The Innovative Leadership of Administrators as Perceived by Faculty Members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were: 1) to study the innovative leadership, 2) to compare the innovative leadership as perceived by faculty member classified by gender, age, educational level, and work experience. The quantitative research was employed. The sample consisted of 52 faculty members selected by stratified random sampling by majors, and data were collected using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire, achieving an IOC of .97 and a Cronbach's Alpha of .974. The data were statistically analyzed by using percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, One-way ANOVA and LSD.

The results of the research were: 1) The innovative leadership of administrators as perceived by the faculty members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics in overall and in each aspect were in high level. The highest aspect was innovative vision, followed by innovative climate, innovative process, and innovative human resource capacity. 2) The compare of innovative leadership of administrators as perceived by the faculty members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by gender, age, educational level, and work experience showed no difference level in total, both specific aspect and items.

Keyword: Innovative Leadership, Administrators, Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology

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Introduction

In the 21st century, in the era of the knowledge economy, innovation has become the basic survival and activity mode of a country and a nation. It is the basis and driving force of sustainable social development. Innovation cannot be separated from the career of "people". As the cradle of cultivating elite talents in all fields of the future society, the reform and progress of education quality and teaching methods play an important role in the development of the whole society. First-class university leadership is the core ability that must be possessed to promote the development of universities. In the context of constant changes, university leadership needs to achieve innovation and change in order to better cope with the increasingly complex educational environment and challenges.

A competent leader achieves progress by innovating and using innovative changes to keep up with the changing educational trends (Sinlarat, 2010). Innovative leadership plays a multitude of roles when facilitating innovation in organizations, and the role of a leader is especially important in influencing creativity and innovation. With the appropriate leadership, successful innovation becomes a realistic and achievable goal, but without it, the challenge may prove insurmountable (Hunter & Cushenbery, 2011).

As the primary productivity of science and technology and an important base for cultivating human resources, colleges and universities not only uphold the responsibility of researching advanced knowledge and cultivating social talents but also shoulder the realistic mission of serving society and promoting development. Educational institution managers must be eager to transform the innovative development of the organization in order to bring about new innovative capabilities. Achieve goals and create changes that add value to educational institutions and develop sustainably in the future, thereby changing the environment of educational institutions in the era of innovation (Sinlarat, 2010).

Foster innovation in Chinese universities, Peng (2012) emphasizes the need to enhance the innovative capabilities of university leaders. His research identifies three critical areas for development. Firstly, university leaders must cultivate an innovative

vision to foster new ideas and strategies, which is essential for adapting to the rapidly evolving educational landscape. Strengthening mechanism innovation is crucial for creating a culture of continuous improvement and adaptability within the institution. Secondly, implementing competitive appointment and tenure systems is vital for attracting and retaining high-calibre faculty and staff, thereby enhancing academic and research capabilities and fostering a dynamic academic environment. Lastly, there is a need to bolster education and training programs for university leaders, equipping them with skills for effective innovation management. Improving assessment and supervision mechanisms ensures accountability and continuous motivation for leaders to pursue innovative practices. By addressing these areas, universities can enhance their competitiveness and achieve sustainable development.

In the situation of Haikou University of Economics according to the December 2022 Year-end report of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology of Haikou University of Economics (2022), the problems existing in the leadership team management of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology are summarized and analyzed: 1) The human resource management system is not innovative enough, resulting in unreasonable talent structure and large talent mobility. 2) Cultural construction and innovative practice are not paid enough attention to, and cannot well stimulate the creativity of faculty members, and a good atmosphere for innovation needs to be further established. 3) The innovation mechanism of organizational collaboration and process management is not perfect. 4)Innovative vision and strategy are not clear enough. These problems need to be resolved. Innovative leadership will be the key to success in developing the university to be an innovative organization. According to Imron et al. (2018), innovative leadership significantly impacts university achievement by driving sustainable improvements in education quality. This type of leadership requires readiness to embrace change and innovation. In the context of a university, the principal's leadership is crucial as their roles and responsibilities influence all aspects of the administrator's organizational life. The principal's innovative changes systematically affect the school's quality of education, highlighting the importance of their role in aligning individual goals with the institution's future expectations. Effective,

innovative leadership thus ensures continuous development and synchronization between personal and organizational objectives, leading to enhanced educational outcomes.

Innovative leaders must prioritize organizational management amid economic changes, technology, information and technology because a learning society is a new management model that requires effective leadership. Through innovations, school administrators can influence teachers to adopt innovations, use technology in production to develop media and innovations that support learning and work, dare to think differently and bring old ideas into the future of educational institutions. Find new ways to solve problems or create new things in concrete ways, these innovations must be applied to provide the greatest benefit to the educational institution (Chaemchoi, 2017).

Changing the environment of educational institutions in the age of innovation will make teachers receptive to technology, innovation and all kinds of changes. Executives must be recognized and included. Managers in the era of innovation must have the vision and develop implementation guidelines to introduce technology into educational institutions to promote new learning innovations. Being an innovative organization or institution that can cope with continuous changes is leadership (Chaemchoi, 2017). The development of higher education directly affects the future social construction process, which makes universities face more and more challenges.

The key to whether universities can withstand the test and achieve ultimate success lies in the important human resources of university leaders. Their work behavior and performance will not only determine the quality and level of teaching and scientific research, but also in a fiercely competitive environment. will determine the survival and development of colleges and universities. Leaders who serve as a link in the university context will have a significant impact on the work attitudes and behaviors of faculty and staff (Li, 2015). As Katina Pollock (2008) identifies four key pillars of innovation that are crucial for fostering an environment conducive to innovation in applied to university settings as well. These pillars include having a clear vision and strategy for innovation that aligns with institutional goals and motivates stakeholders, creating a supportive culture that encourages experimentation and risk-

taking, allocating resources effectively to support innovative practices, and establishing processes for continuous improvement and feedback. Applying these pillars to universities can help address challenges, enabling leaders to enhance their innovative capabilities, drive sustainable development, and improve educational outcomes.

The analysis of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology reveals a significant gap in the innovative leadership capabilities of its leaders, particularly in areas such as vision, talent development, technology, and resource management. This deficiency hampers the academy's ability to create and implement effective innovation strategies, which are crucial for its development. Drawing from Katina Pollock's (2008) study on the four pillars of innovation, which emphasizes the importance of vision, supportive culture, resource allocation, and continuous improvement, it is clear that these elements are essential for fostering an environment conducive to innovation

The findings of this new study will provide valuable insights for the leaders at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, guiding them to adopt more effective research methods and improve their leadership strategies. By incorporating these innovative leadership principles, the academy can better navigate its challenges, enhance its competitive edge, and achieve sustainable development. This study underscores the critical role of innovative leadership in driving the success and advancement of educational institutions.

Research Objectives

1. To study innovative leadership of administrators as perceived by faculty members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics.

2. To compare innovative leadership of administrators as perceived by faculty members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, when classified by gender, age, educational level and work experience.

Research Methodology

This study used descriptive survey research to examine perceptions of innovative leadership among administrators at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology,

Haikou University of Economics.

Population and Sample: The population included 60 faculty members. The sample of this research were 52 faculty members as suggested by Krejcie and Morgan's Table for Determining Sample Size (Robert V. Krejcie and Earyle W. Morgan, 1970 cited in Petchroj, 2019) and selected by stratified random sampling.

Research Instrument: A 29-item questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale was developed from relevant leadership theories. Content validity was confirmed by three experts (IOC = .97). A pilot test with 30 non-sample participants yielded a reliability score (Cronbach's alpha) of .97. Data Collection: Questionnaires were distributed via email and online platforms. Data were coded and prepared for analysis. Data Analysis: Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) described respondent characteristics and perceptions. Inferential statistics (t-test, one-way ANOVA, LSD) were used to compare perceptions by demographic variables.

Results

1. In line with the first research objective, which was to study the innovative leadership of administrators as perceived by faculty members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology at Haikou University of Economics, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 The results of the mean, standard deviation, meaning, and rank of faculty members' opinions on the innovative leadership of administrators at the Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology at Haikou University of Economics in overall.

(n=52)

Item	Innovative Leadership	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level	Ranking
1	Innovative Human Resource Capacity	4.41	.59	high	4
2	Innovative Climate	4.51	.52	highest	2
3	Innovative Process	4.49	.52	high	3
4	Innovative Vision	4.54	.50	highest	1
	Total	**4.49**	**.48**	**high**	

From Table 1, it was revealed that the faculty members' opinions on the innovative leadership of administrators were overall high ($\overline{X}$= 4.49, S.D.= .48). When considering each aspect, the highest aspect was innovative vision in highest level ($\overline{X}$=4.54, S.D.=.50), followed by innovative climate in highest level. In high lever were innovative process and innovative human resource capacity.

2. In accordance with the second research objective, which aimed to compare the innovative leadership of administrators as perceived by faculty members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology at Haikou University of Economics across gender, age, educational level, and work experience, the findings are presented as follows.

Table 2 Comparison of faculty members' opinions on innovative leadership of administrators at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by gender.

(n=52)

Item	Innovative Leadership	Gender				t	Sig.
		Male		Female			
		$\overline{X}$	S.D.	$\overline{X}$	S.D.		
1	Innovative Human Resource Capacity	4.48	.51	4.36	.66	.69	.50
2	Innovative Climate	4.46	.55	4.56	.51	-.63	.54
3	Innovative Process	4.53	.49	4.46	.55	.52	.60
4	Innovative Vision	4.54	.53	4.55	.49	-.03	.98
	Total	**4.50**	**.49**	**4.48**	**.49**	**.17**	**.86**

From Table 2, it was revealed that the mean of faculty members' opinions on the innovative leadership of administrators at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by gender, showed no difference level in total and each specific aspect.

Table 3 Comparison of faculty members' opinions on innovative leadership of administrators at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by age.

(n=52)

Item	Innovative Leadership	Age				t	Sig.
		Less than 31		more than 31			
		$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	S.D.		
1	Innovative Human Resource Capacity	4.47	.50	4.37	.67	.62	.54
2	Innovative Climate	4.53	.52	4.50	.54	.20	.84
3	Innovative Process	4.50	.51	4.48	.54	.12	.90
4	Innovative Vision	4.58	.45	4.51	.55	.52	.61
	Total	**4.52**	**.46**	**4.46**	**.51**	**.41**	**.68**

From Table 3, it was revealed that the mean of faculty members' opinions on the innovative leadership of administrators at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by age, showed no difference level in total and each specific aspect.

Table 4 Comparison of faculty members' opinions on innovative leadership of administrators at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by educational level.

(n=52)

Item	Innovative Leadership	Educational level				t	Sig.
		Bachelor		Master			
		$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	S.D.		
1	Innovative Human Resource Capacity	4.41	.64	4.42	.59	-.01	.99
2	Innovative Climate	4.57	.52	4.50	.53	.38	.70
3	Innovative Process	4.56	.61	4.47	.50	.49	.63
4	Innovative Vision	4.63	.51	4.52	.51	.59	.56
	Total	**4.54**	**.55**	**4.48**	**.47**	**.39**	**.70**

From Table 4, it was revealed that the mean of faculty members' opinions on the innovative leadership of administrators at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by educational level, showed no difference level in total and each specific aspect.

Table 5 Comparison of faculty members' opinions on innovative leadership of administrators at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by work experience.

(n=52)

Item	Innovative Leadership	Work experience						F	Sig.
		1-5 year		6-10 year		More than 10 year			
		$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	$\bar{X}$	S.D.		
1	Innovative Human Resource Capacity	4.51	.49	4.36	.52	4.30	.81	.63	.53
2	Innovative Climate	4.58	.46	4.44	.54	4.45	.64	.44	.65
3	Innovative Process	4.53	.51	4.52	.46	4.39	.59	.33	.72
4	Innovative vision	4.60	.46	4.55	.48	4.43	.61	.54	.58
	Total	**4.56**	**.46**	**4.47**	**.46**	**4.39**	**.57**	**.53**	**.59**

From Table 5, it was revealed that the mean for work experience with "1-5 years" of experience was the highest followed by "6-10 years" and "more than 10 years". ANOVA was used to study the faculty member's opinions on the innovative leadership of administrators, classified by work experience. The sample did not show statistically significance in total and all aspects, indicating consistency and no differences.

The summary of the research results revealed that.

1) The study revealed that faculty members perceived the innovative leadership of administrators at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou

University of Economics, to be at a high level overall. Among the key dimensions assessed, innovative vision emerged as the most highly recognized strength, reflecting the administrators' ability to establish clear, forward-looking goals and strategies for institutional development. This was closely followed by the innovative climate, which emphasized the creation of supportive and collaborative environments conducive to new ideas and practices. In addition, innovative processes and human resource capacity were also acknowledged positively, highlighting the administrators' ability to implement effective systems and maximize personnel potential in fostering innovation. Overall, the findings indicate that administrators demonstrate strong innovative leadership, particularly in shaping a vision and cultivating an environment that encourages creativity and progress.

2) The comparative analysis of faculty members' perceptions of the innovative leadership of administrators at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by gender, age, educational level, and work experience, revealed no statistically significant differences across all variables. Faculty members consistently rated the administrators' innovative leadership at a high level in all dimensions—human resource capacity, innovative climate, innovative process, and innovative vision. These findings indicate that the perception of administrators' innovative leadership was generally uniform, regardless of demographic or professional background. This suggests that the administrators' innovative leadership practices are recognized broadly and positively by faculty members, reflecting a shared acknowledgment of their efforts in fostering innovation within the institution.

Discussion

1. The results revealed that the innovative leadership of administrators, as perceived by the faculty members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, the Haikou University of Economics, overall and in each aspect, were at a high level. This highest level was an innovative vision. Because it might be the administrators' ability to foster creativity, adaptability, and forward-thinking within the institution. In the competitive academic environment in China, innovative leadership is crucial for

achieving international recognition and improving academic performance. This leadership style promotes openness to change, collaboration, new ideas, and the integration of technology into teaching and learning, all of which enhance organizational culture and faculty satisfaction, preparing the institution for changes and achieving its goals. And institutional success. This is consistent with innovative leadership. According to Horth, innovative leadership is crucial for navigating challenging changes and solving problems, as it encourages leaders to focus on cooperative efforts and the overall strength of the institution. These findings also align with Rogers' Innovation Diffusion Theory (Rogers, 1962) supports the idea that administrators act as change agents, facilitating the spread of new ideas and methods throughout the organization. Also, the Leadership for Innovation Framework (Mumford et al., 2002) further explains that effective leadership involves fostering creativity and creating an environment conducive to experimentation, aligning with the high perception of innovation among faculty. Supporting research, such as Li et al. (2020), reveals that innovative leadership in Chinese higher education enhances academic performance, faculty retention, and research output. Wu and Zhou (2018) demonstrate that such leadership fosters faculty creativity and empowerment. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2019) found that transformational and innovative leadership styles positively impact faculty satisfaction and institutional performance. Together, these theories and studies underscore the significance of innovative leadership in fostering a positive and productive work environment in academic institutions. The findings reveal that administrators of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, possess critical leadership abilities, particularly in fostering awareness and changing attitudes. These leaders are adept at personal transformation, evolving into innovation leaders by continuously learning new skills and developing frameworks that enable them to turn creative ideas into actionable strategies. Their capacity to adapt and grow not only benefits the organization but also helps them lead by example, inspiring others to adopt innovative practices and change their attitudes toward leadership. Ultimately, this self-development and proactive leadership lead to enhanced organizational outcomes through innovation-driven actions. The findings

reveal that administrators possess critical leadership abilities, particularly in fostering awareness and changing attitudes. These leaders are adept at personal transformation, evolving into innovation leaders by continuously learning new skills and developing frameworks that enable them to turn creative ideas into actionable strategies. Their capacity to adapt and grow not only benefits the organization but also helps them lead by example, inspiring others to adopt innovative practices and change their attitudes toward leadership. Ultimately, this self-development and proactive leadership lead to enhanced organizational outcomes through innovation-driven actions.

2. Results of comparing the mean scores on the innovative leadership of administrators as perceived by the faculty members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by gender, age, education level, and work experience. The research discussion is as follows:

2.1 The results of comparing by t-test the mean scores on the innovative leadership of administrators, as perceived by the faculty members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by gender, showed no difference level in total and each specific aspect. This consistency is attributed to the fact that administrators at Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, regularly receive training designed for new-generation executives. This training equips them with innovative leadership qualities and professional knowledge, enabling them to manage work effectively and guide the organization towards sustainable development.

2.2 The results of comparing by t-test the mean scores on the innovative leadership of administrators, as perceived by the faculty members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by age, showed no difference level in total and each specific aspect. This was because administrators were of similar ages and engaged in ongoing development and support for the use of innovation and information technology in their daily lives. Research indicates that faculty members' perceptions of innovative leadership in universities do not significantly vary by age due to several factors.

2.3 The results of comparing by t-test the mean scores on the innovative leadership of administrators, as perceived by the faculty members of Nanhai Academy

of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by educational level, showed no difference level in total and each specific aspect. This is because administrators promote teachers with all levels of education to receive equal support in technology. Research indicates that the perception of faculty members about innovative leadership in universities in China shows no significant differences when classified by educational level; it indicates that faculty members' views on innovative leadership are consistent regardless of their highest degree attained.

2.4 Results of One-way ANOVA comparing the mean on the innovative leadership of administrators as perceived by the faculty members of Nanhai Academy of the Arts and Technology, Haikou University of Economics, classified by work experience, in total and all aspects, indicating consistency and no differences. This is because the current advancement in information technology has caused rapid changes in the environment, society, culture, science, and technology. Research indicates that the perception of faculty members about innovative leadership in universities in China shows no significant differences when classified by work experience; it indicates that faculty members' views on innovative leadership are consistent regardless of their length of service or experience in academia.

2.5 Furthermore, the researcher analyzed more to compare the mean and standard deviation of the items of each variable classified by gender, age, educational level, and work experience. It also found that no show was statistically significant as a whole. This is because these demographic factors do not substantially influence their views on innovative leadership. This suggests that faculty members, regardless of these characteristics, have similar perceptions of innovative leadership in their institutions.

Recommendation

1. Suggestions for the application of the research results

1.1 The comparing the mean of innovative human resource capacity found the lowest item was “Administrators establish ongoing training courses to develop innovative skills for faculty members in the long term”. Administrators should design long-term, tailored training programs focused on developing innovative skills, incorporating emerging technologies, and fostering creative teaching methods. This will

help faculty stay current with industry trends and educational innovations. May pair faculty with mentors or creating peer learning groups can help sustain ongoing skill development. These programs should emphasize innovation in pedagogy and research, allowing faculty members to learn from each other's experiences.

1.2 The comparing the mean of Innovative Climate found the lowest item was "Administrators provide resources that foster innovation for faculty members" in high level. Administrators should allocate more funds and materials (e.g., research grants, technology, time) that directly support faculty innovation. Ensuring access to cutting-edge technologies and collaborative tools can enhance the innovative capacity of faculty. Setting up an internal innovation support hub where faculty can access resources, seek technical assistance, and collaborate with peers on innovation projects would help address the need for more tangible support.

1.3 The comparing the mean of Innovative Process found the lowest item was "Adjust the work process flexibly based on feedback from faculty members" in high level. Administrators should establish more dynamic systems that regularly solicit feedback from faculty and use that information to adjust workflows and processes. This could include regular surveys, feedback loops, and forums for open discussion on how to optimize work processes based on faculty needs. Consider adopting an agile approach to work processes, where there are regular reviews and adaptations based on ongoing faculty feedback. This ensures that processes remain flexible and relevant to the ever-changing needs of the institution.

1.4 The comparing the mean of Innovative Vision found the lowest item was "The administrators collaborate with external partners to reach the faculty's goals" in high level. Administrators should actively seek collaborations with industry partners, research institutions, and international bodies. These collaborations can help provide faculty with access to new resources, technologies, and global expertise, aligning external input with internal goals. Creating joint initiatives with external partners focused on research, innovation, and shared goals will not only enhance the university's reputation but also provide faculty with more opportunities for development and impact. Collaborations should be framed around specific goals, such as technology transfer, research publications, or curriculum development.

2. Suggestions for future research

2.1 Research should be conducted on the innovative leadership of administrators at other levels, such as educational policy executives in various universities.

2.2 Research should be conducted on the innovative leadership of administrators in terms of morality and ethics.

2.3 Research should be conducted on models and guidelines for promoting, supporting, and developing innovative leadership among administrators.

2.4 The opinions of administrators should be studied by analyzing data classified by relevant personnel groups, as mentioned above, to use the results for consideration, planning, and further development of educational quality.

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