discretionary effort, resulting in superior service, increased customer happiness, increased profit, and increased shareholder returns. According to the most widely accepted definition from Schaufeli and Bakker (2003), work engagement is a three-dimensional construct, including a behavioral-energetic component (i.e. vigor), an emotional component (i.e. dedication), and a cognitive component (i.e. absorption).

Situational leadership theory. Situational leadership is a leadership style where leaders adjust their leadership approach based on the situation. It involves taking stock of the personnel in the organization, considering the many factors at work, and then

deciding on a kind of management style that best suits the organization's current objectives and circumstances. As Blanchard (1997) noted, positional authority no longer suffices for today's leaders. According to the SLT, no one leadership style is optimal. Rather, organizations rely on the style of leadership and strategy most appropriate for the job at any singular point in time.

Delimitations

This research focused on male and female leaders and instructors in primary and secondary public schools in two Chinese provinces (Shandong and Yunnan). For the male and female leaders, the study included presidents, vice-presidents, secretaries of the Party Committee, and directors in Chinese K-12 public schools. Public schools were affected in a myriad of ways due to a national policy change in China in 2021. However, this study did not focus on differences in effectiveness that arose from the changes in leadership function or position in the school. The introduction of the policy prohibited transactions between private educational tutors and public schools, which was predicted to disrupt normal operations, however it is unclear whether existing schools that provide compulsory education were affected, and it has taken time for local governments to develop regulations to implement the new national policy. Therefore, the impact of changes in government measures and local regulations likely did not affect the results in this study.

The study used quantitative research design. Quantitative research involves a systemic investigation of a given occurrence or phenomenon by collection of data which can be quantified and the variables of the study must be measurable and persuasive (Hoare & Hoe, 2013). In this study, although gender may affect leadership effectiveness, leadership effectiveness cannot be directly measured, but must be perceptual data from

the perspectives of the leader and teachers. Therefore, the study of leadership effectiveness and work engagement are perceptual survey data in this study.

This study employs the use of multiple questions to measure leadership style and worker engagement. In surveys, a single item has considerable measurement error (Willits et al., 2016). When multiple indicators are used, this variation is expected to be averaged out (Willits et al., 2016). For complex concepts, multi-item scales may be needed to provide an overall summary of respondents' perceptions of these topics and are not subject to fluctuations, like in individual items (Willits et al., 2016). However, when a concept being referenced is single, specific, and understandable to the respondent, a single item is appropriate (Willits et al., 2016). In this study, multiple survey items were averaged to measure all variables in leadership and worker engagement.

Due to the breadth and complexity of the area of leadership effectiveness research, this study focused on a situational leadership, in order to examine teacher engagement as influenced by gender in Chinese K-12 public schools. There is a paucity of research on SLT in China due to the inaccessibility of data (Przybylski et al., 2018; Walker et al., 2012; Zhao & Jones, 2017; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). As a result, in this study, the sample size was restricted, the schools examined were confined to public schools, and the research study concentrated on the domains of leadership and pedagogy. This research focused only on any possible association between the level of use of situational leadership and level of employee engagement, mitigated by gender disparities in Chinese primary and secondary public schools.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I of this study discussed the theoretical framework, leadership theories, research findings on gender and work engagement, China's education system reforms, cultural leadership perspectives on social behavior and leadership development, and prior studies on the situational leadership model (SLM) and work engagement in China. Chapter II mainly adopts literature research analysis, (a) hotspot leadership theories research and this research variables research existing results, (b) the background of China's education system reform statement, (c) different cultural point of view of leadership theories research, (d) existing research in China about the situational leadership theory and work engagement, (e) gaps in the study. Chapter III details the study's methodology and research design, as well as the techniques utilized to gather data and information on the study's population and sample. At the conclusion of the report, references and appendices are presented. In chapters IV and V, the study's purpose, questions, methodology, and data collection strategies are outlined. Chapter V presents a summary of the results and some ideas for future research, as well as the results of any hypothesis tests that were conducted.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review examined the leadership traits of male and female K-12 educational leaders and the effects on teacher engagement, mitigated by leader and teacher gender. Due to the paucity of leadership studies in China, and the fact that certain papers were not available in English, a greater emphasis was placed on literature reviews from the United States and other countries in order to establish a strong global academic research foundation for conducting research in China.

In leadership studies that include a differentiation of gender, differences existed between men and women's success due to inconsistencies in women's status and leadership abilities (Appelbaum et al., 2018; Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Jogulu & Wood, 2016; Medina, V., 2015; Reed, 2019). Male directors, according to a Wall Street Journal editorial, were just afraid to take an unnecessary risk by employing a woman (Eagly, 2020). The unfortunate fact is that women get to the pinnacle of industries such as network nightly news and Hollywood only when those positions are undervalued, argued Kiefer (2015) of the New York Times editorial board. Given this trend, it is ironic that women are lauded in contemporary American culture for having the optimal combination of leadership abilities, superior leadership styles, and exceptional effectiveness (Eagly, 2020; Vroom & Jargo, 2007). On the other hand, it seems to be commonly accepted that women are inferior to men in leadership success (Eagly, 2020; Eklund et al., 2017; Faizan et al., 2018; Flabbi et al., 2019). Women continue to confront obstacles in

obtaining leadership roles, as well as prejudice and hostility once in these positions (Emmerik et al., 2010; Johnson et al., 2008).

Most of the existing research on SLT to date has focused on service-oriented organizations in education, healthcare, business management (Cretella et al., 2019; Eagly et al., 2003; Eklund et al., 2017; Emmerik et al., 2010; Faizan et al., 2018; Hoy & Tarter, 1986). Moreover, in the context of different leadership cultures, this chapter presents preliminary hypotheses on the applicability of leadership theory to Chinese leaders (Ha et al., 2019). The chapter presents the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence leadership (cultural context as well as follower work engagement), the characteristics of SLT used to define effective leadership (Albrecht & Marty, 2020; Basaran & Kiral, 2020; Hoy & Tarter, 1986), and the results of current research on leadership effectiveness (Faizan, 2018; Markovska & Nikolovski, 2014; Lestari et al., 2020).

The reform of educational leadership processes in China as well as the limits of research on leadership in various cultural contexts are described (Walker et al., 2012). A literature review of research on gender leadership traits is highlighted (Paustian-Underdhl et al., 2014; Powell, 2020), including an overview of leadership from a cultural perspective (Rajasekar & Beh, 2013), different theories of leadership styles (Appelbaum et al., 2018; Basaran & Kiral, 2020; Bell, 1993; Blase & Blase, 2004), and barriers to female leadership (Eagly, 2020; Ellemers, 2018). The chapter concludes with a summary of the research gaps related to studying leadership traits using SLT as the foundational theory and teacher engagement, as mitigated by gender.

Theoretical Framework

This chapter uses a theoretical foundation of SLT and measures for any association with work engagement (Albrecht & Marty, 2020; Basaran & Kiral, 2020).

The purpose of this study was to uncover any relationship between leadership styles (situational leadership), and teachers' work engagement in Chinese K-12 public schools, mitigated by gender difference. SLT assists leaders in reviewing and monitoring critical variables at work in order to pick the leadership style that best matches their aims and circumstances (Blanchard, 1997; Hoy & Tarter, 1986; Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2014). Thus, SLT adjusts to the organization's current working environment and demands, and is not dependent on the leader's skills, but adjusts his or her management style to match the organization's requirements. Work engagement refers to a positive and emotional condition of high energy paired with great commitment and a strong emphasis on work (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2015; Zahed-Babelan et al., 2019). The commitment of employees by modern public and private organizations, as a result of strong creativity, work performance, organizational citizenship, and customer happiness are demonstrated to coincide. In short, job involvement is an excellent predictor of significant employee, and business outcomes. The literature explored how the situational theory and work engagement theoretical models manifest across cultures and genders (Albrecht & Marty, 2020; Bakker & Schaufeli, 2015; Basaran & Kiral, 2020; Hassan, 2019; Wiley, 2010). Taken together, the research framework explained the relationship between work engagement and situational theory, as well as gender differences, providing evidence on how Chinese K-12 public school leaders can improve their leadership effectiveness (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Ha et al., 2019).

Leadership Theories

Research in leadership covers theory of leadership and many conceptions of leadership (Bolden et al., 2003; Eagly et al., 2003; Greenwood, 1996). The efficacy of generalization of management has long been identified as a mediating element affecting

action by leaders and followers (Burns & Martin, 2020; Faizan et al., 2018; Paustian-Underdhl et al., 2014; Sudha et al., 2016). Leadership is defined as an individual's ability to influence, encourage, and enable others to contribute to their companies' effectiveness and success (Appelbaum et al., 2018; Busher, 2006; House et al., 2004). While leadership behaviors can be conceived in various sizes, a large portion of their content can be represented using initiating structure and gender ratio, which indicating a conclusion that male managers are less engaged in initiating structures in companies with more female managers after controlling for social variables, but female managers' leadership is not related to the gender ratio (Emmerik, et al., 2010). The analysis and initiation structure are relatively autonomous leadership behaviors, measured from low to high. The Metlife survey (2013) indicates that the work of operating the national schools is increasingly complicated, difficult, and stressful and that schools alone cannot solve them (Göksoy, 2015). In nearly all circumstances, leadership is seen as a critical variable in the equation of organizational success (Grove, 2008; Gurr, 2008), yet leadership does not rely just on what a school leader or any other individual or group of leaders understands and does (Spillane et al., 2004). Instead, it is leaders' actions, particularly their connections with others, that provides teachers with a focus on certain objectives (F. Chen, 2005; Lestari et al., 2020; Spillane et al., 2004). Thus, it is difficult to manage the adoption of a leadership philosophy.

Situational Leadership Theory

SLT was developed by Hersey and Blanchard in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Blanchard, 1997; Gates et al., 1976). The theory's aim is to assist executives in selecting the most appropriate leadership style for each set of personnel and organizational

circumstances (Blanchard, 1997; Gates et al., 1976). According to SLT, effective leadership is matching an employee's desire for guidance and support to a specific goal or action (Blanchard, 1997; Hoy & Tarter, 1986; Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2014; Paustian-Underdhl et al., 2014; Lestari et al., 2020; Reed, 2019). Hoy and Tarter (1986) believe no optimum style of leadership exists. Effective leadership is conditional based on an alignment with the complimentary organizational and personnel circumstances (Hoy & Tarter, 1986).

As the Ohio State University's contemplation and initialing framework emphasized, an effectiveness component included two dimensions, relationship behavior and task behavior (Graeff, 1997; Yoshioka, 2006). Hersey and Blanchard believed that the effectiveness of leaders' behavior was linked to the leaders' leadership styles being appropriate for the maturity of their followers (Blanchard, 1997; Gates et al., 1976; Graeff, 1997), so they utilized the term *maturity* to describe their followers' growing willingness and ability to succeed in their new role. They suggested individuals use SLT to assist them in improving the maturity level of their followers in a specific area (Blanchard 1997; Gates et al., 1976).

The SLM in its most current iteration is called Situational Leadership II (SLII) (Blanchard, 1997; Gates et al., 1976). The changes in SLII included the addition of new expressions as well as some subtle changes to various components of the hypothesis (Al-Khamaiseh et al., 2020; Graeff, 1997). According to the SLII, all employees begin at the first readiness level and move to the fourth, but the SLM implies that an employee may begin at any level of readiness (Blanchard, 1997; Hersey et al., 1979). SLII refers to developmental levels rather than readiness levels and uses somewhat different

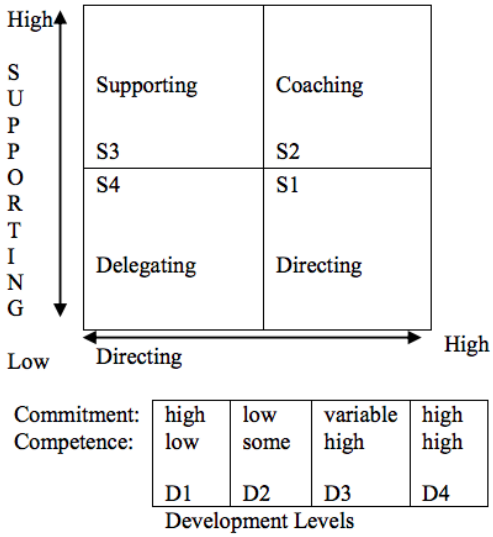
terminology to define each developmental level and leadership style (Blanchard, 1997; Hersey et al., 1979). In SLTII the phrasing was changed to refer to situational leadership as a model rather than a theory (AI-Khamaiseh et al., 2020). Additionally, the leadership styles were renamed from Telling, Selling, Participating, and Delegating to Directing, Coaching, Supporting, and Delegating. These behaviors are classified as directive and supportive behaviors in the SLTII (see Figure 1). In order to meet a person's developmental needs for a certain objective or activity, SLII creates specific goals, evaluate performance, and provide recommendations.

When directing, directive behavior was strong whereas supporting behavior was low. This leadership style worked well when the team member needed tight monitoring due to inexperience or lack of dedication to the job at hand (Al-Khamaiseh et al., 2020; Yoshioka, 2006). When coaching, the amount of directive and supporting behavior was high. In this situational leadership technique, leaders may watch and help the eager novice without tight monitoring (Al-Khamaiseh et al., 2020; Yoshioka 2006). Support with little directive conduct was the recommended leadership approach when a team member had the abilities but lacked the confidence or drive to perform a job effectively (Al-Khamaiseh et al., 2020; Yoshioka, 2006). Because delegation was a team-driven leadership style, it entailed minimal directive and supporting conduct. When team members were self-motivated achievers, leaders were recommended to step back (Al-Khamaiseh et al., 2020; Yoshioka, 2006). This method encouraged team flexibility and trust (Graeff, 1997; Yoshioka, 2006). Leaders were responsible for mapping their leadership style to the developmental stage of their subordinates and then openly using

the adapted approach with different employees with varied developmental stages on a range of goals or responsibilities (Al-Khamaiseh et al., 2020).

Figure 1

Situational Leadership II Model



Note. Four quadrants explained the situational leadership features style and were used in a variety of studies. Retrieved from "Exploring and Developing Items Measuring Situational Leadership II," by Z. Al-Khamaiseh, B. B. A. Halim, A. Afthanorhan, and A. H. Alqahtani, 2020. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews, 8*(2), 579-588. https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2020.8266

The adjustment of leaders was mostly dependent in the intercultural communication environment on broad categories, according to conventional thinking, and based on western cultural connections and conventions (Rajasekar & Beh, 2013). This study of Western governance advised adapting conditions for nonwestern cultures but offered little specific guidance of the application of the SLT model in a global context.

The SLT model was used in studies including the influence of gender. When multiple leadership scenarios were considered, no difference was measured between men and women in perceived leadership effectiveness (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014; S. Wang et al., 2019; Ward et al., 2015; Young, 2021). Therefore, leadership scenarios were one of the initial determinants of leadership effectiveness. The meta-analysis of gender and leadership include several studies using transformational and transactional leadership theory but fewer on situational leadership (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014; Thompson & Glasø, 2015). Some suggested that while concepts like transformation and servant leadership have been used for several decades, a complete model must be developed that offered a constructive and encouraging structure to guide contemporary leaders through challenging times (Offermann et al., 2018).

Studying the effective use of situational leadership was difficult because it requires leaders to self-assess, which can raise questions regarding the difficulty for leaders to honestly view themselves, making data reliability a challenge (Hoy & Tarter, 1986; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). Therefore, situational leadership was often evaluated by measuring how often administrators alter leadership styles, and how skillfully and suitably workers assess their leader's effectiveness. The question of the effectiveness of leadership may therefore be distinguished by triangulating leader and worker perceptions measured with the SLT, as used in this study.

Transformational Leadership

Several research projects on transformational school leadership inside China from 2010 to 2019 showed that qualitative techniques and mixed methods were preferable (F. Chen, 2005; Li, 2020). With regard to the K-12 Chinese school, some suggest it is

important to examine transformative leadership since this includes different phrases used to develop a vision and emphasis on commitment and the capacities of original members (Ogunyinka & Adedoyin, 2013). Some suggest that unique complexities in Chinese K-12 schools including the consequences of sex disparities, and China's restrictive conduct morays, indicated the need to understand effective styles of leadership needed to resolve decreasing academic achievement (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Walker et al., 2012). Transformative leadership in the K-12 sector, some suggest, was required to allow direct and indirect school improvement (Wing-Wah, 2013). The style of leadership and effectiveness of technical and professional institutions in Ghana explored how managers may execute their leadership effectively through transactional and transformational leadership styles (Beri & Aibu, 2018). Some researchers conclude that school principals, in most cases, use transactional rather than transformative leadership styles (Sims et al., 2020; Walker et al., 2012).

In fact, almost no studies address the effects of situational leadership in Chinese education, and few practical arguments are presented on whether SLT should be applied (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Walker et al., 2012).

Contingency Leadership Theory

Contingency leadership theory illustrates how leadership styles are motivated by the structure of hidden wants of leaders who encourage action in various interpersonal settings (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). Fiedler's (1958) contingency theory recommends two main types of leadership: task-motivated, where leaders tend to concentrate on the job and results of the work; and relations, where leaders place great importance over excellent communication and the establishment of a link between them. This idea is

nonetheless restricted to the capacity of leaders to act in particular circumstances (Northouse, 2013). The use of contingency theory is similar to SLT because the model focuses largely on qualities applicable to assessing the efficiency of leaders based on a circumstance approach (Ogunyinka & Adedoyin, 2013; Wibowo, 2017). The major distinction between contingency theory and SLT is that contingency leadership theory stresses a leader's *capacity* to adapt to a particular environment, while situational leadership measures an actual change in leadership traits (Blanchard, 1997; Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2014; Hoy & Tarter, 1986; Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

Trait Theory

Trait theory suggests that certain people possess attributes that produces excellent leaders (Bolden et al., 2003; Burns & Martin, 2014). Trait theories make no assumptions regarding the hereditary or learned nature of leadership characteristics (Bolden et al., 2003). The fact that biological sex is unlikely to influence distinctions in leadership style and the continuing perception that male and female leadership are different inspires masculine leadership (Greenwood, 1996; Harrison, 2017; Sacher & Kanodia, 2016). In addition, a societal explanation of female versus male leadership is lacking. A number of research studies were conducted to investigate if socially built roles affected the difference in the efficacy of leadership between men and women (Burns & Martin, 2014; Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2014; Vasconcelos, 2018). Gender roles can be seen as a stronger predictor of leadership than sex. Stereotypical male conduct is an essential element in leading characteristics (Johnson et al., 2008; Vasconcelos, 2018; S. Wang et al., 2019). People with this characteristic or behavior were seen as constituting a greater leadership than more supportive characteristics or behaviors. However, this is

problematic because the development of holistic leadership should be inclusive of both assertive and supportive behaviors. While masculinity may be seen in the rise of leadership as a highly essential feature, the link between leadership and androgyny may be feasible. The rise of people with feminine qualities has been noted as a highly significant consideration for contemporary leaders (Vasconcelos, 2018). For example, persons with male or androgynous characteristics are more likely than persons with female or undifferentiated values to be chosen as leaders (Henman, n.d.; Sacher & Kanodia, 2016). Although male attributes support major leadership functions, the existence of feminine traits do not detract from or diminish the likelihood of effective leadership. Thus, trait theory does not properly address management features in the context of gender and does not account for an integrative range of gender features in men and women (Harrison, 2017; Mumford, 2010). In this study, the SLT analyzed leadership effectiveness in light of gender disparities.

Gender and Leadership

The historically favored connection between gender and leadership is problematic and disturbing from an equality and social justice standpoint (Busher, 2006; Eklund et al., 2017; Emmerik et al., 2010; Faizan et al., 2018; Powell, 2020). It was a prominent topic of study in literature on gender problems at work from the 1970s (Powell, 2020). In addition, management behaviors are especially useful for studying gender problems because of the known preconceptions about individual leadership styles (Emmerik, et al., 2010; S. Wang et al., 2019). Men are historically viewed as stronger, powerful and driven to control their surroundings and are hence more willing to employ the initiating leadership of structures (Emmerik, et al., 2010; S. Wang et al., 2019). On the other hand,

women are viewed as more concerned about others and more willing to utilize transformational leadership (Emmerik, et al., 2010; Eagly, 2020; Eagly & Carli, 2003). Although these male and female preconceptions are powerful and solid, in real management performance there is minimal data to support such stereotypes (Emmerik et al., 2010).

Gender stereotypes are reported and debated in published academic studies, in the mainstream media, and in the general public (Ellemers, 2018; Faizan et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2008). Partly, gender stereotypes represent the various features of gender but the widespread generalization of so many individuals can never be real and precise. In other words, whereas sex stereotypes compound gender differences, most men and women do not converge on any similar physiological group. Furthermore, sex stereotypes vary with each culture, and similarities and distinctive distinctions are found among men and women (Guimond, 2008; Sims et al., 2020; S. Wang et al., 2019).

Gender inequality is likely to contribute to indifferences in educational leadership as well as the principal-teacher relationships affecting K-12 public schools (Sims et al., 2020). The specific problem is the inequality that limits the roles played by different leaders based on a gender point of view in a nation that decries the ability of women to take up administrative positions in the academic sector (Burns & Martin, 2020; Emmerik et al., 2010; Flabbi et al., 2018; Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2014; Waring, 2003). Current literature examines comparative studies on the leadership of the two gender roles (Rhee & Sigler, 2015; S. Wang et al., 2019; Wood & Eagly, 2010). Burns and Martin (2020) indicate that sex had no influence on leadership and emphasized the value of reverence and trust in improving school leadership. In addition, qualitative testing at the

University of Wisconsin thoroughly studied the idea, when it comes to success, that male and female leaders may differ because of the incongruity between women's roles in society and their roles in the workplace (Johnson et al., 2008). As a result, women leaders need more opportunities for leadership development than males balancing sensitivity and authority (Johnson et al., 2008). The connection between sex and leadership continues to have major effects on individuals, organizations, and the execution of jobs (Powell, 2020).

Some scholars differentiate gender from sex (Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Powell, 2020). Gender refers to the psychosocial consequences of being female or male, including gender stereotypes, defined as beliefs about male-via female psychological traits (Ellemers, 2018; Powell, 2020). Gender *identity*, is defined as beliefs about how much one possesses traits related to gender stereotypes (Bell, 1993; Powell, 2020). Gender *roles* are defined as gender behavior, deemed appropriate for men and women (Wood & Eagly, 2010). Gender-based *socialization*, is defined as the process by which persons learns gender-based stereotypes and roles from childhood onward (Ruble et al., 2009). Finally, the definition of *sex* is a biologically determined reality based on the genotype of sex chromosomes (Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Bell, 1993; Cretella et al., 2019).

Women's leadership is more likely to include wider networks, greater career planning, and stronger leadership when they are mentored (Burns & Martin, 2020; Dickson et al., 2014; Eagly, 2020). In gender studies, women and men were found to exhibit different degrees of transformational leadership (Sims et al., 2020). In previous meta-analyses (Eagly & Carli, 2003; Flabbi et al., 2019) it was discovered that women use a more democratic (or participatory) style and a less autocratic (or direct) approach

than males in positions of authority. Women are more likely to be effective in modern circumstances than males (Eagly & Carli, 2003). The disparities amongst women leaders may be different dependent on the racial identity of women (Sims et al., 2020). Meta-analysis studies indicate that the link between gender and leadership was moderated by many factors, including whether the rating was perceptual by the individual leader, the type of organization, the educational degree of the leader, and the setting of the study (Eagly & Carli, 2003; Göksoy, 2015; Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014).

Employee Work Engagement

Work engagement is defined as a pleasant and fulfilling state of mind characterized by vitality, dedication, and absorption (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2015). Employee involvement is critical in determining a leader's success (Hallinger, 2010; Zahed-Babelan et al., 2019). Teachers are the most critical resource in K-12 schools for effectively implementing and achieving educational goals and policies in the classroom (Beri & Aibu, 2018). The leadership style of school administrators directly influences personnel and their ability to do their assigned duties or obligations successfully. Successful school administrators are considered to use a variety of leadership styles in carrying out their administrative responsibilities (Beri & Aibu, 2018; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010).

The available literature examines the link between employees' work engagement and management from several philosophies of leadership (Rahmadani et al., 2020; Schaufeli, 2015; Tims et al., 2011; Zahed-Babelan et al., 2019). Teaching commitment was studied as a link between leadership styles and work involvement of teachers (Basaran & Kiral, 2020). Principals help create a healthy school culture by encouraging

teacher cooperation, fostering collective leadership, and expressing a common vision commitment (Zahed-Babelan et al., 2019). The work commitment must be fostered, as it is a positive behavior and has a lasting positive influence on the welfare of employees. To ensure teams are effective, employees need support from their leaders (Basaran & Kiral, 2020). Moreover, the present research suggests a certain type of leadership that encourages (team) participation in the motivating process is a crucial (mediatory) characteristic (Offermann et al., 2018; Rahmadani, 2020).

The school culture, on the other hand, is a recent study trend to investigate the commitment of employees. School culture was often used for describing and distinguishing between schools and individual working circumstances in organizations (Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2014; House et al., 2004; Hoy & Miskel, 2013; Zahed-Babelan et al., 2019). Organizational culture provides a wide framework that refers to school traditions, rituals, common standards, and assumptions. It was commonly concluded that a principal of the school must first understand the culture of the school before adopting major changes (Bulach 2001; Zahed-Babelan et al., 2019).

Education System Reforms in China

A primary issue addressed in this study is that K-12 schools in China lack suitable leadership styles, which could contribute to worse academic performance due to an extreme gender imbalance in various positions (F. Chen, 2005; Ha et al., 2019; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, education has been viewed as a vital tool for reforming society and building a national economy (Feng, 2020). The Chinese Communist Party prescribed several leadership approaches to the national ideology of education and official education policy (Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, 2021; Feng, 2020; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010).

The reform of the Chinese leadership education system has undergone a number of reforms to the primary responsibility system (Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, 2021) from direct leadership to direct governance, changing from the structure of hierarchical leadership to politicized leadership, and replacing centralism of leadership to division (Walker et al., 2012; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). Since 2000, the Chinese Ministry of Education strengthened school management in the principal and developed quality management standards in compulsory education, including planning for school development, creating the culture of schools, leading curriculum and teaching, guiding the development of students, optimizing internal management, and debugging the external environment (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). Directors are urged, instead of using the authority to dominate others, to utilize their experience to influence others (Walker et al., 2012).

In addition to fulfilling the government's responsibility for K-12 schools in China, the notion of implementing educational reform, some believe, was the best way to solve gender-based leadership hurdles (Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). However, from a leadership perspective, effective leadership style research is valuable (Busher, 2006; Blase & Blase, 2004). F. Chen (2005) observed that researching primary and high school leadership behaviors in mainland China frequently showed benign authoritarian and bureaucratically styles. Because of the difference in gender role behaviors, men and women were given different positions in the field of education in China, contrary to the hope of gender equality (Rajasekar & Beh, 2013). Therefore, exploring the leadership competencies of educational leaders of different genders in different contexts may give a more accurate

and objective picture of leadership effectiveness (Hoy & Tarter, 1986; Lestari et al., 2020).

China has shown increased interest in education quality, which was the major source of numerous education leadership studies across its continent (Lai et al., 2017). The K-12 learning sector in China needs to take measures to implement styles of management that improve the effectiveness of work of school leaders in the areas of planning, coordination and management of various activities (Ogunyinka & Adedoyin, 2013).

Cultural Leadership Perspectives

The cross-cultural management literature demonstrates that social cultural variations have a major impact on leadership conduct (Emmerik, et al., 2010; Rajasekar & Beh, 2013; Zahed-Babelan et al., 2019). The diversity and flexibility of leadership theory is therefore enriched by social culture. Cultural variations across nations include the collective mentality that differentiates one group or category of people from another (Hofstede, 1993). Intercultural leadership research is a tool to predict verbal and nonverbal leadership behavior (Hofstede, 1993).

Leadership Style and Social Culture

Whereas other academics suggest leadership theory must emerge from a traditional cultural base, some propose a subjective leadership style that articulates and empowers efficiency and success (Emmerik, et al., 2010; Hofstede, 1993; Rajasekar & Beh, 2013). The changing global landscape necessitates a re-examination of cultural context concepts. The reality is that the world is rapidly globalizing, owing to the quick and overwhelming effect of modern communication technology, that transforms continual interaction and mutual influence and the resulting consequences that would not

have been predicted just a few years ago (Rajasekar & Beh, 2013). Moreover, social culture has an effect on corporate culture, which in turn influences leaders' conduct (Emmerik et al., 2010; House et al., 2004). The GLOBE leadership study (House et al., 2004) was pioneering in this respect, because it examined difference in leadership owing to the nature and organizational structure of culture (Emmerik et al., 2010). In conjunction with sociocultural research, on the one side, there are significant negative links between leadership style and the gap between power and socio-cultural ideals (Emmerik et al., 2010). On the other hand, research has demonstrated a considerable and favorable relationship between social and organizational leadership and equality between men and women (Emmerik, et al., 2010; Grove, 2008; House et al., 2004). The researchers of GLOBE defined leadership as the capacity of "an individual to influence, encourage and empower others to help make the organizations of which they are members efficient and successful" (House et al., 2004, p. 15). The study indicates that organizational features are integrated into society (Emmerik, et al., 2010; Grove, 2008; House et al., 2004). This might be especially true of the efficacy of leadership in Chinese culture and society. Social standards and practices dictate management participation and proper management behavior types (Emmerik, et al., 2010). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the features and interactions of social and organizational factors if we wish to better understand the complicated link between gender and leadership.

Hofstede's (1991) research of IBM branch workers' attitudes revealed cultural differences in occupational values across countries and regions (Hofstede, 1991). Five elements affected how people from different cultures coped with comparable problems. The four concepts were (a) power distance, (b) individualism-collectivism, (c)

masculinity-femininity, (d) uncertainty avoidance, and indulgence (Hofstede, 1991). Later, long-term focus was added by Hofstede and Bond (1988) based on research on Confucianism in China. The differences in values between China and the United States were clear on Hofstede's 6-D model.

A breakdown of the values between China and the United States on Hofstede's (1991) 6-D model is as follows. High scores on the first dimension, power distance, indicate that subordinates value the dependence of their leaders (Hofstede, 1991). China scored 80 on the power distance dimension, indicating that individuals were more reluctant to deal with their bosses from the same position of power and seek an interdependent relationship. The opposite is true for the United States.

In the second dimension, individualism, China scored 20 points while the United States obtained 91 points, and was ranked better for its individuality. Hofstede (1991) argued that in nations where individualism is highly valued (such as the United States), individuals place more emphasis on their personal lives, such as time spent alone, independence, and the satisfaction they get from their work, whereas in some civilizations, individualism is less valued (i.e. China). For nations with strong individualism, Hofstede characterized these traits as a sense of guilt, self-esteem, and self-assertion; for countries with high collectivism, he defined these characteristics as harmony, a sense of shame, and saving face (Hofstede, 1991).

The third dimension, masculinity, showed women and men's duties were clearly delineated in an overtly patriarchal country. But, in a culture that was less patriarchal, the roles of sexes were not clearly defined (Hofstede, 1991).

The fourth dimension reflected the degree to which individuals were afraid of the unknown and the unsure (Hofstede, 1991). China received a 30 while the United States received a score of 46 on this dimension. As a result, China's degree of risk aversion was lower than that of the United States. Hofstede (1991) posited that organizations, and individuals, in a society with a high level of uncertainty avoidance are more likely to seek out rules, laws, and regulations, as well as to adhere to them, in an effort to lessen the amount of uncertainty in their lives. People in communities with low levels of uncertainty avoidance, on the other hand, despise rigid regulations at work (Hofstede, 1991).

The measure of the fifth dimension indicated that people showed respect to their bosses and managers in nations with high long-term orientation scores because they ordered connections by status and followed this order (Hofstede, 1991). In contrast, individuals in low-scoring nations, like the United States (score of 26), craved quick satisfaction while China scored an 87.

The last dimension defined how much control individuals exercise over their impulses and wants, dependent on how they were brought up (Hofstede, 1991). On the sixth dimension, the United States ranked as an indulgent society (score of 68). This characteristic is seen in the behaviors and attitudes, like working hard and having fun. China received a low score of 24 on this dimension, which indicates it is a conservative society (Hofstede, 1991). Cynicism and pessimism are rampant in societies with low scores in this domain (Hofstede, 1991). These people believe their behaviors are constrained by societal standards and that indulging oneself is morally unacceptable (Hofstede, 1991).

According to Hofstede's six characteristics of culture (see Table 1), Chinese individuals are more conservative in their relationships, more respectful of their superiors, and have higher expectations for norms and decorum. Preference for relationships and regard for supervisors might be reformed as a need for relational conduct, while regard for supervisors and expectations for norms and etiquette can be reconstructed as a requirement for task behavior. Thus, if Hofstede's comparison of China and the United States is framed as a comparison of two follower aspects in the SLM, the two nations' relative positions would appear as shown in Figure 2.

Table 1

Summary of Hofstede's Comparison of China and the United States

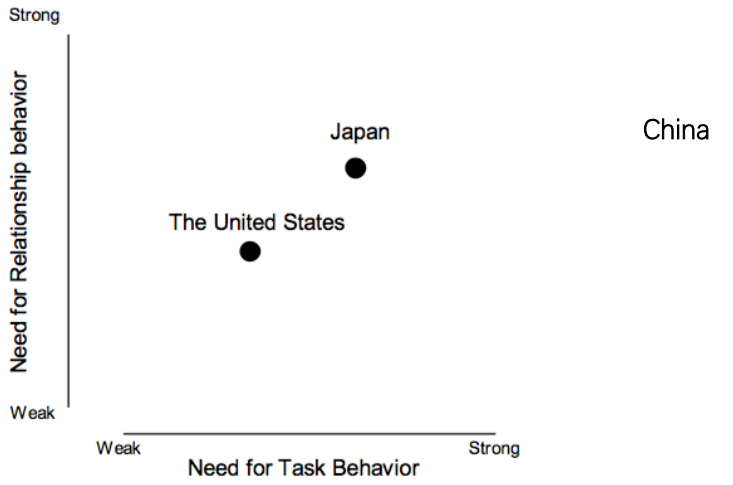
Dimension	China	United States
	Score	Score
Power Distance	High 80	Low 40
Individualism	Low 20	High 91
Masculinity	High 66	High 62
Uncertainty Avoidance	Low 30	Moderate 46
Long-term Orientation	High 87	Low 26
Indulgence	Low 24	High 68

Note. Adapted from "Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind," by G. Hofstede, 1991. McGraw-Hill.

A large portion of the debate centered on whether Western theories and conceptions of leadership applied to the Asian experience (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Rajasekar & Beh, 2013). The crucial question is whether Western leadership ideas can be applied to Asian leadership effectively or even morally (Rajasekar & Beh, 2013; Walker et al., 2012).

Figure 2

Location of China and the United States on the Task Behavior and Relationship Needs Map



Genders and Leadership

There is evidence that female-male differences in management talents, attitudes, and work-related behaviors have an effect on the leaders' choice of leadership style (Alan et al., 2019; Appelbaum et al., 2018; Eklund et al., 2017; Emmerik et al., 2010; Fecher, 2007; Johnson et al., 2008; Kairys, 2018; Parveen & Tariq, 2014). Russel et al. (1988) stress the difference in the conduct of men and women in leadership positions. In their study, they assumed that a female leader with an effective position should be more regarded than a male leader (Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2015; S. Wang et al., 2019). Female executives differentiate themselves for their empathy, adaptability and participation in diverse corporate processes at different level (Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2015). Abolade (2014) alludes to the fact that women share common features, including determination, superiority, uniqueness, autonomy, leadership and determination. Gender stratification is a consistent element in educational settings (Waring, 2003). Despite the

fact that their educational backgrounds are not materially different from men's, women tend to assume staff jobs that are peripheral to the institution's goal (Eklund et al., 2017; Waring, 2003). Thus, previous investigations targeting gender leadership revealed that women exhibit disadvantages in their academic leadership strategies as well as research productivity through a structural barrier (Przybylski et al., 2018). Research has shown that women leaders with mentorship are likely to develop more networks, conduct more professional planning, and exercise better leadership (Dickson et al., 2014). A broad range of research indicates that women leaders display greater success styles such as personal attention, emotional intelligence, a transformation leadership (Gartzia & Baniandrés, 2019).

Different researchers studied female leaders from diverse occupational fields (Burns & Martin, 2020; Eagly, 2020; Eagly & Carli, 2003; Emmerik et al., 2010; Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2014; Markovska & Nikolovski, 2014). Many of them studied female leaders in a commercial business perspective. For example, on the market performance point, some scholars discussed the impact of female leaders on gender-specific pay distribution and job performance (Flabbi et al., 2019). Studies indicate that the variance in women's incomes is growing. As a result, politicians are more likely to pay salaries close to the average productivity of female employees, thus minimizing sexism (Flabbi et al., 2019). Another study involved using a mixed-method approach to investigate conditions that impact women leaders' accomplishment of the organizational targets was higher than males (Markovska & Nikolovski, 2014). From a social development viewpoint, recent work focused on the development of female leaders and their contribution to society (Johnson et al., 2008; Ward et al., 2015). One example

involves research on the phenomenon of alpha women and the creation of a 14-dimensional women's personality measurement tool regarding women's roles in evolving environments so that the growth of female leadership can be quantitatively endorsed (Ward et al., 2015). Additional research examined female socially responsible leaders' effect on unity and stability and their social impact on women's compensation (Johnson et al., 2008).

Although not enough research evaluates if SLT is appropriate to Chinese women, various individual leadership style were found to be effective (Fox et al., 2015; Ha et al., 2019; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). Therefore, conducting research that concentrates on the influence of Chinese women in academic leadership is an essential factor because it elaborates on the styles to consider for positions such as the administrative leadership position within the K-12 schools in China (Ha et al., 2019).

Prior Studies of the Situational Leadership Model and Work Engagement in China

A review of peer-reviewed literature uncovered only two peer-reviewed studies on the situational leadership in China: Luo and Liu (2014), and Silverthorne and Wang (2010). Current research on SLT in China has not yet been conducted in conjunction with employee work engagement, despite the fact that SLT is a popular research topic in China. Using the two aforementioned studies as examples, the most often utilized way for studying SLT is to define and identify leadership types via the use of a survey. Table 2 shows the variables and measurements used in these two studies.

Table 2

Prior Studies of the Situational Leadership in China

Researchers	Subject	Variables	Scales
Luo and Liu (2014)	Southern Pearl River Delta in China	Situational Leadership	14-item Scale
		Employee Readiness	17-item scale
		OCB	OCB scale
Silverthorne and Wang (2010)	Taiwanese business organizations	Situational Leadership	LEAD
		Employees Productivity	6 measures of productivity

Note. OCB = Organizational Citizenship Behavior. Retrieved from "Effect of Situational Leadership and Employee Readiness Match on Organizational Citizenship Behavior in China," by H. Luo and S. Liu, 2014. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, *11*(1), 16-28. http://dx.doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2014.42. 10.1725; "Situational Leadership Style as a Predictor of Success and Productivity Among Taiwanese Business Organizations," by C. Silverthorne and T. Wang, 2010. *Journal of Psychology, 135*(4), 399-412. https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980109603707

According to Luo and Liu (2014), all ratings were made using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating strongly disagree and 5 indicating strongly agree. Supportive and directive supervision were evaluated using a 14-point scale (Oldham & Cummings, 1996). A six-item survey was used to assess directed behavior, and an eight-item scale measured supportive behavior. In addition, for testing employee's readiness level, Luo and Liu (2014) applied the scale list of 17 Chen et al. (2002). Assessments were made using a nine-item scale. For instance, "He/she accomplished squad tasks." An 8-point scale was used to measure a person's willingness. For example, "He/she agreed to take on team responsibilities," etc.

As Silverthorne and Wang (2010) adapted the LEAD scale to test situational leadership level, they used the LEAD-Self and LEAD-Other tools (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988) to analyze how participants were able to identify the leadership styles they utilized most often, based on both their own judgment and their employees' views. For leaders, Silverthorne and Wang employed the LEAD-self instrument, and for staff members, the LEAD-other instrument. According to the LEAD manual's leadership-adaptability scale, there are low (0-23), moderate (24-29), and high (30-36) degrees of adaptability. When it comes to leadership flexibility, leaders should score between 30 and 36 (high) on the scale. Those managers who had a leadership adaptability score between 24 and 29, which is considered moderate, were eliminated from the final selection process (Silverthorne & Wang, 2010). The LEAD survey was tested for its validity in Taiwan and accuracy as a predictor of adaptation as part of the research.

The most comparable peer-reviewed studies on the leadership and work engagement in China were conducted by Li, Castaño and Li (2018), and Z. Wang et al. (2017). Table 3 shows the variables and measurements used in these studies.

Table 3

Prior Studies of the Leadership and Work Engagement in China

Researchers	Subject	Variables	Scales
Li, Castaño and Li (2018)	High-tech enterprises in Henan Province, China	Leadership Styles	45-item MLQ5X survey
		Psychological Capital	24-item Psychological Capital Survey
		Work Engagement	17-item UWES
Wang, Li, and Li (2017)	A Chinese IT company	Resilience	9-item resilience scale
		Leadership	
		Positive Affect	Positive and Negative Affect Schedule
		Work Engagement	17-item UWES

Note. UWES = Utrecht Work Engagement Scale. Retrieved from "Linking Leadership Styles to Work Engagement: The Role of Psychological Capital Among Chinese Knowledge Workers," by Y. Li, G. Castaño, Y. Li, 2018. *Chinese Management Studies*, *12*(2), 433-452. https://doi.org/10.1108/CMS-04-2017-0108; "Resilience, Leadership and Work Engagement: The Mediating Role of Positive Affect," by Z. Wang, C. Li, X. Li, 2017. *Social Indicators Research*, *132*(2), 699-708. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-016-1306-5

Li et al. (2018) and Z. Wang et al. (2017) both used the Utrecht work engagement scale (UWES), established by Schaufeli and colleagues (2002), to gauge employee commitment to their jobs. Five points on the Likert scale from 1 to 5 were used by respondents to score the questions. Vigor, devotion, and absorption were the three aspects of the scale. In addition, six subcategories are measured in the UWES tool for vigor, five subcategories for devotion, and six subcategories for absorption. Vigor is the ability to persevere in the face of adversity, regardless of the difficulty of the job at hand or the number of setbacks that may occur (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2015; Schaufeli & Bakker,

2003). Becoming deeply immersed in a job and having a strong feeling of purpose and energy are two characteristics that define dedication (Bakker & Schaufei, 2015; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Absorption at work is defined as the capacity to maintain a high degree of connection while at work (Bakker & Schaufei, 2015; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). The notion of work engagement is becoming more popular among academics and business leaders because of its ability to accurately predict job success (Jayashree et al., 2019; Rahmadani et al., 2020). Hence, Bakker (2009) spoke about how a positive antithesis of burnout is a state of mind that is marked by "vigor," "dedication," and "absorption," which he describes as the school of thinking on interpreting the notion. The UWES survey has been validated in a number of nations, including Greece, South Africa, Spain, and the Netherlands, among other places (Guillen & Martinez-Alvarado, 2014; Jayashree et al., 2019; Schaufeli et al., 2006). The three-component structure was validated by all studies using factor analysis (Jayashree et al., 2019; Schaufeli et al., 2006).

Gaps in Research

Firstly, this study concentrated on the research scope in K-12 schools to conduct literature analysis, and found that the existing literature has not studied the relationship between leadership effectiveness and employee work engagement. Secondly, this study conducted literature analysis on the two research areas of the relations between leadership effectiveness and work engagement, as well as gender and SLT, and found gaps that have not been studied. This part included the gaps finding in the literature research.

Gaps in Research on K-12 Leaders Effectiveness and Employees Work Engagement

To thrive in the 21st century's global economic environment, K-12 leaders improved their responsiveness and competitiveness (Beri & Aibu, 2018; Fox et al., 2015;

Przybylski et al., 2018). According to studies, disengaged employees reduce global productivity in all sorts of firms, prompting organizational leaders throughout the world to pay special attention to productivity and engagement levels (Albrecht & Marty, 2020; Rahmadani et al., 2020). It might be challenging to ensure that employees are completely dedicated to their jobs and participate and perform well at work during difficult times. Effective leadership in the workplace motivates employees and generates positive performance and growth (Albrecht & Marty, 2020). Because of their mental well-being, employees who feel devoted and dedicated to their jobs are more productive. However, there are theoretical and empirical gaps in the understanding about the effectiveness of K-12 leaders and employee work engagement (Rahmadani et al., 2020; Tims et al., 2011; Zahed-Babelan et al., 2019).

Gaps in Research on Gender and Situational Leadership Theory

The existing literature lacks research on whether gender is one of the intervening variables in SLT (Albrecht & Marty, 2020; Basaran & Kıral, 2020; Beri & Aibu, 2018; Day & Leithwood, 2007; Fox et al., 2015; Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2014; Lestari et al., 2020; Rahmadani et la., 2020; Reed, 2019; Sudha et al., 2016).

Leadership effectiveness research on gender has mainly focused on transformational leadership and transactional leadership theories (Beri & Aibu, 2018; Sims et al., 2020; Wing-Wah, 2013). The leadership style and effectiveness of Ghana's technical and business institutions examined how managers may successfully perform their leading duties through transactional and transformative leadership styles (Beri & Aibu, 2018). The survey also showed that women were more successful in business and education, while males were more effective in managing and senior positions (Paustian-

Underdahl et al., 2014). As self-assessors, males saw themselves as leaders of lower and higher levels of management than women. A search in gender and leadership literature did not differentiate the gender controversy to indicate that the same leadership theory could be used for efficiency in the same organization (Appelbaum et al., 2018; Bell, 1993; Eklund et al., 2017; Emmerik et al., 2010; Flabbi et al., 2019; Medina, 2015; Thompson & Glasø, 2007).

Gaps in Research on Leadership Effectiveness and Employee Engagement

There are no theoretical considerations that integrate SLT with employee engagement. It demonstrates that neither a theoretical argument nor an empirical test of the impact of leadership effectiveness on employee engagement has been made (Lestari et al., 2020; Reed, 2019; Thompson & Glasø, 2015; Wuryani et al., 2020).

Leaders using SLT are encouraged to use a variety of leadership styles depending on the situation and the level of growth of their team members (Hoy & Tarter, 1986; Lestari et al., 2020; Reed, 2019; Thompson & Glasø, 2015; Wuryani et al., 2020). Situational leadership establishes a successful leadership style that creates a healthy balance for the entire organization by adapting to the needs of the team (Hoy & Tarter, 1986; Lestari et al., 2020; Wuryani et al., 2020). However, research has not yet to develop a clear understanding of how high job performance and employee engagement lead to improved financial performance (Flabbi et al., 2019; Faizan et al., 2018; Lestari et al., 2020). Leaders have used situational theory to establish a critical link between employee engagement, organizational development and profitability (Lestari et al., 2020; Reed, 2019; Thompson & Glasø, 2015; Wuryani et al., 2020), but the research does not indicate whether leadership effectiveness is an intervening variable in employee

engagement. Empirical evidence does not support employee engagement as a mediating factor for leadership effectiveness and organizational profitability (Beri & Aibu, 2018; Burns & Martin, 2020; Faizan et al., 2018; Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2014; Paustian-Underdhl et al., 2014; Sudha et al., 2016; Walker et al., 2012), especially across the cultural dimension background in China (Ha et al., 2019; Przybylski et al., 2014; Walker et al., 2012; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010).

When the literature is analyzed, few studies measured whether situational leadership affects teachers' work engagement and affects leadership effectiveness; while several research findings reveal that work performance is affected by authentic leadership (Basaran & Kiral, 2020; Walumbwa et al., 2010); invitational leadership (Burns & Martin, 2020); distributed leadership (Göksoy, 2015); transformational leadership (Tims et al., 2011); instructional leadership (Zahed-Babelan et al., 2019); the emotional intelligence level of the teachers (Kabar, 2017); organizational culture and leadership (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Busher, 2006; Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2014; House et al., 2004; Rajasekar & Beh, 2013); self-efficacy and job resources (Albrecht, & Marty, 2020); work performance and motivation (Lestari et al., 2020; Wuryani et al., 2020); and employee turnover rate (Reed, 2019).

From the literature reviewed, teachers generally show a high degree of dedication and measured relatively high levels of work engagement (Basaran & Kiral, 2020). Authentic leadership of school administrators, according to teachers, strongly impacted teachers' feelings of work engagement (Basaran & Kiral, 2020). It is not known whether employee involvement directly influences leadership effectiveness. By conducting a review of the existing literature to ascertain the connection between leadership and

employee engagement, this study aimed to close a knowledge gap while giving a complete understanding of how employee engagement reflects leadership effectiveness (Rahmadani et al., 2020; Schaufeli et al., 2002).

Conclusions

Leadership is a word that gained huge popularity in the early 1800s to indicate the political influence and control by individuals in the British parliament in the 19th century (Appelbaum et al., 2018; Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Eagly et al., 2003; Eklund et al., 2017). During this period, leadership remained the most observed but least understood phenomenon. This led to enormous research and literature spanning several decades and remains popular today. In the 19th century, leadership was based on appointment, usurpation, or inheritance rather than competence (Eklund et al., 2017). Early definitions of leadership centered on the ability of an individual to influence others and organizations in the communities. Today, leadership is defined as the ability of an individual to enable, motivate, and influence others to contribute towards success and effectiveness in an organization (Eklund et al., 2017). Therefore, the ability to control others is not indicated in the current definition of leadership.

Literature from the start of the 21th century has continued to be developed on the gender differences in leadership and the extent of differences in women and men's behaviors (Eklund et al., 2017). Researchers saw the need to understand the relationship between leadership traits and behaviors. Studies by Eklund et al. (2017) noted that social behavior, cognition, and temperament are the major differences pertaining to leadership styles. Other areas include compliance, dominance, competitiveness, levels of activity, fear and anxiety, and technical sensitivity (Jogulu & Wood, 2016; Rhee & Sigler, 2015).

Differences in skills, attitudes, and work-related behaviors of women and men in management were reported to have implications in the area of leadership. Jogulu and Wood (2016) found that both female and male leaders performed similarly in task-oriented and interpersonally-oriented styles in organizational leadership. This means that both women and men leaders are equally capable in task-oriented leadership and equally capable in matters related to interpersonal skills.

The relationship between leaders and followers in society drives the society (Eagly et al., 2003; Eklund et al., 2017; Faizan et al., 2018). However, some believe different kinds of leaders are needed for different scenarios; therefore, there can be no universal leadership style. The ability of some leaders to easily adapt to various situations and act accordingly makes them better leaders than others (Reed, 2019; Thompson & Glasø, 2015; Vroom & Jago, 2007; Wuryani et al., 2020). The role of a leader is to achieve the desired goals efficiently and effectively. Contemporary K-12 leaders are faced with numerous functions and responsibilities similar to those of conventional corporate leaders (Kaufman, 2017). Current literature, focusing particularly on the paternalist leadership style, examined the effects of key elements of Chinese modern society (Rajasekar & Beh, 2013). Rajasekar and Beh (2013) concluded historic and modern leadership studies in China, where they contrasted China with major Western leadership conceptions to explore the complicated and potential growth in and for a globalizing China contemporary leadership. There were various concepts of leadership, which the scholars in this field of study propose (Wibowo, 2017). This paper found an overlap in the conception of leadership and effectiveness in education in the literature. Research indicates which of the gender stereotypes influence and hinder the career

success of men and women leaders, and create a profile of effective women and men leadership (Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2015). The purpose of this study was to determine if SLT leadership strategy was suitable for K-12 public schools in China and was limited by gender inequality.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research technique for this study is described in this chapter. Included is a goal statement that explains the study's purpose, as well as four core research questions connected to the overall topic to be investigated. The research design, demographic and sample, data collecting techniques, and data analysis methodology are also discussed. Finally, the chapter discusses the study's shortcomings before concluding with a summary.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to measure for the presence of a significant association between the leaders' level of use of situational leadership and the level of engagement of teachers, including any effects of leader or teacher gender on the association.

For educational institutions, including China's K-12 public schools, effective leadership includes being a good communicator and motivator as well as providing clear direction and support to instructors so they can complete their assigned responsibilities (Gu et al., 2020; Lai et al., 2017; Przybylski et al., 2018; Walker et al., 2012; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). Leaders in China's K-12 public schools are assigned the responsibility of developing methods and procedures to guarantee that pupils continually improve their academic performance (Lai et al., 2017). Studies show that the school leader's capacity to inspire and encourage the staff to deliver relies on the ability of teachers and staff to

provide effective services to students (F. Chen, 2005; Göksoy, 2015; Przybylski et al., 2018). In order to guarantee that every member of the organization meets expectations, public school leaders constantly examine the performance of instructors (Gurr, 2008; Lai et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2012). The goal of this research was to examine leadership in China's K-12 public schools and the use of situational leadership. Teachers' degree of work engagement and the amount of situational leadership used by school leaders were examined in this research, as well as any possible implications of gender on the relationship.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following three research questions guided this research study. The first question was developed to understand whether the leader's use of situational leadership is effective in promoting teacher work engagement. The second and third questions explore the effects of the teacher and leader's gender on the use of SLT and work engagement. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant relationship between the level of situational leadership used by the school head and the teachers' level of work engagement in K-12 public schools in China?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' gender and the level of use of situational leadership by school heads in K-12 public schools in China?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the leaders' gender and their level of use of situational leadership in K-12 public schools in China?

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study:

H_{01}: There is no relationship between the level of situational leadership used by the school head and the teachers' level of work engagement in K-12 public schools in China.

H_{02}: There is no relationship between the teachers' gender and the level of use of situational leadership by school heads in K-12 public schools in China.

H_{03}: There is no relationship between the leaders' gender and their level of use of situational leadership in K-12 public schools in China.

Research Design

The research design was a quantitative survey approach that measured the leaders' use of situational leadership and teachers' work engagement as a measure of leader effectiveness. Because of challenges to the reliability of self-reported data on school leaders' use of situational leadership, both the leader and their teachers were asked to assess the leaders' use of situational leadership. Quantitative methodology involving the collection and analysis of numerical data to prove a given hypothesis was considered an appropriate and useful research design for studies of this type (Basaran & Kiral, 2020; Burns & Martin, 2020; Emmerik et al., 2010; Fox et al., 2015; Gu et al., 2020; Kaufman, 2017; Lazaraton, 2015; Offermann et al., 2018; Reed, 2019). The findings of an association between leadership style and worker engagement could have a practical significance in helping Chinese public-school leaders understand leadership styles that influence worker engagement.

Although women in school leadership positions in the China's K-12 public schools were fewer than men (Gu et al., 2020; Li, 2020), the study used a purposeful sampling approach to gather adequate data for the analysis. For studies that used surveys

to gather data, a pre-test is required in order to analyze any concerns with the survey in advance, such as unpleasant concepts or inappropriate question phrasing (Presser & Blair, 1994; Presser et al., 2004). This study conducted a pre-test and pilot study to ensure that the questions were appropriate for the respondents' language and culture, as well as for the attitude and behavioral measurements. Google Translate and DeepL were used to convert English to Mandarin for surveys and consent forms. As part of a pre-test, the survey was analyzed by two teachers and two leader practitioners to evaluate the surveys' language usage and adaptability, as well as communicate with the researcher to obtain revisions based on the specific work culture and place. Elementary and secondary public schools in China provided pre-testing. Judgement samples based on language skills in English and Chinese were used to choose practitioners. This procedure allowed participants to be chosen who were most favorably located or in the greatest position to offer pertinent information (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010).

Participants in the study and survey received an email encouraging them to provide feedback on any questions they found to be unclear or difficult to comprehend. As Brislin (1980) recommended, an official translator was employed whose legitimacy would be checked by the investigator to ensure the accuracy of the questions and time spent on them. Following the collection of data, the data were evaluated using sampling and counting in order to remove invalid samples and ensure no problems were found with the data.

Method Rationale

The independent variables in this study were the level of use of situational leadership by the school leader and the leader and teacher's gender. Moreover, the dependent variable was teacher work engagement. Consequently, the study employed ordinal logistic regression to determine whether independent variables had a statistically significant influence on the dependent variable (Laerd, n.d.).

To conduct ordinal logistic regression, certain assumptions were required to be met, including the type of independent and dependent data collected. First, data are required to include a single dependent variable that was quantified on an ordinal scale. Ordinal variables included Likert scale questions in the SLII and the UWES-TES (e.g., a 6-point scale from "never" through to "always") survey tools used in this study (see Appendix A and B). Second, the data must include one or more ordinal, or categorical independent variables (including dichotomous variables). Variables that were categorical must be treated as ordinal independent variables (Laerd, n.d.). The SLM self-test administered to teachers (and scored) was an example of a categorical variable that would need to be changed to an ordinal variable for this research, since it ranked the proportion of leaders who preferred specific situational leadership styles (telling, selling, participating, and delegating), whereas gender was an example of a dichotomous categorical variable that meet the analysis criterion (e.g., two groups: male and female). Because the sex and age groups were ordinal, numeric and categorical, respectively. As a result, Pearson's R could not be used in this instance. If the data did not match the conditions of the ordinal logistic regression test, such as multicollinearity or

proportionate odds, the study planned to employ Spearman's Rho as an alternative analytical approach.

Population and Sampling

The process of setting up a sample size in quantitative research was based on the calculation of the accuracy and the non-response rate expected among the participants (Arghode, 2012; Watson, 2015). Four public primary and secondary schools in Shandong Province and four public primary and secondary schools in Yunnan Province were selected for the study. Shandong province is situated in northern China's coastline area and is among the top five educational provinces in the nation, out of 34 (SACBU.com, 2021). It was the birthplace of Confucius and Mencius and has a long educational history. Yunnan province is situated in southwest China's interior, its education level is in the medium to bottom echelons of the national ranking, and its national gross domestic product is much lower than that of Shandong province (SACBU.com, 2021). Therefore, the choice of these two cities enabled a synthesis of the discrepancies between northern and southern China and produced more representative and extensive data, hence improving the study's validity and reliability. Two sample provinces were selected to and are considered generalizable of the leadership style of China's educational leaders. The sample included 100 male teachers and 100 female teachers, and the target leaders were divided into 26 female and 24 males. The study sent surveys to all teachers and leaders in the participating schools and stopped collecting data when upon receiving 100 males and 100 females. Respondents from leaders numbered 24 males and 26 females. Data were collected by convenience sample for school leaders in Yunnan province since the researcher’s family grew up and studied there, and in Shandong province since the

researchers lives and works there, and existing working resources were available for the study. All the teachers and leaders in the two selected provinces were selected within gender categories as dictated by the study questions. The leader survey N value was targeted at survey 25 male and 25 female respondents, but 24 males and 26 females actually responded. No participant indicated, "preferred not to answer" to the gender question, nor indicated an alternative gender.

All the schools chosen were in urban settings. Chinese public schools are well supported by the government, have existed for a longer period of time than private schools, have a strong historical and cultural heritage, and a favorable public reputation (Wu & Zhi, 2020). Additionally, public schools often employ a better faculty and lower teacher turnover than private schools (Wu & Zhi, 2020). According to the statement of Wu and Zhi (2020), China, K-12 public schools continued to be the absolute primary source of compulsory education. As a result, the selection of public schools, rather than private schools, was critical for the study of leadership and teacher work engagement.

Instrumentation

The instruments used in this investigation were in Chinese, which were initially translated from English. To ensure that the meanings of English questions and items were equivalent in the Chinese survey, the survey was pre-tested before it was formally distributed, with content feedback and corrections made by several English teachers from the study schools. The study was back-translated for any content that did not fit the Chinese language context. The measures and scales used in this study were developed and used by Blanchard (1997), Gates et al. (1976), and Hersey and Blanchard (1997) and called the SLII survey. To measure teacher work engagement, Schaufeli and Bakker's

(2003) original 17-item version work engagement (UWES-TES) survey was used. Because the study examined the situational leadership and work engagement relations in China, subjects were asked questions using Chinese language instrument, districted by the chosen eight public schools in China.

The surveys employ a Likert scale (see Table 4). Raw data from the SLT from teachers, the SLTII from leaders, and the UWES-TES from teachers were gathered and imported into a statistical software program called Statistical Product and Service Solutions, or SPSS.

Table 4

Summary of Tools and Scale of the Study

Survey Tools	Scales
Leaders' Situational Leadership Level	12-item SLT Model Assessment Scale for Teachers 24-item SLII Assessment Scale for Leaders
Teachers' Work Engagement Level	17-item UWES-TES Scale

Note. SLT = Situational Leadership Theory; SLTII = Situational Leadership II; UWES = Utrecht Work Engagement Scale- Teacher Engagement.

The study ordinalized the answer values, e.g., the numbers indicating frequency ranged from 1 to 5. There was no requirement for decimal places since the survey numbers were in single digits and reflect high to low frequency. The study used SPSS to label each possible response on a scale of zero to four ("never", "rarely", "sometimes", "often", "usually", and "always") for the situational leadership survey and zero to five ("never", "rarely", "sometimes", "often", "usually", and "always") for the work engagement survey, so that they emerged as ordinal variables consistent with the Likert scale. The likelihood ratio and Pearson coefficient tests were used to examine if the study

rejected the null hypothesis, while the goodness of fit test was used to check whether the observed data was consistent with the fitted model (Laerd, n.d.).

The study was divided into five stages for the entire data analysis framework. The first stage mainly used descriptive statistics to analyze the data for the sample distribution. The second stage was to test the reliability and validity of the sample, mainly on the scale. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's reliability analysis in the SPSS was used to test the validity of the survey questions, and Cronbach's alpha was used to test the reliability of the survey questions. The third stage was mainly the surface data analysis, using descriptive statistics. All the questions of the scale (i.e., the target variables) were dimensionally transformed and mean scores were obtained, while for the 12-item SLT choice-question of the teacher test (see Appendix C), the mean scores of each question were obtained to continue the surface data analysis step. The fourth stage was the correlation analysis, which used the analysis-bivariate in SPSS to conduct Pearson's study on the dimensions of the scale and cross-tabulation and Chi-square tests on the mean scores of the non-Likert scales, i.e., 12-item SLT surveys for teachers. The fifth stage was the impact factor analysis, mainly using ordinal logistic regression analysis. The study divided the situational leadership levels in the non-scales into high, medium and low levels (with "delegating" being the "high" level of situational leadership, "selling" and " participating" being the "high" level. participating" being the "medium" level of situational leadership, and "telling" being the "low" level of situational leadership) were studied. In addition, for the Likert scale topics, i.e., the UWES survey for the teachers and the 24-item SLTII for the leaders, the study set three intervals for the scale frequency numbers, i.e., high, medium and low, and conducted an ordinal logistic regression

analysis of the sample data. The study used an individual's gender to see if it had an influence on their degree of situational leadership. Predictors were used to determine how much variance in situational leadership could be accounted for by the factors studied.

Analysis Method

This study was based on the classification of the three target variables: (a) situational leadership level, (b) work engagement level, and (c) gender. Different questionnaires were complied to investigate the results from different groups to ensure that the research content conforms to the logical relationship between the variables. In conclusion, quantitative data analysis was undertaken to explore the variables correlations and influencers.

Situational Leadership Level

Subjects were asked to assess leaders' situational leadership level using both SLT model assessment scale – teachers rating scale and SLII assessment scale – leaders rating scale. SLT model scale and SLII were composed of four components, Directing (Telling), Coaching (Selling), Supporting (Participating), and Delegating (Delegating). This study modified the original questions to fit the survey format and cultural work environment. For instance, the original question of SLT model scale asked, "your group …" "you are …" Then the subjects not only did the personas of the various test groups alter, for example, change "You" to "You desire your leader to," but the context of the questions differed as well. The subjects changed "group" as "department" in order to fit all leaders' position at schools. The leadership style were identified from the total answers according to the determining leadership style and style range table. The instrument categories include Leadership Style 1 (S1) called Directing style, Leadership Style 2 (S2) called Coaching, Leadership Style 3 (S3) called Supporting style, and Leadership Style 4 (S4)

called Delegating style (Blanchard, 1997; Gates et al., 1976; Hersey et al., 1979). These categories were further delineated below:

- Directing (S1). Assign explicit directions and keep a careful eye on the results.
- Coaching (S2). Clearly explain the conclusion and allow for more discussion.
- Supporting (S3). Share your thoughts and help others make choices.
- Delegating (S4). Make choices and execute them in the hands of others.

The study examined one ordinal independent variable – level of situational leadership – using the Likert scale and categories rating rank, one dichotomous independent variable (covariate) – gender, which were classified into two groups: "males" and "females," and one dependent variable – level of work engagement, which also would be classified using the Likert scale. The independent variable's "categories" (situational leadership levels) were sometimes referred to as "groups" or "levels" (Laerd, n.d.), although the word "levels" was often reserved for ordinal variables' categories. In the survey of having leaders to do, the situational leadership levels were considered an ordinal variable based on Likert point scores items; and in the survey of having teachers to do, the situational leadership levels were classified into four categories: “telling,” “selling,” “participating,” and “delegating.”

Leaders’ Genders

Subjects were asked demographic questions, including age, gender, tenure with the school, and year of work experience for both leaders and teachers in the survey. Because this study was examining the link between gender and level of situational leadership and engaged employees (teachers), the gender choice were differentiated in the leadership sample's participation survey. The logistic regression model would not be used

in a one-way study of gender. This was because logistic regression models, like other types of regression, prohibit the direct inclusion of categorical variables in the equation, as they were interpreted as continuous variables (Laed.com, n.d.). For example, if research defined gender as “0” for males and “1” for females and then placed this variable code into the regression equation, the regression equation would regard female as twice as male. In spite of the dichotomous variables containing all the information included in the original category variables, there was no difficulty in interpreting. As such, the gender analysis used the Chi-square test in SPSS to ascertain the existence of a significant link between gender and other variables. When using teachers’ work engagement level as the dependent variable and examining its link to gender, logistic binary analysis was performed by SPSS to test how interrelationships among the independent or predictor variables, data tolerance and VIF. There were two groups of logistic binary analysis. One was if the teachers’ work engagement level was highest which was coded as six, and lowest coded as one, and the predictors in the model included the level of situational leadership. Another group was coded covariables teachers’ and leaders’ gender male as 1, and females as 2, then the predictors in the model were the level of situational leadership.

Teachers’ Work Engagement Level

The study defined the level of teachers’ work engagement developed by a shortened version of the UWES (Hassan, 2019; Schaufeli et al., 2006) -- Teacher Engagement Scale (TES) in Chinese teachers’ work environment with the original 17-item version was established by Schaufeli and Bakker (2003). Three sections were included in the questions, which were Vigor, Dedication, and Absorption. Following

descriptive remarks about the subjects, respondents assess the frequency with which each statement pertains to them on a six-point scale, on a scale of 0 to 5. Then, the subjects choose one to answer from scale of 0 to 5, with 0 for never, 5 for always. The categories examined by the UWES were described below:

- *Vigor.* Strong energy and mental fortitude, as well as the willingness to commit effort to one's task and persistence in the face of challenges are all examples of grit.
- *Dedication.* It is described as having a feeling of purpose and pride in one's work, being involved in one's work, and being challenged.
- *Absorption.* When you are fully immersed in your work, time moves quickly and it is tough to separate yourself from it.

Validity and Reliability

The validity of a research is defined as the extent to which a concept was accurately measured in a quantitative study whereas the reliability is defined as the accuracy of the instrument used in the study (Presser & Blair, 1994). The main objectives of this study explained whether situational leadership styles were directly related to effectiveness in Chinese K-12 public schools, to explore the biases and influences on leadership effectiveness of male and female leaders, and to argue the extent to which work engagement was related to leadership effectiveness. Thus, the study was able to find associations of situational leadership and teacher engagement and address the utility of SLT. This suggested that the study data were valid to answer the research questions presented. The reliability of this study was shown by using the degree of association between leadership effectiveness and leadership style in Chinese K-12 public schools, as

well as the mean, percentage, and deviation of male and female teachers' engagement. Thus, showing the degree of association between male and female leaders' leadership effectiveness.

Pre-testing of the survey on a small sample of participants were conducted, and the findings were coupled with a correction of the question items to demonstrate the survey's validity. A consent form and survey link was emailed to participants (two teachers include an English teacher and two leaders of K-12 public schools in China) to gather feedback on the survey pilot. Due to the fact that the independent and dependent variables were gathered from distinct subjects and different survey question and response procedures were utilized, the research were able to mitigate excessive subjective bias to some level (Podsakoff et al., 2012). The research avoided bias via procedural safeguards. For example, all survey respondents engaged anonymously and were not asked to name a particular leader or to respond to questions offering guidance or assessing leadership style.

In addition, the study used a reliability test to check the data for possible bias. It was used to determine if the missing data were missing or related to influencing factors (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Then, using the variables, the study performed Pearson and Chi-Square tests to see if there was a significant trend in the sample on the variables. The reliability and validity of the study was ensured through the data of the study results, which showed no invalid data.

Data Collection

The work engagement assessment and the leadership survey were completed by teachers, while the SLII survey was completed by school leaders. For evaluating employee engagement, a shortened version of the UWES (Hassan, 2019; Schaufeli et al., 2006) was used. The UWES evaluated three different characteristics of participants involvement: vigor, commitment, and absorption. For the most part, this three-factor model was regarded as the most suitable (Guillen & Martinez-Alvarado, 2014; Hassan, 2019; Schaufeli et al., 2006). The instrument scale was available in two varieties: the original 17-item version established by Schaufeli and Bakker (2003), and a shortened 9-item version created by Schaufeli et al. (2006). Respondents rated the frequency with which each statement applied to them on a six-point scale after receiving descriptive comments about the dimensions.

The goal of this research was to adapt UWES to the Chinese educational setting by examining teachers' psychometric traits, dubbed the TES. The validity of the TES scale was determined utilizing internal consistency and test maintenance reliability. The event drew 200 teachers from two regions in China. They were all employed teachers between the ages of 25 and 60. These participants work an average of 1 to 25 years and spent an average of more than two years in education.

The UWES-TES17 teacher engagement scale (17-item) was employed in the research. The research tailored the instrument to the educational context in China. This constituted updating the original UWES-17 question wording to be understandable and appropriate to Chinese culture. After finalizing the item revisions, the scale was

developed and pilot tested on a sample, with the results modified to create the final version of the survey.

After the pilot research approach, the selection range for the number of school leaders was increased from “1-2” direct supervisors to “1-3” based on the real condition of the schools. As most teachers claimed that their average number of supervisors exceeded three. Second, in the survey of the 24-item SLTII for leaders, the researcher modified "employee(s)" and “staff(s)” to "teachers" in the original survey, and "employer(s)" to "leaders," and "organization" to “school.” Third, in the process of translating English into Chinese, the researcher rendered "push" as "disturb" in English and "procedure" as "standard" in English, which is compatible with the real working vocabulary application in Chinese K-12 public schools and the Chinese context. Forth, in the 12-item SLT survey for teachers, the researcher positioned cause statements before effect claims. For example, Question 3, the researcher put "Group performance and interpersonal connections have been excellent" at the top of the list, which was compatible with Chinese reading habits, and for Question 11, the order of assertions was similarly altered. Additionally, the statement sequence was altered. According to the pilot research, Choices A and D of the Question 3 were relatively redundant and not well defined, thus the study merged options A and D and added an additional option: Ask other teams whether they have similar challenges and learn from their solutions (English interpretation). Also, Option D in Question 4 was modified to adopt the team's idea, but he/she directs the change or orders the individual providing the suggestion to assume full responsibility for the change (English interpretation). The reason for this change was that directing change in the original survey is limited to principals in K-12 public schools in

China. Option C in Question 9 was modified to redefine or split objectives into smaller targets and monitor them closely (English interpretation). Because it was common practice in Chinese K-12 public schools to separate objectives and execute them individually, the revised survey choice was modified to better suit the Chinese context.

According to Hersey and Blanchard's (1997) formal survey, so called this survey as 12-item SLT, teachers used an adapted version of the 12-item survey to measure their leaders' level of situational leadership based on a pilot study with a small sample group. With the pre-test, the content and individual options and words of the survey were changed, as already described before, based on Chinese reading comprehension habits and the actual working conditions of Chinese public schools, researcher changed survey suitably. In addition, in this survey, there were four options for each question and the final leadership styles were derived by circling them on a rating scale and adding responses to the self-assessment scenario questions. These leadership styles corresponded to Hersey and Blanchard's (1997) model and Blanchard's (1997) and Gates et al.'s (1976) SLTII, i.e., Directing (Telling), Coaching (Selling), Supporting (Participating), and Delegating (Delegating).

The SLTII instrument from Blanchard (1997) and Gates et al., (1976) was used to determine the level of leaders' use of situational leadership. Leaders were surveyed to determine how often they engaged in situational leadership in the workplace and what leadership attributes they exhibit. The leadership self-assessment contained 24 items separated into the four SLII components: (a) directing, (b) coaching, (c) supporting, and (d) delegating (Al-Khamaiseh et al., 2020; Blanchard, 1997; Hersey et al., 1979), which was used to determine the degree of situational leadership. The findings were obtained

using a Likert-style scale, with 1 indicating that the ideal leader never demonstrates the trait and 5 indicating that the ideal leader constantly demonstrates the behavior.

Data Collection Procedures

As mentioned above, study data were collected via online survey to ensure the opportunity to obtain a variety of responses (Lazaraton, 2015). The survey was distributed via online sending (email) to 200 teachers and 50 schools' leaders. For the online surveys, the research produced three survey links, each of which displayed a permission form. The instructions directed the respondents to scroll down to the bottom and select "Yes, I read it and agree to its conditions" to begin the survey automatically. The researcher contacted school leaders from the eight selected schools who had previously granted permission to conduct the study, and agreed to provide access to teacher and leader school mailboxes in case a paper copy of the survey was required. However, following further investigation, there were no paper copies or paper surveys included in this research. All teacher and principal email and survey data will be deleted and destroyed no later than one month after dissertation defense passage.

Each survey contained consent form with a verification that the respondent read and understood the expectations before to completing the questions and required participants click a button (for online research) to begin the survey. The administrators participating in the survey included leaders in various positions in the eight schools, including principals, vice-principals, directors from various departments, and secretaries of the Party Committee. Teachers included all employed teachers at the schools. All instruments were translated from the text to take into account regional and cultural language differences, and the translations given to the respondents for official validation.

Participants were required to read a consent form before clicking on the URL link to take the survey. Participants were provided the opportunity to discontinue participating in this study at any time they felt the questions were sensitive or uncomfortable (Lazaraton, 2015).

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis entailed calculating several variables and their frequencies, as well as the differences between variables, in accordance with the study objectives (Arghode, 2012; Muijs & Dunne, 2010). The study's dependent variable was teacher work engagement, whereas the independent variables were gender and situational leadership style hierarchy. Table 5 summarizes the data settings of each variable.

Table 5

Setting Data

-	Variables	Categories	Analysis Method
Dependent variable	Teachers' work engagement	Six ordered categories: "never", "rarely", "sometimes", "often", "usually" and "always".	Ordinal logistic regression
Independent variable	Situational leadership level	The one survey for teachers, which has four categories: "Telling (1)", "Selling (2)", "Participating (3)" and "Delegating (4)". Another survey for leaders, which has five ordered categories: "never", "rarely", "sometimes", "often", and "always".	Ordinal logistic regression
Independent variable	Gender	The gender of the participants.	Binomial logistic regression (two groups: "males =0" and "females=1")

The dependent variables in the study were ordinal multicategorical variables, i.e., high, medium, and low levels of teachers' work engagement. Unlike the nominal multicategorical dependent variable, the qualitative ordinal multicategorical dependent

variable was modeled using a cumulative logit model, which may use this property of orderliness to provide a clearer explanation than the baseline-category model. In reality, the cumulative logit model successively divides the dependent variable into two classes based on various levels of values, and for these two classes, a logistic regression model with the dependent variable as a dichotomous category was constructed (Laerd, n.d.). The regression coefficients of the relevant variables in the model remained unchanged regardless of the location of the splitting point of the response variable; only the constant term was modified. For example, in order to develop adequate data modules, the study considered response results greater than 4 (⩾4) as a "high" level of situational leadership and less than 3 (⩽3) as a "low" level of situational leadership. Then the values of 0, 1, and 2 were assigned to high, medium, and low (see Table 6). It showed that the constant terms of the equations were different, but the regression coefficients were the same. Logistic regression analysis requires that the coefficients of the independent variables in multiple regression equations are equal.

Table 6

Creating the Dichotomous Variable

Ordinal Dependent Variable with six Categories for WE, and five Categories for SLT		First Cumulative Dichotomy	First Cumulative Probability	New Coding
Never	0	Low	Probability (category > 'never')	0
Rarely	1			
Sometimes	2			
Often	3	Medium		1
Usually	4 (SLT Test excluded)	high	Probability (category <='always')	2
Always	5 (SLT Test is 4)			

Note. WE = Work engagement; SLT = Situational leadership theory.

Therefore, a parallel row test, also known as the test for the proportional odds assumption, is required, and the method used is the scoring test. When P>a, the original hypothesis of parallelism is accepted. Otherwise, some values of the dependent variable should be combined to reduce the number of values of the dependent variable, so that the parallelism of the multivariate logistic regression model holds, and other linkage functions can be tried. If the parallelism assumption cannot be met by various linkage functions, it is necessary to consider whether the regression coefficients will change with the splitting point. At this point, it is best to fit the model using an unordered multicategorical logistic regression and then consider how to proceed based on the coefficient estimates. In this study, because all the regression models satisfied the parallelism test, the unordered multicategorical logistic regression analysis was not required.

Furthermore, to meet the four assumptions of ordered regression, the following explanations were provided in the second part of this research.

Assumption 1: The dependent variable was unique and an ordered multicategorical variable so teacher work engagement was classified as high, medium, or low.

Assumption 2: Two independent variables existed and were ordered multicategorical variables; namely the level of situational leadership and genders.

For Hypotheses 1 and 2, the study chose to run the ordinal logistic regression model in SPSS Statistics using the PLUM command, which was invoked through a dialog box. The statistical tests in PLUM had odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals for each category variable.

Assumption 3: There is no multicollinearity among the independent variables.

Assumption 4: The model satisfies the "proportional dominance" parallel test hypothesis. This means that the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable remains the same regardless of the split point of the dependent variable, i.e., the regression coefficient of the independent variable on the dependent variable is independent of the split point.

Principally, dummy dependent variable was used to construct regression model in ordinal regression analysis, where, as stated before, the regression coefficients of the model's variables of interest are unaffected by the response variable's split point. The only variable is the constant. In addition, due to the lack of one or no continuous independent variables, the research did not need to test for multicollinearity in accordance with ordinal logistic regression's assumption three. Lastly, using SPSS, a complete likelihood ratio test was calculated to compare the proportional odds model's fit to that of a model that had variable location parameters in order to evaluate assumption four.

Limitations

China prohibiting paid after-school tutoring in private schools and a total prohibition on investor transactions resulted in the need for the job responsibilities of teachers and the leaders' style to be more flexible and agile. Therefore, this study focused on the leadership of Chinese K-12 public schools. Public school leaders serve in a range of capacities, hold a variety of positions, and serve a minority of the total Chinese student population. Public schools in China were influenced in a variety of ways because of the country's new national policy. However, the inequalities in effectiveness that arise as a

result of different leadership roles or positions within the school were not the focus of this study. Although, prohibiting transactions between private educational tutors and public schools would disrupt their normal operations; it was unclear whether existing schools that provide compulsory education would be affected; and it would take time for local governments to develop regulations in their respective areas. Therefore, the study did not look at the impacts of national or local policy.

This research used a situational leadership method to assess how gender influences teacher participation in Chinese K-12 public schools. Because there was a scarcity of research on SLT in China, the sample size was modest, the schools examined were public, and the research study focused on limited domains of leadership and pedagogy (Przybylski, 2018; Walker et al., 2012; Zhao & Jones, 2017). This research focused primarily on the possible relationship between high levels of situational leadership utilization and high levels of staff involvement in Chinese primary and secondary public schools, which was mitigated by gender disparities. The results of the data analysis and survey validity study demonstrated that the limited N-values did not create data validity issues; rather, the findings were only indicative of the relationship between situational leadership, work engagement, and gender among leaders and teachers in K-12 public schools in two provinces of China (Yunnan and Shandong). The leaders and teachers surveyed in the study were not representative of all leaders and teachers in China. Even though the sample group was divided into representative groups and two representative regional provinces were chosen for the research, the results were not necessarily typical of all Chinese K-12 leaders and teachers. Leaders and teachers were picked from K-12 urban public schools in both areas, although the economic and

educational levels of the two regions varied, and the research did not identify external environment elements that influence leadership. Additionally, the study's SLT survey of leaders used to evaluate their level of SLT and which style they chose implicitly assumed that leaders adopted SLT, hence limiting the study's ability to research leadership.

Summary

This chapter summarized the study's goals and objectives, as well as its research questions and methods. Research design, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection and analytic processes were discussed. The study's limitations were also addressed in some depth.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

This chapter summarized and described the study results. A summary of the study's objectives, research questions, methodology, and data collecting techniques is provided in Chapters IV and V, as well as information on the study's population, sample, and demographics. Observations were briefly summarized at the opening of Chapter IV. There are hypothesis tests and analysis of sample data in this section and a summary of findings and suggestions for further study presented in Chapter V.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to measure for the presence of a significant association between the leaders' level of use of situational leadership and the level of engagement of teachers, including any effects of leader or teacher gender on the association.

The goal of this study was to uncover any relationship between leadership styles (situational leadership), and teachers' work engagement in Chinese K-12 public schools, mitigated by gender difference. The objective of this study was to determine whether the SLM was suitable for K-12 public schools in China and if it was restricted by gender difference. The research design was a quantitative survey approach that measured the association between the principal's use of situational leadership and teachers' work engagement. The reliability of self-reported data presents a possible study limitation as both the leader and their teachers were asked to assess the leaders' use of situational

leadership and as such, relied on perceptual reporting. Quantitative methodology involving the collection and analysis of numerical data to measure support for a given hypothesis was considered an appropriate and useful research design for studies of this type (Basaran & Kiral, 2020; Burns & Martin, 2020; Emmerik et al., 2010; Fox et al., 2015; Gu et al., 2020; Kaufman, 2017; Lazaraton, 2015; Offermann et al., 2018; Reed, 2019). The findings of an association between leadership style and teacher engagement could have practical significance in helping Chinese public-school leaders understand leadership styles that influence teacher engagement.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to discover if situational leadership style was associated with employee work engagement and whether situational leadership style was implemented at a different level of use based on either the leader or the teacher gender. The following three research questions guided this research study. The first question was developed to understand whether the leader's use of situational leadership was effective in promoting teacher work engagement. The second and third questions explored the effects of the teacher and leaders gender on the use of SLT and work engagement.

1. Is there a significant relationship between the level of situational leadership used by the school head and the teachers' level of work engagement in K-12 public schools in China?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' gender and the level of use of situational leadership by school heads in K-12 public schools in China?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the leaders' gender and their level of use of situational leadership in K-12 public schools in China?

Research Methods and Data-Collection Procedures

The research design was a quantitative survey approach that measures the leaders' use of situational leadership and teachers' work engagement as a measure of leader effectiveness.

Teacher Survey 1

For evaluating the principal's leadership effectiveness, teachers were asked to identify the level of situational leadership used by their principal through an adapted situational leadership survey developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1997) and widely used in previous research studies. The adapted survey contained 12 questions. Each question had four response options in a Likert scale. The survey measured situational leadership as defined by Hersey and Blanchard, Blanchard (1997), and Gates et al. (1976) and is widely used and validated in previous educational research.

Teacher Survey 2

For evaluating employee engagement, a shortened version of the UWES (Hassan, 2019; Schaufeli et al., 2006) was used. The UWES evaluates on three different characteristics of employee engagement: vigor, commitment, and absorption. In previous research, this three-factor model was regarded as the most suitable for studies of this type (Guillen & Martinez-Alvarado, 2014; Hassan, 2019; Schaufeli et al., 2006). A shortened nine-item version of the survey was used in this study and created by Schaufeli et al. (2006). Respondents rated the frequency with which each statement applied to them on a six-point scale after receiving descriptive comments about the dimension.

Principal Survey

Another survey evaluating principal leadership effectiveness was administered to school principals in the same schools as the teachers who took the survey noted above. Principals were asked to complete a self-assessment survey, based on the SLII from Blanchard (1997) and Gates et al. (1976), to determine the level of principal use of Situational Leadership. Leaders were surveyed to determine how often they engage in situational leadership in the workplace and what leadership attributes they exhibit. This SLTII leadership self-assessment contained 24 items separated into the four components: (a) directing, (b) coaching, (c) supporting, and (d) delegating (Al-Khamaiseh et al., 2020; Blanchard, 1997; Hersey et al., 1979). The survey responses used a Likert-style scale, with 1 indicating that the leader never demonstrates the behavior and 5 indicating the leader constantly demonstrates the behavior.

Population and Sample

In this quantitative study, the sample size was determined by taking into account both the precision of the study and the projected non-response rate of the participants (Arghode, 2012; Watson, 2015). The research included a total of eight public elementary and secondary schools, four in the province of Shandong and four in the province of Yunnan. In China's 34 provinces, the northernmost Shandong province is consistently ranked among the top five in terms of education (SACBU.com, 2021). Since it was the location of birth for both Confucius and Mencius, has lengthiest educational history in China. Located in the center of China's southwest, Yunnan has a lower gross domestic product than neighboring Shandong and a smaller percentage of the population with college degrees (SACBU.com, 2021). Thus, selecting these two locations allowed for a

synthesis of the differences between northern and southern China, and generates more representative and broad data, enhancing the study's importance. The leadership style and dominance of China's educational authorities were studied by focusing on two sample provinces. Eight schools were surveyed, and their respective staffs were polled. One hundred male teachers, 100 female teachers, 26 female leaders, and 24 male leaders all participated. All the chosen teachers and leaders in the two provinces were chosen according to the gender classifications implied by the research questions.

All of the selected institutions are located in an urban city. Government-supported public schools in China enjoy a head start on the competition, a longer track record of success, a richer cultural legacy, and a more positive public image than their private counterparts (Wu & Zhi, 2020). More importantly, public schools often have higher quality teachers and fewer teacher turnover than private schools (Wu & Zhi, 2020). According to Wu and Zhi's (2020), K-12 public schools remain the principal source of compulsory education in China. Therefore, the selection of public schools was appropriate for the investigation of leadership and teacher participation.

General Information Analysis

This section evaluates data primarily from the following perspectives: In the first phase, descriptive statistics were mostly employed to assess the sample distribution data; the second phase was to examine the sample's reliability and validity, focusing primarily on the scale; the third phase focused mostly on sample characteristics using descriptive statistics; the fourth phase was the correlation analysis, which used "analysis-bivariate" in SPSS to perform Pearson's research on the dimensions of the scale as well as cross-tabulation and Chi-square tests on the mean scores of the non-Likert scales, i.e. the 12-

item SLT questionnaires for teachers. These are general information analysis of the data, and the analysis of the influencing factors would be individually detailed in the coming part.

Demographic Data

Data were collected directly from research participants using surveys. The demographics of the participants reveal that the research was comprised of people with diverse genders, ages, and work experiences. Table 7 demonstrates that the sample had a highly equal gender distribution, which was persuasive for the subsequent study of gender as an indirect variable. Moreover, the average age of teachers was 32.66 years old, while the average age of leaders was 37.54 years old. The mean number of leaders who directly oversee instructors was 5.49, indicating that a K-12 public school teachers in China had around six direct supervisors (see Table 8).

Table 7

Distribution of Gender

-	N of Females	N of Male	N of Not Answer	Total	Total Percent
Leaders	26	24	0	50	100
Teachers	100	100	0	200	100

Table 8

Demographic Data

Demographic Data	Mean	SD	Range
Teachers			
Age (year)	32.66	4.89	20-40
Number of immediate supervisors	5.49	4.87	1-10
Current position work experience (year)	7.74	5.08	1-10
Leaders			
Age (year)	37.54	4.81	20-60

In addition, Table 9 summarizes the leadership styles assessed by teachers for their leaders. It shows that the majority of teachers believed their leaders exhibited situational leadership (frequency = 45, 22.5%), while the minority of teachers felt their leaders used transactional leadership (frequency = 10, 5%).

Table 9

Data of Leadership Styles of Teachers' Assessment for Their Leaders

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Situational leadership	45	22.5	22.5	22.5
Authoritarian leadership	38	19	19	41.5
Participative leadership	40	20	20	61.5
Delegative leadership	23	11.5	11.5	73
Transactional leadership	10	5	5	78
Transformational leadership	44	22	22	100
Total	200	100	100	-

The data in Table 10 shows that the most teachers (n=120) were selected from the category Selling (Coaching) by the teachers. In addition, it could be determined that teachers selected Delegating (Observing) the fewest times, with only four teachers selecting this option. The next most chosen was Participating (Facilitating) categories, n=45. The most gender-balanced option was Directing (Telling) categories. In general, there was minimal variation in the number of responses for each category between female

and male instructors. From the data, it could be stated that both male and female teachers preferred the category Selling (Coaching), indicating that the situational model of Selling (Coaching) was the most appealing and acceptable leadership model for Chinese K-12 school instructors in the study.

Table 10

Data of Situational Leadership Styles of Teachers' Assessment for Their Leaders

Category		Gender (Male)	Gender (Female)	Total
Directing (telling)	Count	15	16	31
	% within 4 SL styles	48.4%	51.6%	100.0%
Selling (coaching)	Count	58	62	120
	% within 4 SL styles	48.3%	51.7%	100.0%
Participating (facilitating)	Count	26	19	45
	% within 4 SL styles	57.8%	42.2%	100.0%
Delegating (observing)	Count	1	3	4
	% within 4 SL styles	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	100	100	200
	% within 4 SL styles	50%	50%	100%

Note. % = Percent; SL = Situational Leadership.

Scale Reliability

Table 11 is a summary table of the UWES-TES and SLT II Assessment Likert Scale reliability study. The values of Cronbach's Alpha for both the overall scale and each dimension of the UWES-TES were more than 0.70 [α(vigor)=0.832 α(dedication)=0.788, α(absorption)=0.739, α(total)=0.904]. The Cronbach's alpha for each dimension of the SLT II assessment was near to 0.7 [α(directing)=0.633, α(coaching)=0.692, α(facilitating)=0.697, α(delegating)=0.63], and the Cronbach's alpha for the entire scale was larger than 0.7 (α=0.836); thus, the reliability of this scale was acceptable.

Table 11

Scale Reliability

-	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
	UWES-TES Scales	
Vigor	0.832	6
Dedication	0.788	5
Absorption	0.739	6
Summary	0.904	17
	SLTII Assessment Scales	
Directing	0.633	6
Coaching	0.692	6
Facilitating	0.697	6
Delegating	0.639	6
Summary	0.836	24

Note. UWES-TES = Utrecht Work Engagement Scale – Teacher Engagement; SLT = Situational Leadership Theory.

Validity Test

Table 12 demonstrated that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values of both UWES-TES and SLTII assessment Likert-scale were more than 0.6 and the significance was less than 0.05, which indicates the validity of both scales were valid and suited for exploratory factor analysis (EFA). However, the data analysis through SPSS indicated that Question 18 of the SLTII assessment Likert-scale failed the validity test. Since the loadings on both dimensions were more than 0.5, which was deemed invalid, therefore the item was eliminated. The remaining questions had loadings more than 0.5 on a single axis; these questions were legitimate and passed the test of validity, thus they were preserved.

Table 12

Kaiser-Meyer-Oikin and Bartlett's Test

Test	-	SLTII Assessment	UWES-TES
Kaiser-Meyer-Oikin Adequacy	Measure of sampling	0.605	0.936
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. chi-square	454.134	1440.305
	df	253	120
	Sig.	0.000	0.000

Note. Approx. = Approximate; SLTII = Situational Leadership II; UWES-TES = Utrecht Work Engagement Scale –Teacher Engagement.

Features of the Sample

Table 13 shows that the mean values of three dimensions of teachers' UWES scales were all between 4 and 5, indicating the majority of teachers' work engagement was "often." The degree of teachers' work engagement was generally greater than 1, and the minimum number of all dimensions were between 2 and 3, showing that the majority of teachers' participation was not exceptionally low. In addition, the greatest value of 6 was focused in the Dedication dimension, suggesting that teachers' work engagement was higher in this area.

The mean value of the leaders' situational leadership performance was around 4, indicating the majority of leaders' performance was "frequently." Moreover, with the exception of the minimum values of the dimension of directing, which was less than 3, the minimum values of the other three dimensions were greater than 3 and the maximum values were 5, indicating that this group of leaders was inclined toward situational

Table 13

Mean and Standard Deviation of Surveys' Scales

-	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
		UWES Scales		
Vigor	2.50	5.67	4.29	0.72
Dedication	2.40	6.00	4.66	0.73
Absorption	2.50	5.67	4.18	0.67
		SLT Survey		
The level of SL	1.00	4.00	2.11	0.67
		SLTII Assessment		
Participating	3.00	5.00	4.19	0.41
Coaching	3.00	5.00	4.23	0.43
Delegating	3.17	5.00	4.27	0.45
Directing	2.67	4.83	3.99	0.50

Note. UWES = Utrecht Work Engagement Scale; SL = Situational Leadership; SLT = Situational Leadership Theory; SLTII = Situational Leadership II. Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES Scales): 17 items. Situational Leadership Theory Survey (SLT Survey): 12 items. Situational Leadership Theory II Assessment (SLTII Assessment): 24 items.

Correlations among Variables

According to the data, there was a statistically significant positive association between teachers' work engagement and leaders' situational leadership level ($r=0.175^{*}$, $p<0.05$). The relations between the "vigor" component of teachers' work engagement and their total work engagement was statistically significant ($r=0.906^{**}$, $p<0.01$). The association between teachers' work engagement "dedication" and total work engagement was statistically significant ($r=0.773^{**}$, $p<0.01$). There was a substantial positive link between teachers' work engagement "absorption" and total work engagement ($r = 0.620^{**}$, $p<0.01$) (see Table 14).

Table 14

Correlations among Teachers' Survey Variables

	The level of Situational Leadership	The Level of Work Engagement	Vigor	Dedication	Absorption
The level of situational leadership	1	-	-	-	-
The level of work engagement	0.175*	1	-	-	-
Vigor	0.144*	0.906**	1	-	-
Dedication	0.145*	0.890**	0.773**	1	-
Absorption	0.140*	0.837**	0.611**	0.620**	1

Note. **P<0.01; *P<0.05.

Table 15 shows correlations between the level of situational leadership of leaders and other variables. The data shows that the degree of situational leadership was significantly correlated with gender (P=0.044<0.05), age (P=-0.288*<0.05) and position (P=-0.348*<0.05), and not with the leader's working district.

Table 15

Correlations among Leaders' Survey Variables

-	Gender	Age	Position	District	The level of Situational Leadership
Gender	1	-	-	-	-
Age	0.048	1	-	-	-
Position	-0.021	-0.601**	1	-	-
District	-0.088	-0.184	0.254	1	-
The level of SL	0.044	-.288*	-0.348*	0.128	1

Note. SL = Situational Leadership. **P<0.01; *P<0.05.

Analysis of Influencing Factors

The research analysis was mostly based on three research hypotheses, and the ordinal logistic regression analysis was primarily employed to evaluate and explain the link between independent factors and dependent variables. The following conclusions were obtained: Hypothesis 1 is accepted, indicating that (a) the leader's level of situational leadership was related to the teacher's work engagement; Hypothesis 2 is rejected, indicating that (b) the leader's level of situational leadership was not related to the teacher's genders; and Hypothesis 3 is accepted, indicating that (c) the leader's level of situational leadership was related to the leader's genders. The research discovered a link between other factors, such as the Impact of job engagement on teacher genders, in addition to validating the hypothesis. The new results were significant in understanding the efficacy of leadership and the work engagement of teachers.

Effects between the Level of Work Engagement and the Level of Situational Leadership

Hypothesis 1 of the study stated that the level of situational leadership of leaders is related to the work engagement of teachers. The following analytical findings using ordinal logistic regression addresses Hypothesis 1. The effect of different levels of work engagement on the level of situational leadership was explored. Situational leadership levels were stylized according to the SLTII model, with “selling” being the "high" level of situational leadership, “telling” and “participating” being the "medium" level of situational leadership, and “delegating” being the "low" level of situational leadership.

Applying ordered logistic regression analysis, the following analytical results were obtained.

As evidenced in Table 16, the level of work engagement of teachers was strongly related to the level of situational leadership of leaders (P= 0.018 <0.05). The OR of the leader's level of situational leadership was 1.614>1, indicating that the greater the level of teacher work engagement, the higher the leader's degree of situational leadership. In addition, when teachers' work engagement raised by one level, the degree of contextual leadership raised by 1.614 times more than before.

Table 16

Ordinal Logistic Regression of Analysis for Hypothesis 1

	Influencer	β	OR	P	OR 95% CI
Threshold	The level of work engagement = 1	-1.415	0.243	0.002	0.097~0.607
	The level of work engagement = 2	1.114	3.047	0.018	1.208~7.683
-	The Level of Situational Leadership	-0.488	1.614	0.019	0.408~0.923

Note. OR = Odds ratio.

Effects between the Level of Situational Leadership and Gender of Teachers

Hypothesis 2 of the study states that the level of situational leadership of leaders is related to the gender of the teacher. The analysis conducted cross-tabulation analysis to test Hypothesis 2, based on the level of contextual leadership of the leader (12 items) and the gender of the teachers.

Figure 3 shows that the difference in the number of male and female teachers to assess their leaders' situational leadership level, and the distribution of men and women in the same dimension was relatively even.

Figure 3

Cross-Tabulation Analysis Results

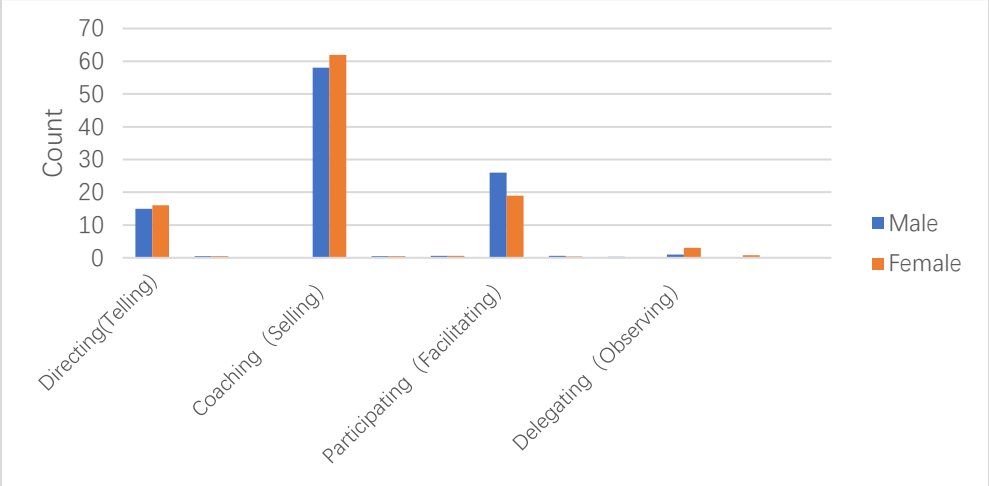


Table 17 shows that there was no significant relationship between teachers' genders and their leaders' level of situational leadership (P>0.05). The study used Chi-square test to investigate the effects between leader's leadership styles of single-choice survey question response versus genders of teachers. Except for the Chi-square test summary, the remaining analysis findings were indicated in two bar charts to make the data more visual.

Table 17

Chi-Square Tests between Teachers' Genders and Their Leaders' Level of Situational Leadership

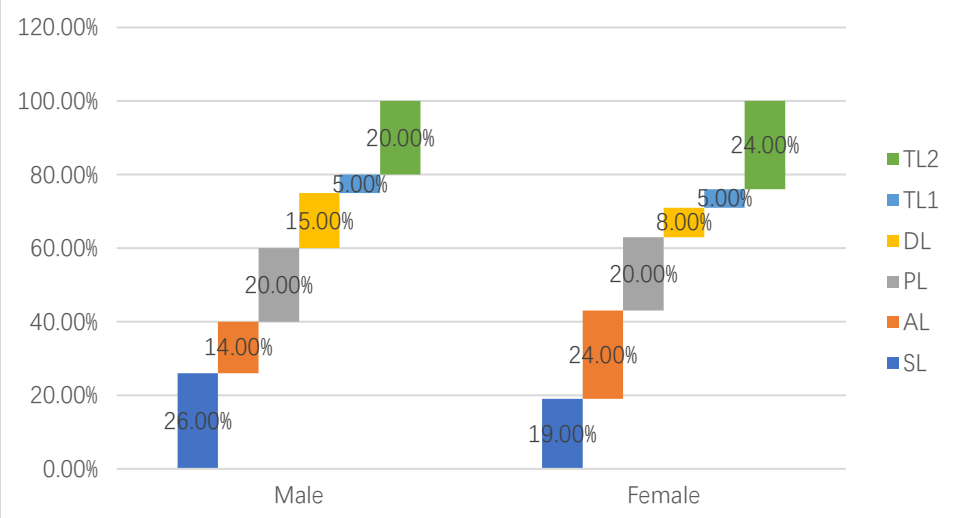
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson chi-square	2.254[a]	3	0.521
Likelihood ratio	2.305	3	0.511
Linear-by-linear Association	0.178	1	0.673
N of valid cases	200	-	-

Note. [a]2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.00.

The Figure 4 stacked bar chart depicts the genders of teachers and the leadership styles utilized by their leaders. Based on the information in the graph, male teachers in Chinese K-12 public schools perceived their leaders to employ the most situational leadership types, accounting for 26% of the total, followed by transformational leadership types and participative leadership types, each accounting for a higher percentage at 20%. Female teachers in Chinese K-12 public schools reported their leaders utilized transformational and authoritarian leadership styles the most, each at 24% of the total, followed by participatory and situational leadership styles at 20% and 19%, respectively. Both male and female teachers felt their leaders possessed the least transactional leadership style, accounting for 5% of the overall proportion.

Figure 4

The Gender Distribution of Teachers in Terms of Their Leaders' Leadership Styles

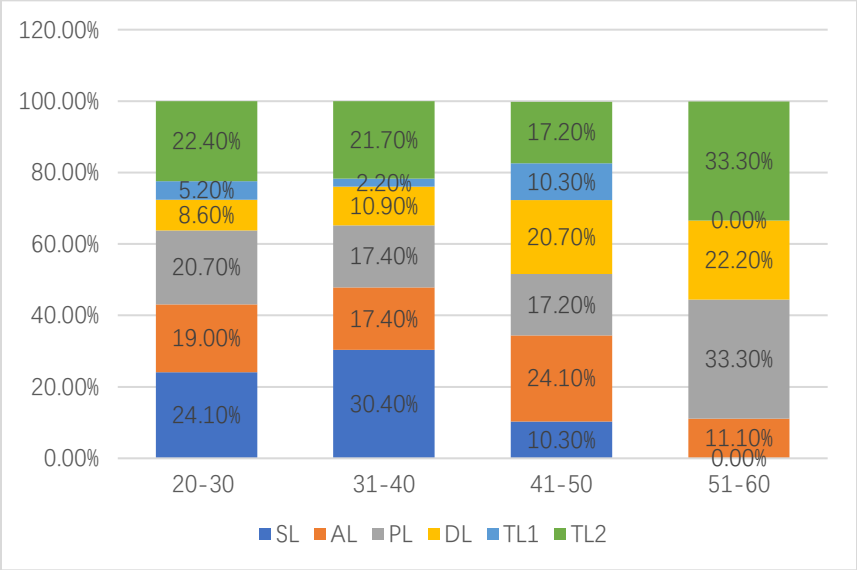


Note. TL2 = Transformational leadership; TL1 = Transactional leadership; DL= Delegative leadership; PL = Participating leadership; AL = Authoritarian leadership; SL= Situational leadership. P>0.05.

Figure 5 reflects a stacked bar chart of teachers' ages and the leadership styles their leaders adopted. According to the information in the graph, the age groups of Chinese K-12 public school teachers who believe their leaders adopted a situational leadership style were mainly concentrated between the ages of 20-30 and 31-40, with 24.1% and 30.4%, respectively. Only 10.3% of teachers in the age group of 41-50 years old believed that their leaders used situational leadership style, and 0%of teachers in the age group of 51-60 years old believed their leaders used situational leadership style.

Figure 5

The Age Distribution of Teachers in Terms of Their Leaders' Leadership Styles



Note. SL = Situational leadership; AL = Authoritarian leadership; PL = Participating leadership; DL = Delegative leadership; TL1 = Transactional leadership; TL2: Transformational leadership. P>0.05.

The two bar graphs illustrate how teachers of various genders and ages reacted to their leaders' leadership styles. The relationship between teachers' genders, ages and leadership types are further illustrated in Table 18.

The data shows the value of Pearson Chi-square is 6.215 and the value of asymptotic significance (2-sided) is 0.286 >0.05, concluding there was no correlation between the gender of teachers and the leadership styles used by their leaders.

Therefore, the results of the study indicate that teachers' gender and age were not only unrelated to the level of situational leadership adopted by their leaders, but also did not significantly correlate with the adoption of other leadership styles by their leaders. That is, there was no significant correlation between teachers' personhood and their leaders' level of situational leadership.

Table 18

Chi-Square Tests between Teachers' Genders, Ages and Leadership Types

	-	Value	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	Gender (teachers)	6.215	0.286
	Age	14.774	0.468
Likelihood ratio	Gender (teachers)	6.285	0.279
	Age	16.730	0.335
Linear-by-linear association	Gender (teachers)	0.121	0.728
	Age	1.513	0.219
N of valid cases		200	-

The Impact of Work Engagement on Teachers' Genders

The relationship between teachers' work engagement and teachers' personality was analyzed using linear regression. Table 19 includes the results of the study on teachers' gender and teachers' work engagement showing that female teachers were significantly more engaged in work than males ($p=0.039<0.05$); therefore, teachers' gender and work engagement were related, and female teachers were more related than males.

In addition, teachers aged 31-40 years had significantly higher compliance in work engagement than teachers aged 20-30 years ($p<0.05$), and the compliance was 0.021 higher than that of teachers aged 20-30 years.

The compliance of teachers aged 41-50 years was not significantly different from that of Method teachers aged 20-30 years in terms of work engagement, $p=0.260>0.05$. The compliance of teachers aged 51-60 years was significantly higher than that of teachers aged 20-30 years ($p<0.05$), and the compliance was 0.01 higher than that of teachers aged 20-30 years.

Thus, the low level of work engagement among young male teachers in the overall teacher population may be due to the fact that there are fewer male teachers in the school that males have less job attribution, and that younger teachers have less work experience than older teachers. Furthermore, the unfamiliarity of the job content among younger teachers may contribute to the low level of work engagement.

Table 19

Linear Regression Analysis (Coefficients[a]) of Teachers' Work Engagement and Teachers' Gender and Age

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	P
1	(Constant)	4.690	0.283	-	16.590	0.000
	Female	0.182	0.088	0.146	2.081	0.039
	Male	0	0	0	0	0
	Age (20-30 years)	0	0	0	0	0
	Age (31-40 years)	0.248	0.107	0.168	2.322	0.021
	Age (41-50 years)	0.145	0.128	0.082	1.130	0.260
	Age (51-60 years)	0.552	0.211	0.184	2.618	0.010

Note. Dependent variable: The level of work engagement. All data from teachers' surveys.

Effects between the Level of Situational Leadership and Gender of Leaders

Hypothesis 3 of the study indicated that the level of situational leadership of leaders is related to the genders of leaders. Hypothesis 3 was analyzed using ordinal logistic regression to investigate the association between leader's gender and level of situational leadership. For the gender analysis of the study, the dummy variables 0 and 1 were used. Similarly, dummy variables were processed for the appropriate variables, including district variable setting. The sample responded to the survey according to the performance frequency of the level of situational leadership, which ranged from 1 to 5. In order to develop adequate data module, the study considered response results greater than 4 (≥4) as a "high" level of situational leadership and more than 3 (≥3 and <4) as a "medium" level of situational leadership. Less than 3 (≤3) as a "low" level of situational leadership.

From Table 20, since P> α(P>0.05), it shows that the initial hypothesis was accepted, suggesting that the regression equations are parallel, and the coefficients of the respective variables in the model remain constant regardless of the location of the split point of the response variable. Therefore, the model is consistent with the ordered logistic regression model.

Table 20

Test of Parallel Lines

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Null Hypothesis	36.836	-	-	-
General	36.496	0.340	3	0.952

Table 21 shows that the gender of leaders is strongly related with the level of situational leadership (P=0.037<0.05). The OR (odds ratio) of male leaders was 0.602<1,

which indicates the degree of situational leadership of male leaders was lower than that of female leaders; the likelihood of increasing the degree of situational leadership by at least one level was 0.602 times higher for male leaders than for female leaders. Furthermore, age of leaders was strongly related with the level of situational leadership (P=0.044<0.05). The OR for age was 0.429<1, indicating that the younger the age, the higher the degree of situational leadership. When the age was reduced by one year, the likelihood of increasing the degree of situational leadership by one level was 0.429 times higher than the original one. In addition, "district" had a P=0.546>0.05, thus there was no correlation between working district of leaders and quality of situational leadership.

Table 21

Ordinal Logistic Regression Result of Leaders' Survey

-	Influencer	β	OR	P	OR 95% CI
Threshold	[The level of situational leadership = 1]	-2.333	0.097	0.389	0.011～0.870
	[The level of situational leadership = 2]	0.429	1.535	0.712	0.157～15.059
Gender	[Male=1]	-0.508	0.602	0.037	0.190～1.910
	[Female=2] reference group				
Age	-	-0.847	0.429	0.044	0.188～0.976
District	[Yunnan=1]	-0.366	0.694	0.546	0.212～2.270
	[Shandong=2] reference group				

Note. OR = Odds ratio.

Summary of the Findings

A total of 200 teachers were surveyed, of whom 100 were male and 100 were female, and there were no missing or invalid data. The majority of the teachers were 20-30 years old (57.7%), followed by 31-40 years old (22.9%), 41-50 years old (14.4%), and

52-60 years old (4.5%). More than half of the teachers in the study data had between one and five years of experience (61.2%). This data was consistent with the general realities of Chinese K-12 public school teachers today, in light of the strict qualifications for tenure in Chinese K-12 public schools (based on years of working and academic contributions). In addition, in terms of regional differences between the north and south, the sample consisted of 100 teachers in Yunnan Province and 100 teachers in Shandong Province, thus, the sample was evenly distributed in both regions.

The study also involved 50 leaders (24 male leaders and 26 female leaders), with a near even gender distribution. The sample consisted of 21 leaders from Yunnan Province and 29 leaders from Shandong Province. Leadership positions are concentrated in the position of director (including directors of grades and different departments), while the number of principal and vice principal positions was not the majority. This information was compatible with the existing status of Chinese K-12 public school administrators. Based on this, the basic profile of teachers and leaders meet the basic requirements of the sample type for this study.

Good Reliability and Validity of the Research Scale

The scales used in the study were analyzed and determined to demonstrate good reliability and validity. The reliability of each subscale and dimension was above 0.6. After further analysis, the validity of the scale was fully met by removing the 18th question of the SLTII assessment Likert-scale, indicating that the data obtained from the scale to test the level of work engagement and situational leadership reliably reflects the performance of teachers and leaders on each dimension.

Two Sides of the Sample Results

The results of the SLT survey showed that most teachers believed their leaders applied situational leadership style, and had a moderate level of situational leadership (with an average rating of 2.11 on a 4-point scale). This indicates that teachers typically considered their leaders lacked a high degree of situational leadership style, and the majority of teachers stated their leaders' situational leadership style was mostly focused on Selling (Coaching). However, the results of the SLTII survey showed that the majority of the leaders perceived their situational leadership style to be more Delegating (Observing). By comparing the data, there was a discrepancy between the results of the current situational leadership assessment from teachers and the results of the leaders' self-assessed situational leadership assessment. Therefore, it was important to study the situational leadership of leaders from both groups of teachers and leaders in order to make the results of this study more convincing and to further illustrate the need for this study.

A Description of the Study's Variable Correlations

The current study's main findings were as follows: (a) the leader's level of situational leadership was only related to the teacher's work engagement and the leader's personality (e.g., gender, age, and position) and not to the teacher's personality (e.g., gender and age); (b) the factors influencing the teacher's work engagement, in addition to the leader's level of situational leadership, were the teacher's personality (e.g., gender and age); (c) the gender of the teachers was irrelevant to the leadership style employed by the leader; and (d) the gender of the leaders was relevant to the situational leadership level.

By comparing the differences between teachers of different genders, ages, and regions, the study found there were significant differences in the work engagement profiles of teachers by gender and age: (a) female teachers were significantly more adherent to work engagement than males; and (b) older teachers were significantly more adherent to work engagement than younger teachers. Also, the results of the SLT survey showed there were differences in the choice of leadership style type by gender and age of teachers: (a) male teachers perceived their leaders to adopt the most situational leadership type; (b) female teachers perceived their leaders to adopt the most transformational leadership type and authoritarian leadership type; and (c) both male and female teachers perceived their leaders to adopt the least transactional leadership type. The age groups of teachers who perceived their leaders to adopt the situational leadership style were concentrated between the ages of 20-30 and 31-40. Therefore, subsequent studies on the factors influencing teacher engagement need to consider the gender and age of teachers to adopt the appropriate leadership style. However, there were no significant differences in the level of situational leadership styles of the leaders according to teacher's gender and age. In other words, teachers' gender did not influence leaders' situational leadership. Then, when conducting subsequent studies on the factors influencing situational leadership, teachers' gender need not be used as a control variable.

The correlation analysis revealed that teachers' gender, age, and leaders' situational leadership levels were not correlated. In addition, although teachers differed by gender and age in the types of leadership styles their leaders adopted, correlation analysis revealed there was no significant correlation between teachers' gender, age, and the type of leadership style their leaders adopted. Therefore, situational leadership style

can be an independent leadership style adopted by leaders and adopted by teachers, and take advantage of it to become an effective leadership style.

In addition, through ordinal logistic regression analysis, it was finally obtained that: situational leadership style of the leader and gender of the leader were independent influencing factors of teachers' work engagement. Firstly, there was a positive relationship between the level of teachers' work engagement and leaders' situational leadership in general and in all four dimensions. That was, higher levels of situational leadership were associated with higher levels of work engagement and vice versa. Secondly, the gender and age of the leaders, as well as the position, were significantly correlated with the level of situational leadership. Male leaders had lower levels of situational leadership than female leaders, and vice versa. The younger the leader's age, the higher the level of situational leadership, and vice versa. The higher the position of the leader, the lower the level of situational leadership and vice versa. There was no correlation between the leader's region and the level of situational leadership. Therefore, the region factor would not be used as a discussion factor in the subsequent findings, but rather as a factor to ensure that the sample size was vast and representative.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study are presented in this last chapter. Research topics, methodologies, sample, and population were all re-examined. Presenting major and unexpected discoveries, as well as the researcher's conclusions, implications for action, and suggestions for future study are included. The chapter concluded with a few final observations on the influencers of situational leadership's level, which was substantially connected with the gender and age of the leaders, as well as the position, rather than the genders of teachers. Observations of teacher gender also showed a significant influence on teacher work engagement. In addition, there was a favorable association between the level of teacher's' work engagement and the leaders' situational leadership in general. Despite the fact that the Chinese government is currently attempting to improve the effectiveness and leadership training of the Chinese education system, the absence of a scientifically effective development strategy and solid bureaucratic structure necessitates that these efforts be cognizant of potential challenges and adopt new methods for improvement.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to measure for the presence of a significant association between the leaders' level of use of situational leadership and the level of engagement of teachers, including any effects of leader or teacher gender on the association.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following three research questions.

1. Is there a significant relationship between the level of situational leadership used by the school head and the teachers' level of work engagement in K-12 public schools in China?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' gender and the level of use of situational leadership by school heads in K-12 public schools in China?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the leaders' gender and their level of use of situational leadership in K-12 public schools in China?

Research Methods and Data-Collection Procedures

A quantitative survey approach was used to investigate the school principal's use of situational leadership and teachers' work engagement. For these types of inquiries, quantitative research design was determined appropriate and helpful. It is deemed proper and advantageous to gather and analyze numerical data in order to verify a given theory (Basaran & Kiral, 2020; Burns & Martin, 2020; Emmerik et al., 2010; Fox et al., 2015; Gu et al., 2020; Kaufman, 2017; Lazaraton, 2015; Offermann et al., 2018; Reed, 2019). The findings suggested a link between leadership style and teacher's work engagement has practical implications for Chinese public-school administrators.

The study was conducted by administering surveys to 200 teachers (100 females and 100 males) and 50 leaders (26 females and 24 males). All surveys were administered online. Samples were collected on the basis of gender requirements and collection was discontinued when the required number was reached. The original collection goal was to survey 25 male leaders and 25 female leaders, however, in the actual survey process, the returns resulted in 24 male leaders and 26 female leaders. Due to the uneven gender

distribution in leadership and the small sample size of school leaders, the gender distribution of the leadership sample was a little more uneven than the gender distribution of the teachers. The gender difference was small and did not affect the overall data analysis. There were three surveys in total. Surveys included a 12-item SLT and UWES-TES administered to 200 teachers. A 24-item SLTII survey was administered to 50 school leaders. The survey procedures were completed and approved in accordance with Institutional Review Board requirements. The data collected were coded by symbol and number and the corresponding data analysis were completed in SPSS.

Population and Sample

Participants included principals, vice- principals, directors, and teachers of the eight schools included in the study. All the schools chosen were in urban settings. Chinese public schools are well supported by the government, existed for a longer period of time than private schools, had a strong historical and cultural heritage, and a favorable public reputation (Wu & Zhi, 2020). Additionally, public schools often employ a better faculty and lower teacher turnover than private schools (Wu & Zhi, 2020). The study granted approval from schools' leaders to conduct the study, administering one survey to school-level leaders and two surveys to all teachers, via an emailed online survey. Emails for the teachers and school leaders were readily available through public information, so no permission was needed to acquire those. Four public primary and secondary schools in Shandong Province and four public primary and secondary schools in Yunnan Province were selected for the study using a convenience sampling approach. The school were selected because they were close to the researcher, willing to participate in the

study, provide the N value needed for analysis, and were representative of northern and southern schools in China.

Major Findings

In relation to the research questions, this study examined whether the principles of the SLM were appropriate in the Chinese context and, if so, whether an SLT leadership strategy was suitable for K–12 public schools in China and was limited by gender inequality. This study aimed to uncover any relationship between leadership styles (situational leadership) and teachers work engagement in Chinese K–12 public schools, mitigated by gender differences. Four main conclusions could be drawn from the study:

- In terms of teachers' increased work engagement, situational leadership is effective regardless of the leader's gender.
- Teachers' gender and age are associated with work engagement, and the teachers' gender impacts their perceptions of their leaders' leadership styles, but not the leader's situational leadership level.
- There was a positive relationship between the level of teacher work engagement and leaders' situational leadership in general.
- The gender and age of the leaders, as well as their position, were significantly correlated with the level of situational leadership.

The first conclusions match the core principles of the SLM, which is that the higher the leader's situational leadership level, the more effective the leader's influence is (in terms of high work engagement level) (Blanchard, 1997). Situational theories suggest that leaders should adapt their leadership style to their current scenario rather than portraying themselves in a single leadership position for the duration of their career

(Blanchard, 1997; Parveen & Tariq, 2014). Therefore, leaders should adapt their leadership style to the present context in order to accommodate reform and progress, and leadership application and transformation should involve paying attention to the research. As Kotter (2001) said, leaders push for change, rather than push for complexity. Situational leadership appears to be advantageous in Chinese K–12 public schools, as demonstrated by this study's findings that the majority of teachers judged their leader's leadership style to be situational leadership.

This study also found an association between teachers' levels of work engagement and situational leadership. It further revealed that only the gender of the leader affects the situational leadership level and that a higher situational leadership level is associated with greater work engagement. Leaders, therefore, are recommended to study and develop situational leadership in order to boost their work engagement and leadership effectiveness.

The second conclusion derived from the fact that based on their gender and age, the personal traits of Chinese teachers were directly related to work engagement level and judging the leadership styles, but it did not affect the level of situational leadership used by school leaders. The results of the 12-item SLT survey revealed differences in the choice of leadership style type according to teachers' gender and age: (a) male teachers perceived their leaders to adopt the most situational leadership type; (b) female teachers perceived their leaders to adopt the most transformational leadership type and authoritarian leadership type; and (c) both male and female teachers perceived their leaders to adopt the least transactional leadership type. The results of the 12-item SLT

survey also showed that in terms of SLT, both male and female leaders generally adopt a selling/coaching style.

The survey further revealed that teachers' impressions of their leaders' leadership styles were influenced by the teachers' gender. Namely, various leadership evaluations by different genders suggest that distinct groups may have different leadership requirements. Although gender had no bearing on the degree of situational leadership, it had a substantial correlation with teachers' work engagement, and a greater level of work engagement was associated with a higher situational leadership level. Therefore, in order to increase teachers' work engagement, the gender of teachers should be addressed in the study's analysis. This study showed that female teachers were much more committed to work engagement than male teachers, and older teachers were significantly more committed to work engagement than younger teachers. Younger male teachers comprised the majority of the target demographic for enhancing teachers' work engagement.

The third conclusion drawn was that leaders with greater levels of situational leadership resulted in teachers who were more engaged in their job. Therefore, in light of this clear and unambiguous finding, rather than depending on inexperienced personnel, schools should employ and train leaders capable of executing their duties successfully. Teachers are more inclined to operate in a proactive and positive manner if their superiors have a more adaptable leadership style (Johnson et al., 2008). Because leadership is the foundation of talent management, schools must emphasize leadership education for leaders (Hersey et al., 1996; Reed, 2019; Wuryani et al., 2020). Furthermore, data in this study showed a positive relationship between selling/coaching (a subscale of situational leadership) and work engagement, which was the same conclusion Parveen and Tariq

(2014) drew. That is, the majority of department heads used a "selling" leadership approach to make decisions in universities in Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Wah, and Taxila. Parveen and Tariq's study highlighted that school leaders believed the situational leadership style known as the selling/coaching approach to be a successful technique. The approach created a high-task and high-relationship environment, indicating that leaders often explain their choices and provide opportunities for clarification.

The fourth finding of this current study identified objective factors such as the leader's gender, age, and position as having an impact on situational leadership levels. This finding is logically consistent with the university study by Parveen and Tariq (2014), which found that the gender of the department chair affects the job satisfaction of university faculty, which in turn affects the leadership style of the leader. The conclusion drawn in this study in regard to the correlation between gender and leadership in an educational leadership setting (that female leaders' degree of situational leadership was more effective than that of male leaders) was based on the leaders' self-evaluations and was not in line with what Paustian-Underdahl et al. (2014) noted: When only self-evaluations were examined, men rated themselves as significantly more effective than women rated themselves. In addition, according to Johnson et al. (2008), male leaders had higher levels of situational leadership than female leaders, meaning that male leaders tended to be partnership oriented in their performance, while female leaders were more relationship oriented. By contrast, the results of this study led to a contrary conclusion: that male leaders had a lower level of situational leadership than female leaders. This study assumed that female leaders tended to be more flexible, diagnostic, and partnership

oriented in their performance. It implied that leaders in Chinese K–12 public schools applied an unusual approach to situational leadership in terms of gender differences.

The fourth conclusion also revealed that younger leaders were more likely to accept the situational leadership paradigm than older leaders. Specifically, in atmospheres characterized by competition and fast change, younger leaders are more willing to embrace new leadership methods and establish their own leadership styles (Larsson & Bjorklund, 2020). Moreover, according to the Chinese educational work environment and promotion system, a leader's higher position, more years of work experience, and lower degree of Situational Leadership might be explained (Wilson & Xue, 2013).

Theoretical Implications

This study focused on the evolution of SLT in China and its implementation in K–12 public schools. The study findings extended SLT, strengthened gender leadership influences, and provided statistical support and a theoretical pathway for future research.

Leadership Redefined

SLT was born and developed in the United States and was empirically found to be an effective leadership style by many scholars (Blanchard, 1997; Blanchard & Hersey, 1976; Cairns et al., 1998; Hersey et al., 1979). However, in China, little research has been conducted on situational theory in the field of education, and most of the existing studies conclude that the Chinese subjective leadership style is a paternalist (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Lai et al., 2019; Rajasekar & Beh, 2013; Wibowo, 2017) or authoritarian leadership style (Militello & Berger, 2010; W. Zhang & Koshmanova, 2021).

The Chinese government took measures to improve the quality of Chinese higher education and to increase the worldwide impact of Chinese institutions as a result of rising globalization and internationalization (Ministry of Education, People's Republic of

China [MOE], 2009; Lu & Smith, 2020; C. Zhu & Caliskan, 2022). The major goal of these changes was to establish schools that are effective and competitive and to turn China into a global participant in the emerging knowledge-based economy (Liu et al., 2019). This paternalist leadership paradigm may continue to be safeguarded by traditional Chinese cultural values (Lai et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2019; C. Zhu & Caliskan, 2022). In connection with this, some academics claim that implementing educational leadership in a hierarchical, policy-driven, extremely power-distant, collectivist Chinese culture may be difficult and challenging (Lu & Smith, 2020; C. Zhu & Caliskan, 2022). However, some Chinese higher education institutions have adopted Western leadership theories, which were defined as the promotion of distributed, democratic, participative, and shared leaders (Lu & Smith, 2020; C. Zhu & Caliskan, 2022), and adapted them to their own context, resulting in the promotion of formal leaders rather than a shift away from traditional hierarchical structures (Militello & Berger, 2010).

In contrast to previous research, the results of a 12-item SLT indicated that situational leadership was the predominant leadership style in Chinese K–12 public schools. The bulk of prior research on educational leadership in China focused on school leaders' propensity to use the standard top-down instructional leadership approach promoted by the District Education Bureau (Lai et al., 2017; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). While there has been an increase in funding and substantial advancements in school leadership training and continuous professional development, provision has been top-down and focused mostly on a growing understanding of educational policy and reform (Przybylski et al., 2018; Wilson & Xue, 2013). The outcomes of this current study were compared to determine whether situational leadership was a superior substitute leadership

technique in Chinese K–12 public schools. This finding of the study that the relationship between SLT and teachers' work engagement under the influence of gender is a new discovery in the existing literature and provides a unique way of thinking about future research on leadership in China.

Gender-Adaptation in Leadership

In both the teacher and leader self-assessment results, this current study indicates that in the Chinese education field, the situational leadership style of leaders in the K–12 public school setting did not shift according to the gender of their subordinates, nor did it change according to the specific situation. Studies have found that in terms of the effects of situational leadership, the leadership style preferred in the field of education is different from that within fields such as business (Luo & Liu, 2014; Silverthorne & Wang, 2010). This may be explainable by the application of situational leadership in China being closely related to the work environment. This occurrence is logical due to the hierarchical leadership style inherited from the traditional Chinese leadership structure and management system (Lu & Smith, 2020; C. Zhu & Caliskan, 2022). Since the release of the new set of Professional Standards for Compulsory Education School Principals from the Ministry of Education in 2013 (resulting in 2035 new school projects in China in 2019 (Y. Zhu, 2019), the standards have encouraged principals to pay more attention to the voices of teachers in school-level decision-making, as well as to the interaction of power distance and coherent principal leadership (Rajasekar & Beh, 2013; Wibowo, 2017). Therefore, China's K-12 public schools had formed a centralized and hierarchical management system, which had been affecting the understanding and application of the leadership of the leadership team in public schools. The standards also

claimed that China had to establish educational power connected with global school reforms. For example, schools had to build stronger theories for understanding how they should react to academic policies and practices such as leadership, curriculum, and teachers' professional development (W. Zhang & Koshmanova, 2021). However, the gender of subordinates showed differences in their leaders' leadership-style judgments. For example, the results of this current study showed that male teachers in Chinese K–12 public schools perceived their leaders to use the situational leadership type the most, while female teachers perceived their leaders to use the transformational leadership type and the authoritarian leadership type the most. Moreover, younger teachers in this study chose situational leadership style more often, meaning that the concept of situational leadership style was still relatively new in China and was more popular among younger teachers. In addition, male leaders showed lower levels of situational leadership than female leaders and vice versa. This finding suggests that women are more effective than men in adopting situational leadership-type leaders and that society should develop a sound understanding of gender leadership theory. Although women are still underrepresented in leadership positions in most countries around the world, this is clearly evident in China, especially in leadership positions in K–12 public schools (Feng, 2020; Ha et al., 2019; Li, 2020). The current study at least illuminated that the downside of gender inequality is the neglect of the positive impact of female leadership in Chinese K–12 public schools.

Equivalence Leadership Development

In the current study, a sample of the South–North sample was conducted because of the disparity in population and education levels between the North and South of China;

however, the results showed no correlation between the leader's region and situational leadership level. Therefore, the study established that leadership style is not related to the overall level of the region; rather, leadership style is generally related to the individual. Interestingly, these results contradict what most scholars believe to be the influence of cultural–geographical differences on leadership, whereby they argue that internal and external differences in the school environment in China influence the majority of the leadership within the school community (Bush & Haiyan, 2013; Ha et al., 2019; Zhong & Ehrich, 2010). Sociocultural research found that on the one hand, there are significant negative links between leadership style and the gap between power and sociocultural ideals (Emmerik et al., 2010). On the other hand, research demonstrated a considerable and favorable relationship between social and organizational leadership and equality between men and women (Emmerik et al., 2010; Grove, 2008; House et al., 2004). The results of this current study demonstrate that regional differences in Chinese society and culture do not negatively affect leadership styles and there are no significant differences between organizational leadership and society and culture for promoting gender equality. Therefore, the findings infer that at least in Chinese K–12 public schools, leadership is not related to regional cultural differences, and policymakers can develop uniform educational leadership guidelines and policies for application throughout Chinese K–12 public schools, but improving overall leadership must begin with the individual.

Practical Significance

Firstly, the findings can be applied by future researchers who seek to investigate the relationship between SLT and other factors. Especially in a research framework that emphasized gender as an indirect or moderating variable, this study provided a solid groundwork for further data analysis and theoretical support.

Secondly, it contributed to leadership research by validating the association between situational leadership and work engagement (gender as a covariable) in the period of Chinese K-12 public schools. The study expanded the application of SLT in Chinese education by means of quantitative research and a framework for examining the impacts of situational leadership styles.

According to the study's findings, the variables that determined a leader's situational leadership level include the leader's own personality (gender, age, and position) and the teacher's degree of work engagement. Consequently, in terms of a leader's prolonged leadership effectiveness, the emphasis was on how to improve the leadership level of older men. Regarding teacher work engagement, the elements that impacted work engagement include the leader's situational leadership level and the teacher's personality (gender and age). Therefore, schools should concentrate on enhancing work engagement training for young male educators.

Thirdly, it filled the gaps in Chinese leadership research and expanded the SLT to the effective leadership theory of adapting to the Chinese K-12 public education system. As previously indicated, China lacked research on the idea of research sites and instead utilized work participation as the cause of variables and gender as the independent variable for study. Even during the COVID-19, the principle of situational leadership was used and its efficacy was shown, as evidenced by the study findings. Moreover, even in Chinese culture, where women were less competitive than males, at least in Chinese K-12 public schools, female leaders were shown to have greater situational leadership abilities than male leaders, a result that contradicted the typical gender prejudice in Chinese society.

Fourthly, the results of this research demonstrated that UWES-TES, SLT, and SLT II were reliable quantitative research instruments. Data analysis proved the validity and trustworthiness of the quantitative instruments, and the survey was tailored by changing a few of places to reflect the reality of the working environment and language use patterns in China.

Implications for Action

Education reform and school leadership training in China have grown significantly over the past three decades, but the key messages of educational reform still have a bureaucratic structure, and training outcomes and social progress have been disappointing, with a training agenda that favors policy awareness and policy implementation (Wilson & Xue, 2013). Therefore, the recommendations made in this study to overcome internal and external problems focus on the following subjects.

Decision-Makers

The results of this study partially supported the application of the SLM to Chinese K–12 public schools. However, as the main assumption of this study originally held, based on their gender and age, Chinese teachers had several different leadership needs. Therefore, this study suggested three points (leadership management tool created, professional training pool developed and power distance cognition) to Chinese K–12 public schools' decision-makers that attempt to use the SLM as a training tool and system, also build a clear cognition of power distance in working group.

Leadership Management Tool

A complete public training program helps people establish a stimulating and engaging workplace by successfully conveying performance requirements via consistent feedback. The school must develop an effective leadership team and teach its members

about the complete public training program, which can help them better handle difficult situations. There are ways in which leaders may enhance their management style to keep their staff happy and cut down on employee turnover at work. Educators can better prepare the next generation of leaders, maximize the effectiveness of their leadership skills, and assist people to develop their own personalities to become more successful leaders and managers. This research adds to the body of knowledge, since such research has never been done in Chinese K–12 public schools in this way before. The complete public training program can explain the SLM; determine employees' work engagement levels; apply leadership tactics suited for the scenario; and identify ways for developing self-reliant employees in this training program. Using this leadership management tool, an individual can learn that their situational leadership style can be classified as, for example, either "coaching" for the experienced learner or "directing" for the eager newcomer. A leader's style of leadership can be adapted to the developmental needs of the person he or she leads. Thus, teams or individuals must develop situation-specific leadership tactics that are adaptive.

Professional Training Pool

Vocational education and training (VET) is a leadership development program for teachers and school leaders who want to improve their work skills (Kairys, 2018). As schools grow, it makes sense to pay attention to the growth of school leaders. In light of the disparity between men's and women's perceptions of the importance of leadership skills, it is imperative that aspiring managers focus on honing their cognitive, interpersonal, business, and strategic competencies in order to better position themselves for advancement into senior management roles (Kairys, 2018). This current study showed

that male leaders were less likely than female leaders to employ SLT, suggesting that women's leadership talents are better suited to this type of leadership. Therefore, professional education can not only regulate the performance and leadership of teachers and leaders but also consolidate and develop the equality and validity of gender in leadership theory.

Additionally, principals in Chinese schools have come to recognize that they need to develop a professional learning community in order to increase school progress, teacher dedication, and student accomplishments (W. Zhang & Koshmanova, 2021). According to Huang et al. (2020) and Wilson and Xue (2013), China has neither sufficient research on professional teacher development nor a consistent flow of communication between teachers. This viewpoint extends and strengthens the positive relationship between professional leadership and teacher engagement, which is needed not only to strengthen teachers' professionalism and engagement but, more importantly, to strengthen leaders' leadership effectiveness. According to the findings of this current study, school leaders in China must use an integrated strategy to guide school reform that is flexible, adaptable, and successful when it comes to promoting educational core values. This study supports prior research showing that school leaders must modify their leadership styles to meet the demands of a variety of settings.

Therefore, conducting VET via a professional learning community is a preferred method for recognizing their leadership and teaching potential, enhancing their abilities, and providing continuous feedback on work performance and leadership. However, the study does not fully demonstrate that the diverse learning needs of school leaders are consistent across socioeconomic and cultural contexts because the sample was selected to

be representative rather than universal. School leaders in different socioeconomic and cultural contexts should therefore be aware of their different learning needs so that training opportunities can best meet those needs.

Power Distance Cognition

Since Hofstede (1991) introduced the idea of power distance, several researchers have focused on the study of power distance's impact on organizational management. These findings contribute to the study of leadership behavior in China. Triandis (1996) demonstrated that leaders should wield power in accordance with their subordinates' perceptions of power distance. If the perceived power disparity between superior and subordinate is great and the superior chooses a democratic style of leadership, the subordinate does not respect the leader and exhibit poor trust and high stress levels. In contrast, if the perceived power distance of the subordinate is small and the superior adopts an authoritarian style of leadership, the subordinate would have a strong sense of injustice, especially if the leader engages in inappropriate behavior, which could increase the subordinate's desire to resign. As explained in earlier chapters, China has a greater power gap than the United States. The leader of a nation or organization with a greater power distance is more eager to exercise formal and authoritarian authority. Despite the fact that authoritarian leadership is uncommon in the field of education research area, it is undeniable, based on the findings of a literature review, that there is still a very large power distance in China, i.e., the approval degree of subordinates to superiors to exercise power is high. In organizations with a significant power distance, leaders have a

prominent position and make authoritarian decisions. Even if brainstorming is used for group decision-making, the majority of participants will remain mute and wait for the leader to give tasks and establish the tone (Liao et al., 2010). Therefore, the leader's leadership style and the power distance must coincide. Leaders must understand how subordinates perceive their power gap in order to modify their leadership style. Cai et al. (2017) demonstrated, through empirical analysis of China's financial industry, that power distance matching has a significant positive impact on employees' active behaviors and that power distance moderates negatively the relationship between inclusive leadership and individual-team matching. In addition, school leaders must improve collective decision-making. Additionally, significant power distance may also result in interpersonal and organizational disputes. Communication and negotiating are key leadership qualities in terms of dealing conflicts. Internal information network, email, and group chat have become very common forms of communication in Chinese workplaces. Decision-makers must reduce needless processes and standardize the content of work communication in order to simplify and optimize the communication platforms. To accomplish innovation and progress in Chinese education, the leadership must be vested with the necessary authority. First and foremost, leaders must instill in their subordinates a sense of professional enthusiasm and identity. Second, authority should be provided in a manner equal to the subordinate's personal advantages and working capabilities, with

some leeway given to the subordinate. Finally, to avoid straying from the defined course of action, the approval should be followed by a review of the activity.

According to the findings of this study, the Chinese public K-12 school teachers' work engagement and leaders' situational leadership level have a direct relationship, and from the perspective of gender, the majority of male teachers view their leaders' leadership as situational leadership type, whereas the majority of female teachers view their leadership as transformational leadership type and authoritarian leadership style. Therefore, male and female teachers have distinct expectations of leadership, and decision-makers should create a "matching" work environment whereby leaders can fully grasp teachers, and teachers can fully comprehend leaders. The "match" program employs a method that allows different leaders to contact different subordinates on a rotating basis, thereby facilitating the introduction of subordinates to diverse leaders. There may be less of a language barrier between teachers and leaders, and leaders may be better able to tailor their leadership style to the tastes of their staff if this happens.

Policymakers

Policymakers need to improve the professional capacity of developing teachers, the effective leadership of school leaders, and the management of external relationships to support the reputation of schools. Because the sample in this study illustrates that overall differences in leadership between districts are not significant, policymakers need to develop a detailed and feasible policy program to improve teacher engagement and leadership effectiveness rather than wasting time combining two key indicators with

other indicators (such as student achievement and parental expectations) for policy development. Policymakers need to emphasize the importance of self-determination and the involvement of school leaders in decisions about the form and direction of leadership training. This is consistent with the principles of expansive learning and the requirement for international evidence of best practice, with policy elements that (a) link training learning to school contexts and real-world problems, with significant involvement of trained and experienced principals in project delivery and as mentors and critical friends; (b) ensure policy flexibility to meet diverse needs; (c) provide multiple opportunities for sharing, reflection, brainstorming, and networking through building open lines of communication to facilitate ongoing collaboration among schools and across regions; (d) recognize and respect the existing skills, values, and knowledge of school leaders, as well as affirm the school's developmental mission and vision; (e) implement a meaningful two-way evaluation system.

There are more female leaders in education than in business, it is clear that women leaders are generally more effective in situational leadership than men are. Therefore, the government should encourage women to compete, especially for top management positions, and policymakers need to develop policies to safeguard women's employment and competitive career progression (such as through addressing sexual harassment and gender discrimination in the workplace and using a multimedia network to raise public understanding of gender equality). The policy makers should collaborate with the women's federation to develop viable policy recommendations to enhance the development of women, beginning with the following considerations: (a) increasing the political engagement of women. The data presented in this paper demonstrates that

women's involvement in the administration and decision-making of national and social issues is insufficient. There is rising pressure on women in terms of employment and re-employment, and there is some gender discrimination on the labor market. Therefore, policy makers must expand the number of women involved in the administration of social affairs, raise awareness of women's political engagement, and provide more women direct access to decision-making authority, the right to vote, and the right to be elected; (b) enhance the rights and interests of women in the workplace. In general, women have less access to social security and work benefits than males. The lowest incidence of paid leave outside of statutory holidays and maternity insurance is particularly evident. According to the findings of this literature review, there is a significant disparity in the career paths of men and women, and the more competitive the job, the fewer women occupy it. Employment and advancement chances for women are disadvantaged. In addition to ensuring equal job prospects for men and women, it is necessary to ensure women's equality with men in promotion, promotion, and evaluation of professional and technical positions; (c) highlight the media's involvement in legal publicity. The government should increase gender equality awareness among mass media employees, make full use of mass media, further publicize laws, regulations, and policies to protect women's rights and interests, publicize the concept of civilized and progressive gender equality, and create a social environment where men and women respect and develop equally.

Principals

Effective leadership learning requires a greater focus on mentoring and peer support (Wilson & Xue, 2013), and principals should tailor programs to address

leadership strategies and priorities in their schools. Given the enormous challenges in achieving the education quality and equity reform agenda, principals need learning opportunities that enable them to become agile leaders with critical insight, strategic vision, and the ability to engage and motivate stakeholders to make this vision a reality. There should be a balance between improving schooling standards (i.e., student test scores) and focusing on educators' career development, physical and mental health, and job performance reviews.

Educators

Educators is a category that includes teachers and leaders at K–12 public schools. From the research findings of this current study, leaders and teachers should regularly measure each other's work behaviors and leadership behaviors to avoid common methodological biases. Also, educational leaders should be trained to be effective leaders in order to promote positive work behaviors, such as work engagement, among teachers. Furthermore, leaders should regularly explore additional workplace variables that drive teacher work engagement and design and test interventions to increase teacher work engagement. Leaders also need to undertake the arduous task of regularly reviewing the performance of other teachers to ensure each member in the organization delivers according to expectation. Again, educational leaders should focus on identifying teachers' work behaviors because of the hard work teachers put into achieving excellence in the workplace. Some teachers may simply work hard to cope with their jobs or to avoid being scolded by their leaders rather than enjoying their work. Therefore, developing various channels of communication by learning about teachers from other teachers and colleagues can be accomplished by reducing the distance between leaders

and teachers and by maintaining a good level of communication. Finally, teachers should cooperate with their leaders in the implementation of educational policies and provide timely feedback on their leaders' leadership behaviors while performing their jobs well. Teachers need to establish equal communication platforms and tracking procedures with their leaders to improve the procedures and tasks that can lead to low work engagement.

Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

In this study, SLT did not provide clear support when employing objective indices for follower work engagement level. Advocates of SLT might argue that objective indices, such as gender, age, experience, and positions, did not adequately reflect work engagement levels because they were general assessments and did not indicate follower task-specific competence. However, positions, as applied in this study, were more closely connected to task competence and more convincing as an index of follower competence and should provide some support for the validity of SLT.

Furthermore, proponents of SLT argue that applying objective indices neglected assessment of follower (teachers') commitment, which relied more on subjective reports from supervisors (leaders). However, as Graeff (1997) stated, competence was given "causal priority" as the first or strongest to impact influence on performance in SLT. Using objective indices for competence should therefore provide some knowledge about SLT dynamics.

Additionally, this research lacked a dynamic examination of SLT, since follower work engagement and leaders' abilities could be altered throughout the course of the study, owing to work tasks and the work environment, resulting in inconsistent findings. In order to adopt the most successful leadership style, leaders should be aware of and sensitive to such changes among their followers and then adjust to these emerging new

circumstances. Conducting research on the dynamics of SLT involved a tracking study with task and situational dimensions to confirm that the dynamic trajectory of leaders' SLT is congruent with its intended goal.

This research found a link between leaders' gender and their degree of situational leadership but no association between teachers' gender and leaders' level of situational leadership. Given that this study was limited to the subject of education, it would be beneficial for future research to investigate the substantive link between subordinate gender and leaders' situational leadership levels in other disciplines.

Previous studies, which had used peers, self-reports, and leader assessments in rating follower development levels (J. Chen & Silverthorne, 2005; Hassan, 2019; Thompson & Glasø, 2015; Yoshioka, 2006) had made some progress in identifying the strengths and shortcomings of SLT. This study has found clear evidence for the suggestion that objective indices were a superior device for studying follower reactions to leader behavior than using subjective constructs. Although Yoshioka (2006) found that objective indices would not affect the result of subjective constructs in Japanese companies, this finding was a paradox in relation to the results from a Chinese K–12 educational workplace. In practice, this study suggested a change in the method of diagnosing the level of follower work engagement. Previous studies have suggested using developmental level self-ratings because it is believed that followers are capable of commenting on their own level of work (J. Chen & Silverthorne, 2005; Vries et al., 1998; Yoshioka, 2006). To avoid self-report bias and to ensure independence from the leader's behavioral descriptions, the use of peer evaluations has also been suggested (Basaran & Kiral, 2020; Larsson & Björklund, 2020). Most studies have suggested that leaders rate

the developmental levels of followers (Burns & Martin, 2020; J. Chen & Silverthorne, 2005; Thompson & Glasø, 2015; Yoshioka, 2006), as it was believed that leaders could have the best perspective for assessment. This study should extend the measurement of this dimension in future research as evidence of a component of SLT.

Lastly, whether the SLT construct was more accurately conceptualized with individuals' work engagement at the work level has not been confirmed (Thompson & Glasø, 2015; Yoshioka, 2006). However, the present study was the first attempt to apply work engagement as a source of measurement when validating SLT, which was also scored using leader ratings and follower self-ratings. The evidence from this study suggests that measuring the degree of agreement between leader ratings and follower self-ratings might be a key factor in determining the level of follower development. By comparing leader ratings and follower self-ratings, a more accurate measure would be obtained than using only one source. However, the current study lacked a measure of leaders' work engagement with teachers, so future research could extend the current work by testing the predictions of SLT in four situations: (a) first, when leaders and followers agree on their level of personal development and the ratings are favorable (work engagement is high); (b) second, when leaders and followers agree on their assessments but the ratings are poor (work engagement is low); (c) third, when leader and follower do not agree and follower self-ratings are higher than leader ratings; and finally, (d) when leader and follower do not agree and follower self-ratings are lower than leader ratings.

Conclusion

Organizations, departments, and teams all benefit from having many types of leaders, but leaders who want to achieve their objectives should not just rely on one style of leadership (Goleman, 2000). In prior research, the efficacy of leaders, job stress, and

performance have all been connected to SLT (Breckenridge, 2000; Cairns, 1996; J. Chen & Silverthorne, 2000). Several studies have indicated that subordinates' behavior is impacted by the features of leadership, such as group performance and goal attainment (J. Chen & Silverthorne, 2000; Vroom & Jago, 1988). As a moderating variable, gender was employed to demonstrate the relationship between SLT and gender, as well as the link between SLT and employee engagement (as evaluated by workers' work behavior), in the current study.

The research study concludes that teacher work engagement is linked to the situational leadership style of school heads at K–12 public schools. An increase in the degree of situational leadership style can lead to an increase in teacher work engagement. Gender, as a moderating variable, has an effect on leadership only when the leader's gender is defined, meaning that teacher gender and leadership are not correlated. However, teacher gender influences teachers' determinations and performance of leadership; for example, male teachers perceive their leaders to employ more situational leadership types than female teachers. Furthermore, other sub-moderating variables can also have an impact on situational leadership and work engagement. In terms of the subscales of age, older teachers were significantly more invested than younger teachers to participate in work engagement; younger teachers were more likely to judge and expect situational leadership styles; and younger leaders were more likely to adopt situational leadership styles. In terms of the subscales of position, the higher the position of the leader, the lower the level of situational leadership. In addition, according to the regional survey analysis, there was no correlation between the leader's region and the level of situational leadership, even the styles of leadership. This is contrary to what some

scholars believe: That major disparities in the leadership styles of leaders are based on the demographics of the leaders (Hassan, 2019).

This current study's findings on the relationship between situational leadership level, teachers' work engagement level, and genders provide an essential body of information for the Chinese setting.

While the results of the study reveal the current levels of leadership and teacher engagement in China's public schools, it is clear that many of the test results are average, and that this apparent "balance" is actually a reluctance for change in education and a compromise with the established rules of work. Education requires boldness and creativity, as well as more voices. The study findings indicated that regional differences do not influence school leaders' leadership and that leadership levels are directly related to teacher work engagement. This result can give more educational leaders confidence and a sense of self-identity because they are the only ones who can influence their leadership levels. It is obvious from the study's findings that teacher work engagement was typically low on the "dedication" scale, presumably indicating teachers' disagreement with their work objectives and mission statement. This element of devotion should have been the job of leaders, who should encourage and maintain teachers' work attitudes and engagement behaviors. The sample size of this study is inadequate for examining leadership across Chinese public schools, and the constraints on human personality and creativity within the Chinese system remain open to discussion. Educational leadership and work are historical in nature, varying in nature, purpose, and content from society to society or from one society to another, and they are necessarily constrained by the political economy of the society. This is an ongoing topic.

In addition, the topic of social justice and gender equality is frequently criticized by the general public for being "too perfect," despite the fact that gender stereotypes and sexual harassment still exist in the workplace. However, there are also numerous instances of women's leadership that draw society's attention to the female population. Five of the eight principals of the leadership topics examined were female. Thus, the growth and optimization of female leadership in China seems to be well advanced in the area of education, yet the particulars of the field of education do not adequately address the broader societal challenges.

REFERENCES

Abolade, D. A. (2014). Socio-cultural factor as determinant of female leadership quality; implications for human resource development. *Ege Academic Review, 14*(1), 53-62. https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/eab/issue/39924/474238

Alan, S., Ertac, S., Kubilay, E., & Loranth, G. (2019). Understanding gender differences in leadership. *The Economic Journal, 130*(626), 263-289. https://doi.org/10.1093/ej/uez050

Albrecht, S. L., & Marty, A. (2020). Personality, self-efficacy and job resources and their associations with employee engagement, affective commitment and turnover intentions. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 31*(5), 657-681. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2017.1362660

Al-Khamaiseh, Z., Halim, B. B. A., Afthanorhan, A., & Alqahtani, A. H. (2020). Exploring and developing items measuring situational leadership ii (SLII). *Journal of Humanities & Social Science Reviews*, *8*(2), 579-588. https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2020.8266

Appelbaum, S. H., Audet, L., & Miller, J. C. (2018). Gender and leadership? Leadership and gender? A journey through the landscape of theories. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *24*(1), 43-51. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730310457320

Archer, J., & Lloyd, B. (2002). *Sex and gender,* [2nd ed.]. Cambridge University Press.

Arghode, V. (2012). Qualitative and quantitative research: Paradigmatic differences. *Global Education Journal, 2021*(4), 155-163.

Avery, G. C., & Ryan, J. (2002). Applying situational leadership in Australia. *Journal of Management Development, 21(4),* 242- 262. https://doi.org/10.1108/02621710210423784

Bakker, A. B. (2009). Building engagement in the work place. In R. J. Burke & C. L. Cooper (Eds.). *The Peak Performing Organization,* 50-72.

Bakker, A. B. & Schaufeli, W. B. (2015). *Work engagement.* Wiley Encyclopedia of Management.

Basaran, R., & Kiral, E. (2020). The relationship between authentic leadership and work engagement. *International Journal of Contemporary Educational Research, 7*(2), 351–363. https://doi.org/10.33200/ijcer.767560

Bell, S. L. (1993). *The lenses of gender: Transforming the debate on sexual inequality.* Yale University Press.

Beri, N., & Aibu, M.S. (2018). Leadership styles of school administrations and teacher effectiveness: A metanalysis. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews, 2*(5), 846-853.

Blanchard, K. (1997). Recognition and situational leadership II*. Emergency Librarian, 24*(4), 38.

Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2004). *Handbook of instructional leadership: How successful principals promote teaching and learning.* Corwin.

Bolden, R., Gosling, J., Marturano, A., & Dennison, P. (2003). *A review of leadership theory and competency frameworks*. Centre for Leadership Studies.

Brislin, R. W. (1980). Cross-cultural research methods environment and culture. *Springer, 4*(1)*,* 47-82. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4899-0451-5_3 19

Bulach, C. R. (2001). A 4-step process for identifying and reshaping school culture (EJ627867). ERIC. *Principal Leadership*, *1*(8), 48-51.

Burke, R. J. (1999). Workaholism in organizations: Gender differences. *Sex Roles*, *41*(1), 5-6. https://doi.org.10.1023/A:1018818731922

Burns, G., & Martin, B. N. (2020). Examination of the effectiveness of male and female educational leaders who made use of the invitational leadership style of leadership. *Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice*, *16*, 30-56.

Bush, T., & Haiyan, Q. (2013). Leadership and culture in Chinese education. *Asian Pacific Journal of Education, 20*(2), 58-67. https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2000.10600183

Busher, H. (2006). *Understanding educational leadership: People, power and culture*. Open University Press.

Cai, D., Wang, Y. & Ma, J. (2017). The more inclusive the leader, the more proactive the employee? The role of person-team matching and power distance. (Lingdao yue Baorong, Yuangong Gongzuo yue Zhudong? Geren-tuandui Pipei he Quanli Juli de Zuoyong). Retrieved at http://www.cnki.com.cn/Article/CJFDTotal-YUCE201705001.htm

Cairns, T., Hollenback, J., Snow, W. A. & Preziosi, R. (1998). A study of Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership theory. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal, 19(2),* 113-116. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/01437739810208692

Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. (2021). *Reform of China's education system* (Guanyu Jiaoyu Tizhi Gaige de Jueding). Retrieved at http://www.moe.gov.cn/edoas/website18/18/info3318.htm

Chen, F. (2005). The improvement of leadership behavior of primary and secondary school principals (Jianchi yiren weiben gaijin lingdao xingwei: qiantan zhongxiaoxue xiaozhang lingdao xingwei gaijin). *Contemporary Education Forum, 30*, 30-31.

Chen, J. & Silverthorne, C. (2005). Leadership effectiveness, leadership style and employee readiness. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 26*(4), 280-288. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730510600652

Chen, Z. X., Tsui, A. S., & Farh, J. L. (2002). Loyalty to supervisor vs. organizational commitment: Relationships to employee performance in China. *Journal of occupational and organizational psychology*, *75*(3), 339-356.

Cretella, M. A., Rosik, C. H., & Howsepian, A. A. (2019). Sex and gender are distinct variables critical to health: Comment on Hyde, Bigler, Joel, Tate, and van Anders. *American Psychologist, 74*(7), 842-844. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000524

David, M. (2016). Situational Leadership theory as a foundation for a blended learning framework. *Journal of Education and Practice, 7*(10), 25-30.

Day, C., & Leithwood, K. (2007). *Successful principalship leadership in times of change: An international perspective.* Springer.

Dickson, J., Kiekpatric-Husk, K., Kendall, D., Longabaugh, J., Patel, A., & Scielzo, S. (2014). Untangling protégé self-reports of mentoring functions: Further meta-

analytic understanding. *Journal of Career Development, 41*(4), 263-281. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845313498302

Eagly, A. H. (2020). Once more: The rise of female leaders. *The Journal of Politics, 82*(1), 1-12.

Eagly, A. H., & Carli, L. L. (2003). The female leadership advantage: An evaluation of the evidence. *The Leadership Quarter*ly, *14*(6), 807-834. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2003.09.004

Eagly, A. H., Johannesen-Schmidt, M. C., & maureeVan Engen, M. L. (2003). Transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles: A meta-analysis comparing women and men. *Psychological Bulletin, 129*(4), 569-591. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.129.4.569

Eklund, K. E., Barry, E. S., & Grunberg, N. E. (2017). Gender and leadership. *Gender Differences in Different Contexts*, *5*(12), 129-150.

Ellemers, N. (2018). Gender stereotypes. *Annual Review of psychology, 69*, 275-298. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-122216-011719

Emmerik, H., Wdndt, H., & Euwema, M. C. (2010). Gender ratio, social culture, and male and female leadership. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 83*, 895. http://doi.org/10.1348/096317909X478548

expectations of effective male and female leadership. *Sex Roles*, *18*(5), 279-287.

Faizan, R., Nair, S. L. S., & Haque, A. U. (2018). The effectiveness of feminine and masculine leadership styles in relation to contrasting gender's performances. *Polish Journal of Management Studies, 17*(1), 78-92. http://doi.org/10.17512/pjms.2018.17.1.07

Fecher, J. S. (2007). *Gendered educational leadership: Perceptions, power, and paths* (AAI3255853). [Doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania].

Feng, D. (2020). *Understanding Chinas school leadership.* Springer Open.

Fiedler, F. E. (1964). A contingency model of leadership effectiveness. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 1*, 149-190. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60051-9

Fitch Ratings. (2021). New policies highlight risks for Chinese K-12 education companies. Retrieved at https://www.fitchratings.com/research/infrastructure-project-finance/new-policies-highlight-risks-for-chinese-k-12-education-companies-23-05-2021

Flabbi, L., Macis, M., Moro, A., & Schivardi, F. (2019). Do female executives make a difference? The impact of female leadership on gender gaps and firm performance. *The Economic Journal, 129*(8), 2390-2423. https://doi.org/10.1093/ej/uez012

Fox, J., Gong, T., & Attoh, P. (2015). The impact of principal as authentic leader on teacher trust in the k-12 educational context. *Journal of Leadership Studies, 8*(4), 6-18. https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.21341

Fritz, C., & Van Knippenberg, D. (2017). Gender and leadership aspiration: The impact of organizational identification. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 38*(8), 1018-1037. https://doi.org/10.1108/lodj-05-2016-0120

Gartzia, L., & Baniandrés, J. (2019). How feminine is the female advantage? Incremental validity of gender traits over leader sex on employees' responses. *Journal of Business Research*, *99*, 125-139.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.12.062https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.12.062

Gates, P. E., Blanchard, K. H., & Hersey, P. (1976). *Educational Leadership, 33*(5), 348.

Girdauskiene, L., & Eyvazzade, F. (2014). The profile of an effective female leadership in multicultural context. *Journal of Procedia -Social and Behavioral Sciences, 210*(15), 11-20. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.11.323

Global Times. (2021). *Chinese private education sector eyes public schools following policy shift.* https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202108/1231082.shtml

Göksoy, S. (2015). Distributed leadership in educational institutions. *Journal of Education and Training Studies, 3*(4), 110-115. https://doi.org/10.11114/jets.v3i4.851

Graeff, C. L. (1997). Evolution of Situational Leadership theory: A critical review. *The Leadership Quarterly, 8*(2), 153-170. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(97)90014-X

Greenwood, R. G. (1996). Leadership theory: A historical look at its evolution. *The Journal of Leadership Studies, 3*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/107179199600300102

Grove, C. N. (2008). *Introduction to the CLOBE research project on leadership worldwide. Grovewell LLC.* Retrieved at https://www.grovewell.com/wp-content/uploads/pub-GLOBE-intro.pdf

Gu, L., Chen, J. & Li, J. (2020). The leadership of Banzhuren in Chinese Schools: Based on the sample survey in Changzhou City of China. *Journal of Education and Human Development, 4*(4), 102-114. http://dx.doi.org/10.15640/jehd.v4n4a13

Guillen, F. & Martinez-Alvarado, J., R. (2014). The sport engagement scale: An adaption of the Utrecht work engagement scale (UWES) for the sports environment. *Journal of Univ. Psychol., 13*(3), 975-984. https://dx.doi.org/1011144/Javeriana. UPSY13-3.sesahttps://dx.doi.org/1011144/Javeriana.UPSY13-3.sesa

Guimond, S. (2006). Social comparison and social psychology: Understanding cognition,

Gurr, D. (2008). Principal leadership: What does it do, what does it look like, and how might it evolve? *ACEL Monograph, 42*, 2-23.

Ha, L., Bi, N. C. & Zhang, R. (2019). *Leadership style and success experience of Chinese women academic leaders in China, Taiwan and the United* States, (1st ed.). Routledge.

Hakanen, J. J., Bakker, A. B., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2006). Burnout and work engagement among teachers. *Journal of School PsycholOgy, 43*, 495–513. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2005.11.001

Harrison, C. (2017). *Leadership theory and research: A critical approach to new and existing paradigms*. Springer.

Hassan, U. (2019). School's leadership and employees' work-engagement: Evidences from secondary schools. *Journal of Education*, *31*(2). https://doi.org/10.30971/pje.v31i2.69

Henman, L. D. (n.d.). *Leadership: Theories and controversies.* Harman Performance. Retrieved at https://henmanperformancegroup.com/leadership/leadership-theories-and-controversies/

Hersey, P., Blanchard, K. H., & Natemeyer, W. E. (1979). Situational leadership, perception, and the impact of power. *Group & Organization Studies, 4*(4), 418-428. https://doi.org/10.1177/105960117900400404

Hoare, Z., & Hoe, J. (2013). Understanding quantitative research: Part 2. *Nursing Standard*, *27*(18), 48-55. https://doi.org/10.7748/ns2013.01.27.18.48.c9488

Hofstede, G. (1991). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*. McGraw-Hill.

Hofstede, G. (1993). Cultural constrains in management theories. *The Executive, 7*(1), 81-94. https://doi.org/10.5465/ame.1993.9409142061

House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (2004). *Culture, leadership, and organizations. The GLOBE study of 62 societies.* Sage.

Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2013). *Educational administration: Theory, research, and practice*, McGraw-Hill.

Hoy, W. K., & Tarter, C. J. (1986). *A Theory of leadership: A situational approach*. Retrieved at http://waynekhoy.com/pdfs/theory_of_leadership.pdf https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00288290

Huang, L., Zhang, T., & Huang, Y. T. (2020). Effects of school organizational conditions on teacher professional learning in China: The mediating role of teacher self-efficacy. *Studies in Educational Evaluation, 66,* 100893. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2020.100893

Jayashree, S., Malarvizhi, C. A. N., Hassan Reza, M. N., & Baskiran, S. (2019). Examining the effectiveness of teamwork in work engagement among gen ya conceptual framework. *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering*, *8*(2S9), 254-256. https://doi.org/10.35940/ijrte.B1057.0982S919

Jogulu, U. D., & Wood, G. J. (2016). The role of leadership theory in raising the profile of women in management. *Equal Opportunities International, 25*(25), 236-250. https://doi.org/10.1108/02610150610706230

Johnson, S. K., Murphy, S. E., Zewdie, S., & Reichard, R. J. (2008). The strong, sensitive type: Effects of gender stereotypes and leadership prototypes on the evaluation of male and female leaders. *Journal of Elsevier – ScienceDirect, 106*(8), 39-60.

Kabar, M., & Zafer Güneş, D. (2017). Emotional intelligence as a predictor of high school teachers' work engagement. In *3RD International Conference on Lifelong Learning and Leadership For All (ICLEL 2017)*. ICLEL Conference. https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12436/1032https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12436/1032

Kahn, W.A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement. *Journal of Management Journal, 3(4)*, 692-724. Retrieved from https://www.talenteck.com/academic/Kahn-1990.pdf

Kairys, M. R. (2018). The influence of gender on leadership in education management. *International Journal of Educational Management, 32(5),* 931-941. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-04-2017-0094

Kaufman, K. A. (2017). *Business-oriented leadership competencies of K-12 educational leaders* (3397). [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University].

Kiefer, E. (2015). 5 major takeaways from the NYT women of Hollywood deep dive. Refinery 29. Retrieved from https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2015/11/98078/new-york-times-women-of-hollywood-takeawayhttps://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2015/11/98078/new-york-times-women-of-hollywood-takeaway

Kologrivaya, K. & Shleifer, E. (2021). After government crackdown, what's next for China's Edtech firms? The Diplomat. Retrieved at https://thediplomat.com/2021/09/after-government-crackdown-whats-next-for-chinas-edtech-firms/

Kotter, J. P. (1999). *What leaders really do*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Laerd. (n.d.). Laerd statistics: SPSS statistics tutorials and statistical guides. https://statistics.laerd.com/

Lai, M., Wang, L., & Shen, W. (2017). Educational leadership on the Chinese mainland: A case study of two secondary schools in Beijing. *London Review of Education, 15*(2), 317-328. https://doi.org/10.18546/lre.15.2.13

Larsson, G., & Björklund, C. (2020). Age and leadership: comparisons of age groups in different kinds of work environment. *Journal of Management Research Review, 44(5),* 661-676. https://doi.org/10.1108/mrr-01-2020-0040

Law, W. W. (2009). Culture and school leadership in China: Exploring school leaders' views of relationship- and rule-based governance. *Educational Leadership: Global Contexts and International Comparisons (International Perspectives on Education and Society)*, *11*(1), 303-341. https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-3679(2009)0000011013

Lazaraton, A. (2015). *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning*. (1st ed.). Routledge.

Lee, Y. (2007). *The relationship between situational leadership styles and job satisfaction in overseas Taiwanese companies in mainland China* (Publication No. 3286903) [Doctoral dissertation, the University of the Incarnate Word],

Lestari, N. P. N. E., Putra, P. E. A. P., Gorda, A. O. S., & Gorda, A. E. S. (2020). Situational Leadership, school of organizational climate teacher work and performance motivation. *Enrichment: Journal of Management*, *11*(1, November), 169-172.

Li, Y. (2020). A review of empirical research on transformational school leadership in China (2010–2019). ECNU Review of Education. https://doi.org/10.1177/2096531120942242https://doi.org/10.1177/2096531120942242

Li, Y., Castaño, G. & Li, Y. (2018). Linking leadership styles to work engagement: The role of psychological capital among Chinese knowledge workers. *Chinese Management Studies*, *12*(2), 433-452. https://doi.org/10.1108/CMS-04-2017-0108

Liao, J., Zhao, J. & Zhang, Y. (2010). The influence of power distance on leadership behavior in China. (Quanli Juli dui Zhongguo Lingdao Xingwei de Yingxiang Ynajiu). *Chinese Journal of Management, 7(7),* 988-992. https://wenku.baidu. com/view /22c63d8fc47da26925c52cc58bd63186bceb9263.html

Liu, Q., Turner, D., & X, Jing. (2019). The "double first-class initiative" in China: Background, implementation, and potential problems. *Beijing International Review of Education, 1(1),* 92–108. https://doi.org/10.1163/25902547-00101009.

Lu, X., & Smith, R. (2022). Leadership in Chinese higher education and the influence of sociocultural constructs. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative & International Education, 52(3),* 381–399. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2020.1768827

Luo, H. & Liu, S. (2014). Effect of situational leadership and employee readiness match on organizational citizenship behavior in China. *Social Behavior and Personality:*

An International Journal, *11*(1), 16-28. ttp://dx.doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2014.42.10.1725

Markovska, M., & Nikolovski, L. (2014). The impact of female leaders on management and implement of organizational goals and objectives. *Journal of Sustainable Development, 5*(5), 46-55.

Medina, V., M. (2015). Women's leadership: An essentialist concept? *Journal of Feminist, Gender and Women Studies, 2*(1), 69-72.

MetLife Corporation. (2013). *The MetLife survey of the American teacher: Challenges for school leadership.* Retrieved at https://www.metlife.com/about-us/newsroom/2013/february/the-metlife-survey-of-the-american-teacher--challenges-for-schoo/

Militello, M., & Berger, J. B. (2010). Understanding educational leadership in north‐west China. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, *13*(2), 185-202. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603120902980812https://doi.org/10.1080/13603120902980812

Ministry of Education, People's Republic of China (MOE). (2009). Higher education law of the People's Republic of China. http://en.moe.gov.cn/documents/laws_policies/201506/t20150626_191386.

Muijs, D., & Dunne, M. (2010). Setting by ability–or is it? A quantitative study of determinants of set placement in English secondary schools. *Educational Research, 52*(4), 391-407.

Mumford, M. (2010). *Leadership 101*. Springer.

Northouse, P. G., (2013). *Leadership: Theory and practice.* Sage.

Offermann, L. R., Thomas, K. R., Lanzo, L. A., & Smith, L. N. (2018). Achieving leadership and success: A 28-year follow-up of college women leaders. *The Leadership Quarterly, 31*(4), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2019.101345

Ogunyinka, E. K., & Adedoyin, R. (2013). Leadership styles and work effectiveness of school principals in Ekiti state: Case study of Ado-Ekiti local government area. *Developing Country Studies, 3*(3), 64-73.

Oldham, G. R., & Cummings, A. (1996). Employee creativity: Personal and contextual factors at work. *Academy of management journal*, *39*(3), 607-634. https://doi.org/10.5465/256657https://doi.org/10.5465/256657

Parker, K., Horowitz, J. M., & Rohal, M. (2015). *Women and leadership. Pew Research Center.* https://www.pewresearch.org/social- trends/2015/01/14/chapter-2-what-makes-a-good-leader-and-does-gender-matter/

Parveen, S., & Tariq, A. (2014). Leadership style, gender and job satisfaction: A Situational Leadership approach. *International Journal of Science and Research*, *3*(12), 1-6.

Paustian-Underdahl, S. C., Walker, L. S., & Woehr, D. J. (2014). Gender and perceptions of leadership effectiveness: A meta-analysis of contextual moderators. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *99*(6), 1129-1145. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0036751

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2012). Sources of method bias in social science research and recommendations on how to control it. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *63*, 539-569.

Powell, G. N. (2020). *Gender and leadership.* Sage.

Presser, S., & Blair, J. (1994). Survey pretesting: Do different methods produce different results? *Sociological Methodology,* 73-104. https://doi.org/10.2307/270979

Presser, S., Couper, M. P., Lessler, J. T., Martin, E., Martin, J., Rothgeb, J. M., & Singer, E. (2004). Methods for testing and evaluating survey questions. *Public opinion quarterly, 68*(1), 109-130. https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfh008

Przybylski, R., Chen, X., & Hu, L. (2018). Leadership challenges and roles of school superintendents: A comparative study on China and the United States. *Journal of International Education and Leadership, 8*(1), n1.

Radu, C., Deaconu, A., & Frasineanu, C. (2017). Leadership and gender differences: Are men and women leading in the same way. *Contemporary Leadership Challenges*, *63*. http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/65774

Rahmadani, V.G., Schaufeli, W.B., Stouten, J., Zhang, Z., & Zulkarnain, Z. (2020). Engaging leadership and its implication for work engagement and job outcomes at the individual and team level: A multi-level longitudinal study. *Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17*(3), 776. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17030776

Rajasekar, J., & Beh, L. (2013). *Culture gender leadership: Perspectives from the Middle East and Asian.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Reed, R. (2019). *Situational Leadership and employee turnover intent: A correlational examination of higher education administrators.* https://www.proquest.com/ openview/ d2b92ce59deeb16001aebce9083115b6/1?pq-origsite=gscholar &cbl=18750&diss=yhttps://www.proquest.com /openview/ d2b92ce 59deeb16001aebce9083115b6/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y

Rhee, K. S., & Sigler, T. H. (2015). Untangling the relationship between gender and leadership. *Gender in Management: An International Journal, 30*(2), 109-134. https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-09-2013-0114

Ruble, D. N., Martin, C. L., & Berenbaum, S. A. (2006). Gender Development. In N. Eisenberg, W. Damon, & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Social, emotional, and personality development.* pp. 858–932. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Russell, J. E., Rush, M. C., & Herd, A. M. (1988). An exploration of women's expectations of effective male and female leadership. *Sex Roles*, *18*(5), 279-287. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00288290

SACBU.com. (2021). *Comparison of educational level among provinces in China.* Retrieved at https://sacbu.com/comparison-education-level

Sacher, A., & Kanodia, R. (2016). Trait theories of leadership. *International Journal of Science Technology and Management, 5*(12), 121-133.

Schaufeli, W. B. (2015). Engaging leadership in the job demands-resources model. *Career Development International*, *20(5)*, 446-463. https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-02-2015-0025

Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2003). *UWES – Utrecht work engagement scale: Test manual.* Utrecht, The Netherlands: Department of Psychology, Utrecht University.

Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., & Salanova, M. (2006). The measurement of work engagement with a short questionnaire: A cross-national study. *Educational and*

Psychological Measurement, 66, 701-716. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164405282471

Schaufeli, W. B., Salanova, M., González-Romá, V., & Bakker, A. B. (2002). The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 3,* 71–92. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1015630930326

Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2010). *Research methods for business: A skill-building approach.* (5th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Shuck, B., & Mogan Herd, A. (2012). Employee engagement and leadership: Exploring the convergence of two frameworks and implications for leadership development in HRD. *Human Resource Development Review*, *11*(2), 156–181. https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484312438211

Silverthorne, C. & Wang, T. (2010). Situational leadership style as a predictor of success and productivity among Taiwanese business organizations. *Journal of Psychology, 135*(4), 399-412. https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980109603707

Sims, C., Cater, A., & Moore de Peralta, A. (2020). Do servant, transformational, transactional, and passive avoidant leadership styles influence mentoring competencies for faculty? A study of a gender equity leadership development program. *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 32*, 55-75. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.21408

Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R. & Diamond, J. B. (2004). Towards a theory of leadership practice: A distributed perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 36*(1), 3-34. https://doi.org/10.1080/0022027032000106726

Sudha, K. S., Shahnawaz, M. G., & Farhat, A. (2016). Leadership styles, leader's effectiveness and well-being: Exploring collective efficacy as a mediator. *Vision, 20*(2), 111-120. https://doi.org/10.1177/0972262916637260

Thompson, G., & Glasø, L. (2015). Situational Leadership theory: A test from three perspectives. *Journal of Leadership and Organization Development, 36*(5), 527-544. https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-10-2013-0130

Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Xanthopoulou, D. (2011). Do transformational leaders enhance their followers' daily work engagement? *The Leadership Quarterly, 22*(1), 121–131. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.12.011

Triandis, H. C. (1996). The psychological measurement of cultural syndromes. *Journal of American Psychologist, 51(4),* 407-415. https//doi.org/10.12677/AAC.2022.122010.

Tziner, A., & Shkoler, O. (2018). Leadership styles and work attitudes: Does age moderate their relationship? *Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 34(3),* 195-201. https://doi.org/10.5093/jwop2018a21

Van Beek, I., Hu, Q., Schaufeli, W. B. & Taris, T. W. (2011). For fun, love, or money: What drives workaholic, engaged, and burned-out employees at work? *Applied Psychology: An international Review, 60*(1), 30-55. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2011.00454.x

Vasconcelos, A. F. (2018). Gender and leadership stereotypes theory: Is it reaching the boundaries? *Management Research Review, 41*(11), 1336-1355. https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-04-2017-0131

Vries, R. E., Roe, R. A., & Taillieu, T. C. B. (2002). Need of supervision: It is impact on leadership effectiveness. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 34(4),* 486-501.https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886398344015

Vroom, V. H., & Jago, A. G. (2007). The role of the situation in leadership. *American Psychologist*, *62*(1), 17. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.62.1.17

Walker, A., & Dimmock, C. (2010). Mapping the way ahead: Leading educational leadership into the globalized world. *Formerly School Organization, 20(2),* 227-233. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632430050011443

Walker, A., Hu, R., & Qian, H. (2012). Principal leadership in China: An initial review. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 23*(4), 369-399. https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2012.678863

Walumbwa, F. O., Wang, P., Wang, H., Schaubroeck, J., & Avolio, B. J. (2010). Psychological processes linking authentic leadership to follower behaviors. *The Leadership Quarterly, 21*(5), 901–914. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.07.015

Wang, S., Wang, J., Guo, W., Ye, H., Lu, X., Luo, J., & Zheng, H. (2019). Gender difference in gender bias: Transcranial direct current stimulation reduces male's gender stereotypes. *Frontiers in human neuroscience*, *13*, 403.

Wang, Z., Li, C., & Li, X. (2017). Resilience, leadership and work engagement: The mediating role of positive affect. *Social Indicators Research*, *132*(2), 699-708. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-016-1306-5

Ward, R. W., Popson, H. C., & Dipaolo, D. G. (2015). Defining the alpha female: A female leadership measure. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 17*(3), 309-320. https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051810368681

Waring, A. (2003). Africa-American female college presidents: Self conceptions of leadership. *Journal of Leadership and Organziational Studies, 9*(3), 3-44. https://doi.org/10.1177/107179190300900305

Watson, R. (2015). Quantitative research. *Nursing Standard (2014+)*, *29*(31), 44. https://doi.org/10.7748/ns.29.31.44.e8681

Wibowo, A. P. (2017). Critical analyses of leadership style in one of Indonesian primary school. *Journal of International Conference on Studies in Business Management, Law and Education, 17*(4), 330-336. https://doi.org/10.15242/DIRPUB.DIRH0417217

Wiley, J. W. (2010). The impact of effective leadership on employee engagement. *Employment Relations Today, 37*(2), 47–52. https://doi.org/10.1002/ert.20297

Willits, F. K., Theodori, G. L., & Luloff, A. E. (2016). Another look at Likert scales. *Journal of Rural Social Sciences*, *31*(3), 126-139. Retrieved at https://egrove.olemiss.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1073&context=jrss

Wilson, M., & Xue, X. (2013). School leader perspectives on leadership learning preparation and continuing professional development in the Chinese province of Fujian: An exploratory study. *Journal of Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 41(6),* 800-818. https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143213494187

Wong, K. (2001). Chinese culture and leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 4(4)*, 309-319. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603120110077990

Wood, W., & Eagly, A. H. (2010). Gender. *Handbook of Social Psychology, 5*(1), 629-667. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470561119.socpsy001017

Wu, J. & Zhi, T. (2020). *Promoting the coordinated development of private schools and public schools in compulsory education: current situation analysis and countermeasures and suggestions (cu jin yi wu jiao yu jie duan min ban xue xiao yu gong li xue xiao xie tong fa zhan:xian Zhuang fen xi yu dui ce jian yi).* www.cssn.cn/jyx/jyx_ptjyx/202005/t20200528_5135471.shtml

Wuryani, E., Rodlib, A. F., Sutarsi, S., Dewi, N. N. & Arifb, D. (2020). Analysis of decision support system on situational leadership styles on work motivation and employee performance. *Management Science Letters, 11*(1), 365-372. https://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2020.9.033

Yoshioka, R. (2006). An empirical test of the situational leadership model in Japan. *Journal of Humanities & Social Science Reviews, 8*(2), 579-588. https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2020.8266

Young, T. (2021). *Our future depends on investing in women.* Retrieved at https://www.ypo.org/2021/03/our-future-depends-on-investing-in-women/

Zahed-Babelan, A., Koulaei, G., Moeinikia, M., & Sharif, A. R. (2019). Instructional leadership effects on teachers' work engagement: Roles of school culture, empowerment, and job characteristics. *CEPS Journal, 9*(3), 137-156. https://doi.org/10.26529/cepsj.181

Zeng, G., Chen, X., Cheung, H. & Peng, K. (2019). Teacher's growth mindset and work engagement in the Chinese educational context: Well-being and perseverance as mediators. *Journal of Frontiers in Psychology, 10*(1), 839. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00839

Zhang, X. (2019). Chinese corporation's understanding of leadership. CKGSB Knowledge. https://english.ckgsb.edu.cn/knowledges/leadership-styles-chinese-corporations/

Zhang, W., & Koshmanova, T. (2021). Exploring Chinese school procipal experiences and leadership practice in building a professional learning community for student achievement. *International Journal of Organizational Leadership, 10(2021),* 331-347. Retrieved from https://ijol.cikd.ca/pdf_60594_048030954dc9e0d92b5b61474e3e8553.html

Zhao, J., & Jones, K. (2017). Women and leadership in higher education in China: Discourse and the discursive construction of identity. *Administrative Sciences, 7*(3), 21. https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci7030021

Zhong, W., & Ehrich, L. C. (2010). An exploration of two female principals' leadership in mainland China. *Journal of Educational Administration, 48*(2), 241-260. https://doi.org/10.1108/09578231011027879

Zhu, C. & Caliskan, A. (2022). Educational leadership in Chinese higher education. *Chinese Education & Society, 54(5),* 161-170. https://doi.org/10.1080/10611932.2021.1990616

Zhu, Y. (2019). New national initiatives of modernizing education in China. *ECNU Review of Education, 2(3),* 353-362. https://doi.org/10.1177/2096531119868069

APPENDIX A

SLTII SELF-ASSESSMENT

Survey Protocol: Leaders

Part 1. Background of You

Please choose one option of each question.

1. What is your gender?

   ☐ Male

   ☐ Female

   ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

2. What is your age?

   ☐ 20-30

   ☐ 31-40

   ☐ 41-50

   ☐ 51-60

3. What is your position?

   ☐ Principal (Secretary of the Party Committee)

   ☐ Vice-principal

   ☐ Director

   ☐ Others

4. How long have you been involved in the leadership experience?

   ☐ 1-5 years

   ☐ 6-10 years

   ☐ 11-15 years

☐ More than 16 years

5. How long have you been in your present job?

☐ 1-5 years

☐ 6-10 years

☐ 11-15 years

☐ 16-20 years

Part 2. Situational Leadership II Self-Assessment Survey

Below are 24 statements that you may behave frequently or not frequently with using 1-5 scale. Please answer each of the following (write down five response options whereby 1=never to 5=always) as they apply to yourself.

1. I check teacher's work on a regular basis to assess their progress and learning.
2. I hold periodic meetings to show support for school policy and mission.
3. I appoint teacher into task groups to action policies affecting them.
4. I provide teacher with clear responsibilities and allow them to decide how to accomplish them.
5. I make sure teacher are aware of, and understand, all school policies and procedures.
6. I recognize teacher's achievements with encouragement and support.
7. I discuss any school's or policy changes with teacher prior to taking action.
8. I discuss the school's strategic mission with teacher.
9. I demonstrate each task involved in doing the job.
10. I meet with teacher regularly to discuss their needs.

11. I avoid making judgements or premature evaluation of ideas or suggestions.
12. I ask teacher to think ahead and develop long-term plans for their areas.
13. I set down performance standards for each aspect of my teacher's job.
14. I explain the benefits of achieving their work goals to teacher.
15. I rotate the role of team briefer among the teacher.
16. I emphasize the importance of quality but I allow my teacher to establish the control standards.
17. I have teacher report back to me after completing each step of their work.
18. I hold regular meetings to discuss work status.
19. I provide teacher with the time and resources to pursue their own developmental objectives.
20. I expect teacher to create their own goals and objectives and submit them to me in finished form.
21. I try to assign work in small, easily controlled units.
22. I focus on opportunities and not problems.
23. I avoid evaluating problems and concerns as they are discussed.
24. I ensure that information systems are timely and accurate and that information is fed directly to teacher.

You have finished the survey, thank you for your participation!

领导的情景领导力 SLII 调查

第一部分——您的背景问题

请在每个问题中选择一个选项。

1. 您的性别是什么？

☐男性

☐女性

☐不方便回答

2. 您的年龄是多少？

☐20-30 岁

☐31-40 岁

☐41-50 岁

☐51-60 岁

3. 您的职位是什么？

☐校长（党委书记）

☐副校长

☐主任

☐其他

4. 您从事领导工作多长时间了？

☐1-5 年

☐6-10 年

☐11-15 年

☐16-20 年

5. 您担任目前的职位有多久了？

☐1-5 年

☐6-10 年

☐11-15 年

☐16-20 年

第二部分——情境领导 II 自我评估调查

以下是 24 个工作行为陈述，请使用 1-5 的数值来表示您可能会经常或不经常做的领导行为。请仔细阅读每个陈述，并根据您的实际情况回答（请在每个陈述后写下您的回答数值，即 1=从不，2=偶尔，3=不好说， 4=经常，5=总是）。

1. 我定期检查职工的工作，评估他们的进展。

2. 我确保职工了解所有的组织政策和程序。

3. 我演示与工作有关的每项任务。

4. 我为职工工作的每个方面设定绩效标准。

5. 我强迫职工在完成每一步工作后向我汇报。

6. 我尝试将工作分配到小的、容易控制的单位。

7. 我定期举行会议，以显示对组织政策和战略的支持。

8. 我以不断的鼓励来认可职工的成就。

9. 我定期与职工见面，讨论他们的需求。

10. 我向职工解释实现工作目标的好处。

11. 我定期举行会议，讨论工作状况。

12. 我专注于机会而不是问题。

13. 我任命职工组成任务小组。

14. 在采取行动之前，我会与职工讨论所有组织或政策的变化。

15. 我避免对职工建议的想法作出过早的评价和判断。

16. 我帮助职工，让他们轮流担任团队领导者的角色。

17. 我为职工提供时间和资源来追求他们自己的发展目标。

18. 我会避免评估和讨论问题。

19. 我为职工提供明确的责任，并让他们根据需要决定流程。

20. 我与职工讨论组织的战略计划。

21. 我要求职工为他们的工作制定长期计划。

22. 我允许职工为其工作建立控制标准。

23. 我希望职工建立自己的目标和目的，并按时提交给我。

24. 我确保信息沟通系统的及时性和准确性。

您已经完成了本次调查，感谢您的参与！祝您生活愉快！

APPENDIX B

TEACHERS' WORK ENGAGEMENT LEVEL (UWES-TES17) SURVEY

Survey Protocol: Teachers

Part 1. Background of You

Please choose one option of each question.

1. What is your gender?

   ☐ Male

   ☐ Female

   ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

2. What is your age?

   ☐ 20-30

   ☐ 31-40

   ☐ 41-50

   ☐ 51-60

3. How long have you been in your present job?

   ☐ 1-5 years

   ☐ 6-10 years

   ☐ 11-15 years

   ☐ 16-20 years

4. How many leaders are assigned to your position?

   ☐ 1-3

   ☐ 4-6

   ☐ 7-9

- ☐ More than 10

5. What kind of leadership style do you think your leaders mostly apply in your organization?
   - ☐ Situational Leadership (PS: you will have another survey to test your leader's SL leadership level, it will not affect any further answers)
   - ☐ Authoritarian Leadership
   - ☐ Participative Leadership
   - ☐ Delegative Leadership
   - ☐ Transactional Leadership
   - ☐ Transformational Leadership

Part 2. Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-TES17) Survey

Below are 17 statements that you may behave frequently or not frequently with using 0-5 scale. Please answer each of the following (write down five response options whereby 0=never to 5=always) by yourself.

Vigor

1. At my work I feel like bursting with energy
2. I am very persistent in my work
3. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous
4. When I get up in the morning, I look forward to going to work
5. At my job, I always persevere, even when things so not go well
6. At my job, I am mentally resilient.

Dedication

1. My work is full of meaning and resolve
2. I am enthusiastic about my work
3. I am absorbed in my work
4. I am proud of the work I do
5. My work activity is a self-challenge

Absorption

1. I am happy when I am engrossed in my work
2. I feel inspired whilst carrying out my work
3. I am immersed in my work
4. I am oblivious to everything going on around me when I work
5. Time flies when I am working
6. It is difficult to detach myself from my job

You have finished the survey, thank you for your participation!

职工工作参与度 UWES-TES17 调查

第一部分——您的背景问题。请在每个问题中选择一个选项。

1. 您的性别是什么？

☐ 男性

☐ 女性

☐ 不方便回答

2. 您的年龄是多少？

☐ 20-30

☐ 31-40

☐ 41-50

☐ 51-60

3. 您担任目前的职位多久了？

☐ 1-5 年

☐ 5-10 年

☐ 10-15 年

☐ 15-20 年

4. 直接领导您的工作的领导者有几人？

☐ 1-3 人

☐ 4-6 人

☐ 7-9 人

☐ 10 人以上

5. 您认为您的领导在你的组织中大部分采用哪种领导风格？

- ☐ 情景式领导（在此次研究中，您会有另一个调查来测试你的领导者的 SL 领导水平，该选择将不会影响后期研究判断）
- ☐ 专制型领导
- ☐ 参与式领导
- ☐ 授权式领导
- ☐ 交易型领导
- ☐ 变革型领导

第二部分——Utrecht 职工工作参与量表（UWES-TES17）调查

本调查共有 17 个陈述项目。每个项目包括 6 个回答选项，从 0 到 5 表示您出现相应工作行为的频率逐渐增强，您需要对每个问题进行选择。请您根据实际情况回答以下每一个问题（请在每个陈述后写下一个 0-5 的数字，即 0=从来没有，5=总是）。

背景知识（简单阅读即可）

1. 活力：指工作时有高度的精力和精神毅力，以及在工作中投入努力的愿望和面对障碍时的坚韧。

2. 敬业：是指从事自己的工作，在工作中发现意义，接受挑战，并有一种激情、灵感和自豪感。

3. 吸收：是指完全沉浸在自己的工作中，在此期间，时间过得很快，很难脱离工作。

请您开始作答

活力

1. 在我的工作中，我感到精力充沛。

2. 我在工作中很有毅力。

3. 在我的工作中，我感到强壮和有活力。

4. 当我早上起床时，我期待着去工作。

5. 在我的工作中，我总是坚持不懈，甚至在事情不顺利的时候也是如此。

6. 在我的工作中，我劳逸结合。

敬业精神

1. 我的工作充满了意义和信念。

2. 我对自己的工作充满热情。

3. 我全神贯注于我的工作。

4. 我为我所做的工作感到自豪。

5. 我的工作活动是一种自我挑战。

吸收

1. 当我全神贯注于我的工作时，我很高兴。

2. 我在进行工作时受到鼓舞。

3. 我沉浸在我的工作中。

4. 我在工作时对周围发生的一切视而不见。

5. 工作时，时间过得很快。

6. 我很难从工作中抽身出来。

关于您的工作参与度调查已经结束，请您继续下一个调查，谢谢！

APPENDIX C

TEACHERS' SURVEY FOR THEIR LEADERS' SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP LEVEL (SLT)

Part 1. Situational Leadership Style Questions for Your Leader

Adapted from: Hersey and Blanchard

Self-assessment questions: *Read through the Situation questions and then choose the response (only one) from the corresponding Alternative Action statements that most appeals to your leader or that you feel seems the most characteristic of your leader. In some cases, none of the responses may be appealing or characteristic of your leader. Nonetheless, please select the statement that you prefer or feel suits your leader best.*

1. Your group is not responding lately to your leader's friendly conversation and obvious concern for your welfare. Your performance is declining rapidly. Your leader will:
   A. Emphasize the use of uniform procedures and the necessity for task accomplishment.
   B. Make himself/herself available for discussion but do not push his/her involvement.
   C. Talk with you and then set goals.
   D. Intentionally do not intervene.
2. The observable performance of your group is increasing. Your leader has been making sure that all members were aware of their responsibilities and expected standards of performance. Your leader will:

A. Engage in friendly interaction and continue to make sure that all members are aware of their responsibilities and expected standards of performance.

B. Take no definite action.

C. Do what he/she can make the group feel important and involved.

D. Emphasize the importance of deadlines and tasks.

3. Members of your group are unable to solve a problem themselves. Your leader has normally left you alone. Group performance and interpersonal relations have been good. Your leader will:

A. Work with the group and together engage in program solving.

B. Let the group work it out.

C. Act quickly and firmly to correct and redirect.

D. Encourage the group to work on the problem and be supportive of your efforts.

4. Your leader is considering a change. Your group has a fine record of accomplishment. You respect the need for change. Your leader will:

A. Allow group involvement in developing the change, but do not be too directive.

B. Announce changes and implement with close supervision.

C. Allow the group to formulate its own directive.

D. Incorporate group recommendations, but your leader direct the change.

5. The performance of your group has been dropping during the last few months. Members have been unconcerned with meeting objectives. Redefining roles and responsibilities have helped it the past. You have continually needed reminding to have your tasks done on time. Your leader will:

A. Allow the group to formulate its own direction.

B. Incorporate group recommendations, but see that objectives are met.

C. Redefine roles and responsibilities and supervise carefully.

D. Allow group involvement in determining roles and responsibilities but do not be too directive.

6. The previous leader tightly controlled the effective situation. Your current leader wants to maintain a productive situation but would like to begin having more time building interpersonal relationships among members. Your leader will:

A. Do what he/she can do to make the group feel important and involved.

B. Emphasize the importance of deadlines and tasks.

C. Intentionally do not intervene.

D. Get the group involved in decision-making, but see that objectives are met.

7. Your leader is considering changing to a structure that were new to your group. Members of the group have made suggestions about needed change. The group has been productive and demonstrated flexibility. Your leader will:

A. Define the change and supervise carefully.

B. Participate with the group in developing the change but allow members to organize the implementation.

C. Be willing to make changes as recommended but maintain control of the implementation.

D. Be supportive in discussing the situation with the group but not too directive.

8. Group performance and interpersonal relations are good. Your leader feels somewhat unsure about his/her lack of direction in the group. Your leader will:

A. Leave the group alone.

B. Discuss the situation with the group and then your leader initiates necessary changes.

C. Redefine goals and supervise carefully.

D. Allow group involvement in setting goal, but don't push you.

9. Your leader has been appointed to give leadership to a study group that is far overdue in making requested recommendations for change. The group is not clear on its goals. Attendance at sessions has been poor. Their meetings have turned into social gatherings. Potentially they have the talent necessary to help. Your leader will:

A. Let the group work out its problems.

B. Incorporate group recommendations, but see that objectives are met.

C. Redefine goals and supervise carefully.

D. Allow group involvement in setting goals, but do not push.

10. Your group, usually able to take responsibility, is not responding to your leader's recent redefining of job responsibilities as a result of one member leaving the city. Your leader will:

A. Allow group involvement in redefining standards but don't take control.

B. Redefine standards and supervise carefully.

C. Avoid confrontation by not applying pressure, leave situation alone.

D. Incorporate group recommendations but see that new job responsibilities are met.

11. Your leader has been promoted to a leadership position. The previous leader was involved in the affairs of the group. The group has adequately handled its tasks and direction. Interpersonal relationships in the group are good. Your leader will:

A. Take steps to direct the group towards working in a well-defined manner.

B. Involve the group in decision-making and reinforce good contributions.

C. Discuss past performance with the group and then he/she examine the need for new practice.

D. Continue to leave the group alone.

12. Recent information indicates some internal difficulties among group members. The group has a remarkable record of accomplishment. Members have effectively maintained long- range goals. The have worked in harmony for the past year. All are well qualified for the tasks. Your leader will:

A. Try out his/her solution with the group and examine the need for new procedures.

B. Allow group members to work it out themselves.

C. Act quickly and firmly to correct and redirect.

D. Participate in problem discussion while providing support for group members.

Part 2. Situational Leadership Style Summary

Scoring your self-assessment: *Circle the responses from your Situation questions on the scoring sheet below. Add up each column to determine your leader's preferred leadership style according to the Hersey and Blanchard model.*

	ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS			
SITUATIONS				
1	A	C	B	D
2	D	A	C	B
3	C	A	D	B
4	B	D	A	C
5	C	B	D	A
6	B	D	A	C
7	A	C	B	D
8	C	B	D	A

9	C	B	D	A
10	B	D	A	C
11	A	C	B	D
12	C	A	D	B
TOTAL				
LEADERSHIP STYLE	TELLING (DIRECTING)	SELLING (COACHING)	PARTICIPATING (FACILITATIING)	DELEGATING (OBSERVING)

You're finished this survey, thank you for your participation!

教师对其领导的情景领导水平的调查（SLII）

第一部分——针对您的领导的情境领导 SLII 风格问题

改编自：Hersey 和 Blanchard

自我评估问题。阅读情景问题，然后从相应的备选行动陈述中选择一个最吸引您的领导或您认为最能体现您的领导特点的回答。在某些情况下，可能没有一个回答是吸引人的，也没有一个回答是您的领导的特点。尽管如此，请选择您认为最适合您的领导的陈述。

1. 最近，您的领导对你们的福利的关注没有获得你们的明显反应，你们的工作表现正在迅速下降。那么， 您的领导将：

A.强调使用统一的程序和完成任务的必要性

B.让自己可以参与讨论，但不会干扰你们

C.与您交谈，然后设定目标

D.有意不干预

2. 您的领导一直在确保所有成员都知道他们的责任和预期的表现标准。您的组织工作绩效正在增加。那么，您的领导将：

A.进行友好的互动，但要继续确保所有成员都知道他们的责任和预期的表现标准

B.不采取明确的行动

C.尽他/她所能，使小组感到自己的重要性和参与性

D.强调最后期限和任务的重要性

3. 您的团队的表现和人际关系一直很好。但是，您的团队成员无法解决一个问题。那么， 您的领导将会：

A.与团队合作，一起参与方案的解决

B.让团队自己解决

C.迅速而坚定地采取行动，纠正和重新引导

D.鼓励团队努力解决这个问题，并对您的努力给予支持

4. 您的领导正在考虑改变一些工作内容相关的事情。在此之前，您的团队已经拥有良好的成就记录，您也尊重改变的需要。那么， 您的领导将：

A.允许团队参与变革的发展，但不会太过指令性

B.宣布改变，并在密切监督下实施

C.允许团队制定自己的指令

D.采纳团队的建议，但他／他要指挥变革

5. 在过去的几个月中，您的团队表现一直在下降，您需要不断地提醒自己按时完成任务。在此之前成员们对达到目标不感兴趣的时候，重新定义角色和责任对团队工作有所帮助。那么， 您的领导将：

A.允许团队制定自己的方向

B.采纳小组的建议，但要保证目标的实现

C.重新定义角色和责任，仔细监督

D.允许团队参与确定角色和责任，但不要太过指令性

6. 前任领导已经严格控制了工作局面。但是，您现在的领导想维持一个有效的工作环境，并着手于在成员之间建立人际关系。那么， 您的领导将：

A.做他/她所能做的，使团队感觉到自己的重要性和参与

B.强调最后期限和任务的重要性

C.有意不干预

D.让团队参与决策，但要保证目标的实现

7. 您的领导正在考虑改变您的工作流程和结构。团队成员已经就需要的改变提出了建议。在旧的制度中，您已经取得了成效，并表现出灵活性。您的领导将：

A.界定变化并仔细监督

B.与团队一起参与制定变革，但允许团队成员自己组织实施

C.愿意按照建议进行改变，但保持对实施的控制

D.在与团队讨论情况时，要给予支持，但不要太多指令性

8. 团队表现和人际关系都很好。您的领导对自己在团队中缺乏指导感到有些不放心。您的领导将：

A.不管这个团队

B.与团队讨论这个情况，然后您的领导发起必要的变更计划需求

C.重新定义目标并仔细监督

D.允许团队参与制定目标，但不会强迫实施

9. 您的领导被任命为一个研究小组的领导，该小组已经过了提出变革建议的期限，并且该小组对其目标不明确。因此，会议的出席率一直很低， 并且会议已经变成了社交聚会而非有效会议。他们需要领导的帮助。这时候，您的领导将：

A.让这个小组解决它的问题

B.采纳小组的建议，但要确保目标得到实现

C.重新定义目标并仔细监督

D.允许小组参与制定目标，但不会强迫实施

10. 您的团队有一名成员离开了这个城市。那么，关于对工作职责的重新定义，您的领导将：

A.允许团队参与重新定义标准，但不会参与控制

B.重新定义标准并仔细监督

C.不管情况如何，通过不施加压力来避免冲突和对抗

D.采纳团队的建议，但要确保新的工作职责得到满足

11. 您的领导被提升到了一个新的领导职位。在这个位置的前任领导参与了团队的事务并制定了详细的任务和方向。该团队的人际关系是良好的。您的领导将：

A.采取措施，引导团队以明确的方式工作

B.让团队成员参与决策，并加强良好的贡献

C.与团队讨论过去的表现，然后他/她研究新做法的需要

D.继续让团队单独行动

12.该团队有一个显著的成就记录，并且成员们长期有效地保持了一个稳定的目标。在过去的一年里，他们一直在和谐地工作。但是最近的信息表明团队成员之间存在一些内部困难。那么您的领导将：

A.在团队中试行他/她的解决方案，并研究是否需要新的程序

B.让团队成员自己解决这个问题

C.迅速而坚定地采取行动，纠正和重新引导

D.参与问题讨论，同时为团队成员提供支持

第二部分———情境领导风格总结 (改编自：Hersey 和 Blanchard)

在下面的评分表上圈出你对情境问题的回答。根据 Hersey 和 Blanchard 的模型，将每一栏加起来，以确定您的领导的首选领导风格。

		所有选项			
情境	1	A	C	B	D
	2	D	A	C	B
	3	C	A	D	B
	4	B	D	A	C
	5	C	B	D	A
	6	B	D	A	C
	7	A	C	B	D
	8	C	B	D	A
	9	C	B	D	A
	10	B	D	A	C
	11	A	C	B	D
	12	C	A	D	B
	总计				

领导力风格　　叙述型　　训练型　　参与型　　委托型

您已经完成全部问卷调查，非常感谢您的参与和支持！祝您生活愉快！