



## Transformational Leadership and Its' Impact on Teacher's Creative Behaviour in Chinese Universities

Xiaolei Zou, and Matthew R. Merritt

Graduate School of Human Sciences, Assumption University, Bangkok, Thailand  
Assumption University, Bangkok, Thailand

E-mail: zoulei0121@163.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7721-9364>

Corresponding author e-mail: mmerritt@au.edu, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5158-1587>

Received 06/11/2022

Revised 09/11/2022

Accepted 10/11/2022

**Abstract:-** Since 1949, the Chinese government has always attached great attendance to the development of domestic education and the education level of Chinese people. After 50 years of effort, it has made a great change and development in Chinese education. In the meantime, the facing of serious cash shortages motivates many Chinese universities to change to achieve a higher education level, and it also increases the requirement of a transformational leadership style leader. This researcher aims to use a survey way to find the relationship between transformational leadership and the creative behavior of teachers, and also found the mediating role of person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit. A quantitative research approach was adopted to collect and analyze the data. Questionnaires were used to target the research objects who hide in the wide populations. What's more, the researcher also found that different demographic factors such as gender and age have a significant effect on the transformational leadership style of leaders toward subordinate teachers' perception, and there is no significant difference between different education level leaders' transformational leadership style toward their subordinate teacher's perception.

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership; Person-Organization Fit; Person-Supervisor Fit; Creative Behaviour; Chinese Universities' Teachers

### Introduction

China is a big country in the world with a 1.4 billion population which has a huge demand for education. Since 1949, the Chinese government has always attached great attendance to the development of domestic education and the education level of Chinese people. The Chinese government used many laws to protect Chinese people's rights for education. After 50 years of effort, it has made a great change and development in Chinese education.

With the development of China's social economy, the problem of "satisfying the education demand" in basic education has been basically solved, and the problem of "learning well" has become the focus of parents and society. People's demand for quality education is growing. Teachers are the key factor to determine the quality of education. The quality of teachers' teaching depends not only on their professional knowledge, teaching skills, and professional ethics but also on their creative behavior. It is the source power of teachers' professional development and an effective way to promote teachers' creative behavior and improve the quality of universities' education. Innovation is one of the key capitals of human beings, and innovative talents and creative behavior are the key elements and core power of universities' innovation. And the innovation or creative behavior of universities is the key element of a country's development. COVID - 19 outbreak, as a change of ways of universities' teaching ways, and change of academic communication, but now, many innovations and creative behavior of teachers had provided many contributions to education.

Improving the construction of teacher's teams in the new era is one of the highlights of the development of education at present. Teachers' innovation or creative behavior is an important part of people's satisfaction with education. Whether teachers are creative with their jobs will not only depend on their attitude towards working but also influence the quality of education. Currently, it is a significant subject for principals to stimulate teachers' positive psychological strength and promote innovation or creative behavior through the revolution of leadership style (Cetin and Kinik, 2015; Le et al., 2018; Top et al., 2020).



However, even if a teacher has a high working ability, he or she does not recognize his or her profession, lacks fit for his or her universities, and is difficult to play a higher teaching efficiency, let alone pursue a career. Person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit can help teachers to fit universities' environment, teachers actively accept and love their work from the bottom of their hearts. Therefore, how to stimulate the universities teacher's innovation behavior, help the transformational leader in the universities to build different core competitiveness is very important.

This research has much contributions. First of all, this researcher firstly combined person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit as mediators to measure the relationship between transformational leadership of leaders and creative behavior of universities' teachers. Secondly, this research firstly applies transformational leadership, creative behavior, person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit at a new situation and background. This is a new situation during COVID - 19 outbreak and new Chinese policy reform in Chinese universities.

### Research Objectives

1. To use a survey way to find the relationship between transformational leadership and creative behavior of teachers,
2. To investigate the mediating role of person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit.

### Literature Review

Many papers talked about the importance of transformational leadership toward one organization, and how it affects the employee's creative behavior and performance. For example, Buil et al. (2019) describes the transformational leadership is leaders inspire followers agree with organizational goals and interests, and beyond the expectations of a kind of method, transformational leadership in terms of necessary changes lead to effective management plays a key role. They also pointed out that transformational leadership can improve the performance of organization's employee through motivating and empowering employee to achieve the vision of organization. Many other researchers also supported those ideas. Such as Top et al. (2020) explained that transformational leadership is a kind of leadership style, in this kind of leadership style, the leader to determine the change of demand, through the incentive to create a vision to guide the change, and to increase the members of the organization through positive actions. They also pointed the importance of leadership, they explained that leadership is a kind of support or motivate a group of people toward a common goal diligently mechanism, it can use a strategy to lead the staff and workers to achieve a vision. So, the transformational leadership is important for today's Chinese universities when they facing more challenges than before. So, it also increases the demand for transformational leadership at universities, they need transformational leader to stimulate teachers to achieve different goal and facing problem with different kind of motivation and innovation.

At the meantime, the universities also increase the demand for the creative behavior of teachers, many of those universities looking for transition and increasing competitiveness through education level, technology development and efficiency. It also increasing the requirement of teachers to create more core competitiveness through those fields. Many researchers found the relationship between transformational leadership and creative behavior (Mahmood *et al.*, 2019; Azim *et al.*, 2019). They pointed out that transformational leadership can dominate the process of problem identification and information searching, and then benefit teachers' creative behavior. Azim *et al.* (2019) used multi-item survey instrument to find the results through 400 respondents, they found that transformational leadership can significantly impact on the creative process, and then help organizations to solve problems. Herman and Chiu (2014) pointed out that creative behavior is one of the most importance parts of employee's performance, and it was explained as a process of generate and communicate new ideas and creative thoughts in groups with many benefits, and those new ideas and creative thoughts can help organizations to solve different problems. The idea also was supported by Buil *et al.* (2019) and Top *et al.* (2020), who indicated the importance between transformational leadership and teachers'



performance. To conclude, the creative behavior can be pointed out of some creative ideas and works to help universities to achieve higher education level, more technology development and efficiency.

Hogg (2001) pointed out the importance of social identity theory toward different kind leadership styles. Social identity theory is that the individual seeking actively looks at yourself, and to expand this kind of motivation to individual members of the group identity and social identity. According to social identity theory, transformational leadership leader has self-identity as strong change and achievement goal orientation, they also want to use their own influence to make followers agree and comply with the leader's ideas and suggestions (change and transformation), then to achieve final visions. Then, Hogg (2001) also pointed that the success of different kind leadership is depend on group identification, self-categorization and members' self-identification, for other words, if leaders' leadership can not affect group member, it is hard for members to follow them and achieve leader's vision. So, it is important to know how to strong the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' creative behavior, and whether this relationship existing in universities.

In Chinese universities, there are many transformational leadership leaders with different gender, age and education level, many of them play a very significant role in this industry. And many researchers also informed that different demographic factors may affect the leaders' transformational leadership, and those factors can be gender. Alghamdi et al. (2018) informed that different customer with different male-dominate may affect the perception of subordinate teachers toward their leader, and then those subordinate teachers also will be perceived differently when they face different gender transformational leadership leader. Then, Munir and Aboidullah (2018) also pointed out different views compare with other researchers, they found that female leaders are more affectionate and emotional expressive than male leaders, and female leader also have more consideration structure than initiating structure when they show transformational leadership style, that cause subordinate teachers perceived less transformational leadership style from female leaders, because many subordinate teachers think transformational leadership style should be tough-minded and sometime maybe aggressive. Then, age and education level also may affect the perception of subordinate teachers toward their leaders' transformational leadership style in Chinese universities. For example, Khan *et al.* (2020) and Antonopoulou *et al.* (2021) indicated that elder leaders have more experience than younger leaders, but they are more prudent and cautious than younger leaders. Normally, younger managers have more passions and attention to face challenge and problems, they prefer to change, and they also have faster feedback toward new knowledge and problems. For education level, Cetin and Kinik (2015), Le et al. (2018) and Top et al. (2020) provided different ideas, some of them pointed out education level can not affect the perception of subordinate teachers toward their leaders' transformational leadership style, because it is hard for leaders to study one leadership style through textbook, some of them think leaders' education level such as (doctoral or mater degree) may let subordinate teachers to perceive their leaders differently.

Just as above informed, different leaders pointed out that different demographic factors affect the perception level of teachers toward their leaders' transformational leadership style, because subordinate teachers may perceive differently when they facing different gender, age and education level leaders. But there are no consistent results to show whether those demographic factors can always affect all industries' subordinate teachers at a significant level. And no research talked about how those different demographic factors affect subordinate teachers' perception toward transformational leadership in Chinese universities, it is interesting and significant at this moment.

What's more, some researchers pointed out that not all subordinate teachers will blindly follow those transformational leadership style leaders, they have their own ideas toward their leaders. So, if transformational leadership style leaders want their subordinate teachers follow them, they need some fit between them and their subordinate teachers, and those subordinate teachers also need some fit with their organizations. After research the relationship leaders' transformational leadership style and subordinate teachers' creative behaviors, some researcher found that there are some factors can be used as mediating factors between leaders' transformational leadership style and subordinate teachers' creative behaviors. Some researchers pointed out the mediating role of person-organization fit (Buil *et al.*, 2019) and person-supervisor



fit (Klaic *et al.*, 2018), but less of them use these two factors as mediating factors to strong the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' creative behavior. Many researchers used work engagement (Lai *et al.*, 2020) or job satisfaction (Boamah *et al.*, 2018). But researcher doubt that if teachers already have work engagement or job satisfaction, they may just blindly follow leaders, no matter what style they have. According to the research of Cetin and Kinik (2015) and Boamah *et al.* (2018), they pointed out that, there is four dimensions of transformational leadership, they are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. That means transformational leadership style leaders lead teachers or followers to achieve visions or goals through their influence, motivation, stimulation and followers' thinking, not just blindly following. But the effect of leaders' influence, motivation and stimulation depend on teachers' fit, such as person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit. So, it is interesting to test whether there is a mediating role of person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit toward the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' creative behavior in Chinese universities.

Klaic *et al.* (2018) explained that person-supervisor fit as attitudinal compatibility between supervisors and their subordinate teachers, and it was developed from person-environment fit theory and central stress theory in work and organizational psychology. And they also pointed out the positive relationship between transformational leadership and person-supervisor fit, and then, person-supervisor fit will increase the performance of teachers and creative behavior. Those teachers with high levels of person-supervisor fit, normally have higher satisfaction and well-being work with transformational leader, and then results with high perceived leader effectiveness and high group effectiveness. So, researcher assume that there is a mediating effect for person-supervisor fit between transformational leadership and teachers' creative behavior in universities.

Then, Kwon and Kang (2019) informed the importance of person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit toward teachers in one organization, they found there is a positive relationship between job performance and person-organization fit, and person-supervisor fit. Then, Chi and Pan (2012) and Chen *et al.* (2020) informed the relationship between transformational leadership and person-organization fit. They described person-organization fit as the compatibility between teachers and organizations, organization and teachers can satisfy each other needs or share similar fundamental characteristics such as values, beliefs and goals. They also pointed out that, if there is no similar value, beliefs and goals between teachers and organization, organization may not recruit those teachers, or it is easy for those teachers to leave the organization, and those employees also will not follow the leaders with any leadership style.

To conclude, many researchers talked about the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' performance, but very limited researchers talked about the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' creative behavior which as a very important part of teachers' performance, and no researcher applied those factors on universities. And it is also important applied person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit as mediator between transformational leadership and teachers' creative behavior, that means there should some thinking before teachers follow leaders not just blindly follow in universities.

### Research Conceptual Framework

The research, a Transformational Leadership and Its' Impact on Teacher's Creative Behavior in Chinese Universities, we set the conceptual framework as follow;

Conceptual Framework	
Buil et al. (2019)	the transformational leadership is leaders inspire followers agree with organizational goals and interests, and beyond the expectations of a kind of method, transformational leadership in terms of necessary changes lead to effective management plays a key role.
Top et al. (2020)	transformational leadership is a kind of leadership style, in this kind of leadership style, the leader to determine the change of demand, through the incentive to create a vision to guide the change, and to increase the members of the organization through positive actions.





### Conceptual Framework

Herman and Chiu (2014)	creative behavior is one of the most importance parts of employee's performance, and it was explained as a process of generate and communicate new ideas and creative thoughts in groups with many benefits, and those new ideas and creative thoughts can help organizations to solve different problems.
Khan <i>et al.</i> (2020) and Antonopoulou <i>et al.</i> (2021)	elder leaders have more experience than younger leaders, but they are more prudent and cautious than younger leaders.
Klaic <i>et al.</i> (2018)	person-supervisor fit as attitudinal compatibility between supervisors and their subordinate teachers, and it was developed from person-environment fit theory and central stress theory in work and organizational psychology.
Kwon and Kang (2019)	the importance of person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit toward teachers in one organization, they found there is a positive relationship between job performance and person-organization fit, and person-supervisor fit.

### Methodology

In this study, researchers used the methodology of quantitative methods to obtain data and results. Quantitative research method is by generating a digital or any data or can be converted to the available statistical methods to quantify the problem, and quantitative data collection method is more structured than qualitative data collection method. The researchers chose a survey method to collect data from respondents. Survey is a research method, the researchers used questionnaires to get the data of respondents to know their views and attitudes. To collect data, the researchers designed a questionnaire, and distributed them to the teachers of at different levels of the universities randomly. The questionnaire includes 20 questions, respondents need to write their leader's age, gender and education level, and then, they need to answer a list question about their leaders' transformational leadership level, and those respondents' person-organization fit level, person-supervisor fit level and creative behavior level. All of the questions (excepted demographic questions) are used as 5-Likert scale questions from strongly disagree to strongly agree for all respondents. All of the data is collected and then analyzed by researcher.

Table 1: The Results of Demographic Factors

Questionnaire	
Subjects	Options
leader's Gender	Male Female
leader's Age	Less than 30 years old 30-40 years old 41-50 years old 51-60 years old More than 60 years old
leader's Education Level	Lower than Bachelor Degree Bachelor Degree Master Degree PhD Degree
Transformational Leadership 1	My leader has much attention and passion to finish the goal.
Transformational Leadership 2	My leader has ability to explain the mission and vision of our company and to encourage subordinate teachers to finish work.
Transformational Leadership 3	My leader has courage, confidence and ability to finish the goal.



Questionnaire	
Subjects	Options
Transformational Leadership 4	My leader has ability to express what she/he want.
Creative Behavior 1	I can use creative ways to finish my work.
Creative Behavior 2	I have a systematic way to using creative behavior.
Creative Behavior 3	I can evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of my practical creation idea.
Person-Organization Fit 1	I have similar value and culture compare with my company.
Person-Organization Fit 2	I can get what I want from my work.
Person-Organization Fit 3	I have enough ability, training and experience to finish my work in my company.
Person-Organization Fit 4	The things and works, what I think is important, is also important for my company.
Person-Organization Fit 5	I have good fit with my company.
Person-Supervisor Fit 1	I have similar characteristics and value compare with my leader.
Person-Supervisor Fit 2	My leader can satisfy my needs.
Person-Supervisor Fit 3	I have enough ability and experience to finish the work what leader assigned to me.
Person-Supervisor Fit 4	I can cooperate with my leader perfectly during work.
Person-Supervisor Fit 5	I can understand what my leader wants during work.

Researcher used convenient sampling method to distributed questionnaire to different Chinese universities' teachers online, and then collect those data and run those data through software, and then get the results with following.

## Results

This part aim to answer the results of research questions and hypothesis, including descriptive analysis of demographic data and correlation between each variable. There are 400 teachers are answer the questionnaires. There are two sections of this Data analysis and results . The first part is descriptive analysis that analyze the demographic factors such as gender, age and education level. The second part is the regression analysis, and this part analyzes the relationship between each variable. Researchers also use software to test the reliability and validity of each variable in this research analysis. First of all, researchers use descriptive statistical methods to summarize the essential characteristics of all respondents' leaders. Frequency and percentage were used to calculate and analyze the sample demographic data. And their leaders' information is showed with following.

*Table 2: The Results of Demographic Factors*

Subjects	Options	Frequency	Percent
leader's Gender	Male	202	50.5%
	Female	198	49.5%
leader's Age	Less than 30 years old	56	14.0%
	30-40 years old	160	40.0%
	41-50 years old	110	27.5%
	51-60 years old	48	12.0%
	More than 60 years old	26	6.5%
leader's Education Level	Bachelor Degree	33	8.3%
	Master Degree	201	55.2%
	PhD Degree	165	41.5%



According to table 2, most of the respondents' leaders were male (202 people) at 55.5%, and female (198 people) at 49.5%, that means most of the leaders are male in Chinese universities. Then, based on table 1, researcher also noticed that the majority of respondents' leaders were aged between 30-40 years old, which accounted for 160 people and occupied 40.0% of total sample. Then, 110 respondents' leaders (occupied 27.5%) who was aged between 41-50 years old, 56 respondents' leaders (occupied 14.0%) who was aged less than 30 years old. Only 48 respondents' leaders (occupied 12.0%) was aged between 51-60 years old and 26 respondents' leaders (occupied 6.5%) more than 60 years old. That means, in today's Chinese universities, the leaders are normally young, and most of them are aged between 30-50 years old. The last but not the least, researcher also found that most of the respondents' leaders education level is Master Degree and they (201 people) occupied 55.2% of total sample. And researcher also found 41.5% (97) people have PhD Degree and 8.3% (33) people have Bachelor Degree in total target sample. That means, there are many respondents' leaders own enough knowledge with high education level (Master Degree or higher degree) to face more challenges in Chinese universities.

And then, researcher tested the reliability and validity of those data, this data past reliability and validity test, and then researcher analysis whether different demographic respondents' leaders have difference transformational leadership level, and then analyze the relationship between each variable with following.

*Table 3: The t Test of Different Gender's leaders toward Transformational Leadership*

Subjects	Options	M	SD
Transformational Leadership	Male	4.93	0.18
	Female	4.85	0.27
t	2.92		
p	0.004		

Based on table 3, researcher found that the mean the level of transformational leadership for male leaders is 4.93 and for female leaders is 4.85, and the p-value is less than 0.05, that means there is a significant difference between male leaders and female leaders toward transformational leadership in Chinese universities. The reason maybe that male leader has much attention and passion to change, but female leader maybe not aggressive like male leader who have more enterprise and want more follower to change current situation, the detail will be discussed in the end.

*Table 4: The ANOVA Test of Different Age and Education Level leaders toward Transformational Leadership*

Subjects	Options	M	SD
Transformational Leadership	Less than 30 years old	4.98	0.11
	30-40 years old	4.94	0.18
	41-50 years old	4.89	0.23
	51-60 years old	4.93	0.19
	More than 60 years old	4.71	0.33
F Value	8.601		
p	0.000		

Based on table 4, researcher found that the mean level of transformational leadership for different age leader is different, those leaders who are aged less than 30 years old have highest level of transformational leadership, those leaders who are aged more than 60 years old have lowest level of transformational leadership, and the p value is less than 0.05, F value is 8.601, that means there is a significant difference between different age leaders toward transformational leadership in Chinese



universities. The reason maybe that young leader has much attention and passion to change, but older leader maybe just to maintain current status of company, the detail will be discussed in the end.

*Table 5: The ANOVA Test of Different Age and Education Level leaders toward Transformational Leadership*

Transformational Leadership	Bachelor Degree	4.9	0.23
	Master Degree	4.92	0.17
	PhD Degree	4.92	0.21
F Value	0.852		
p	0.466		

Then, according to table 5, researcher found that there is no significant difference between different education level leaders' transformational leadership style toward their subordinate teacher's perception, because the p value is higher than 0.05. That means subordinate teachers perceived different education level leaders' transformational leadership style is same in Chinese universities. The higher education level cannot bring higher level transformational leadership.

*Table 6: The Relationship between Each Variables*

	Transformational Leadership	Person-organization Fit	Person-supervisor Fit	Creative Behavior
Transformational Leadership	1	/	/	/
Person-organization Fit	0.727***	1	/	/
Person-supervisor Fit	0.512***	/	1	/
Creative Behavior	0.464***	0.403***	0.359***	1

\*\*\* : P<0.001

Based on table 6, researcher found that there is a significant relationship between all of the variable. There is a significant strong relationship between leaders' transformational leadership level and teachers' person-organization fit level, because the number is 0.727 (p<0.001). Researcher also found that there is a significant relationship between leaders' transformational leadership level and teachers' person-supervisor fit level, because the number is 0.512 (p<0.001), and there is a significant relationship between leaders' transformational leadership level and teachers' creative behavior level, because the number is 0.464 (p<0.001). Then, there is also a significant relationship between teachers' person-organization fit and their creative behavior level, the number is 0.403 (p<0.001); and there is a significant relationship between teachers' person-supervisor fit level and their creative behavior level, the number is 0.359 (p<0.001). So, researcher can continue to check whether teachers' person-supervisor fit and person-organization fit play a mediating role between leaders' transformational leadership and teachers' creative behavior.

*Table 7: The Test of the Mediating Role of Person-organization Fit*

	Model 1 Creative Behavior $\beta$	Model 2 Person-organization Fit $\beta$	Model 3 Creative Behavior $\beta$	Model 4 Creative Behavior $\beta$
Transformational Leadership	0.466***	0.727***		0.366***
Person-organization Fit			0.403***	0.138**
R <sup>2</sup>	0.466	0.727	0.403	0.475
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.217	0.528	0.103	0.226
F	110.231***	444.933***	77.305***	57.901***

\*\*\* : P<0.001; \*\* : P<0.05





According to table 7, researcher used regression analysis to analyze the relationship between transformational leadership of leaders and person-organization fit of teachers, and there relationship between transformational leadership and creative behavior, the data also proved that there is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and creative behavior, and person-organization fit is playing a mediating role between transformational leadership and creative behavior. Because according to table 7, researcher found that after combined with person-organization fit, the relationship between transformational leadership and creative behavior is changed from 0.466 to 0.366, and the relationship is significant ( $P < 0.001$ ). Then, researcher continue check the mediating role of person-supervisor fit with following.

Table 8: The Test of the Mediating Role of Person-supervisor Fit

	<b>Model 1</b> <b>Creative Behavior</b>	<b>Model 2</b> <b>Person-supervisor Fit</b>	<b>Model 3</b> <b>Creative Behavior</b>	<b>Model 4</b> <b>Creative Behavior</b>
	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$
Transformational Leadership	0.466***	0.512***		0.382***
Person-supervisor Fit			0.359***	0.164**
$R^2$	0.466	0.512	0.359	0.487
Adjusted $R^2$	0.217	0.262	0.129	0.237
$F$	110.231***	141.054***	59.020***	61.577***

\*\*\* :  $P < 0.001$ ; \*\* :  $P < 0.05$

According to table 8, researcher used regression analysis to analyze the relationship between transformational leadership and person-supervisor fit, and their relationship between transformational leadership and creative behavior, the data also proved that there is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and creative behavior, and person-supervisor fit is playing a mediating role between transformational leadership and creative behavior. Because according to table 8, researcher found that after combined with person-supervisor fit, the relationship between transformational leadership and creative behavior is changed from 0.466 to 0.382, and the relationship is significant ( $P < 0.001$ ).

## Discussion

Based on above results, researcher found that, in Chinese universities, there is a significant difference between male leaders and female leaders toward transformational leadership style. That means in Chinese universities, subordinate teachers perceived different gender's transformational leadership style differently, and those subordinate teachers perceived male leader have higher transformational leadership level than female leader. Then, this research also found that there is a significant difference between different age leaders toward transformational leadership in Chinese universities. The reason maybe that young leader has much attention and passion to change, but older leader maybe just to maintain current status of company. This idea was supported by Khan *et al.* (2020) and Antonopoulou *et al.* (2021), they indicated that older leaders have more experience, they prefer to follow their experience, not change. And they also informed that, different age leaders have different learning speed capabilities, recognition of knowledge value and the ability of taking external knowledge resources. So, those factors may cause different age leaders have different ability to use transformational leadership style and their innovation ability also will affect the perception of their subordinate teachers' perception toward their transformational leadership style. What's more, this research also found that there is no significant difference between different education level leaders' transformational leadership style toward their subordinate teachers' perception. In universities, PhD degree leaders cannot guarantee that they must always perform better than bachelor degree leaders,



and subordinate teachers also may perceive their transformational leadership style based on their work style and communication ability, not degree.

Then, researcher also found that there is a significant relationship between leaders' transformational leadership and teachers' creative behavior. As one of the most important part of teachers' performance, Chinese universities need creative behavior, transformational leadership leaders also can help teachers to follow them to do innovative work, and then save their universities. In the end, researcher also found that there is a significant relationship between all variables. And person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit is playing a mediating role between transformational leadership and creative behavior. In Chinese universities, teachers have their own self-identity, if leader want their subordinate teachers follow them and achieve good results, they need to make sure their subordinate teachers have similar group identification, self-categorization and self-identification with them, and they also need to make sure those subordinate teachers have good person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit, those subordinate teachers need to know how to follow their leaders' transformational leadership style and then achieve success.

## Conclusion

China is a big country in the world with 1.4 billion population which have huge demand for education. Since 1949, Chinese government has always attached great attendance on the development of domestic education and the education level of Chinese people. Chinese government used many laws to protect Chinese people's rights for education. After 50 years effort, it has made a great change and development in Chinese education. With the development of China's social economy, the problem of "satisfy the education demand" in basic education has been basically solved, the problem of "learning well" has become the focus of parents and society. People's demand for quality education is growing. Teachers are the key factor to determine the quality of education. The quality of teachers' teaching depends not only on their professional knowledge, teaching skills and professional ethics, but also on their creative behavior. It is the source power of teachers' professional development and an effective way to promote teachers' creative behavior and improve the quality of universities' education, and it also increase the requirement of transformational leadership style leader when today's universities facing more challenge than before.

This researcher aims to use a survey way to find the relationship between transformational leadership and creative behavior of teachers, and also found the mediating role of person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit. What's more, researcher also found that different demographic factors such as gender and age have significant effect on transformational leadership style of leaders toward subordinate teachers' perception, and there is no significant difference between different education level leaders' transformational leadership style toward their subordinate teacher's perception. For future research, researcher can apply transformational leadership style to different industries, and compare their difference. Then, they also can find more factors which may affect or be affected by transformational leadership style, and try to find how transformational leadership style deeply affect the performance of different kind teachers and universities at different industries.

## Recommendations

This paper found the relationship between transformational leadership and creative behavior of teachers, and also found the mediating role of person-organization fit and person-supervisor fit, based on a survey way in Chinese universities. In this research, researcher also found that different demographic factors such as gender and age have significant effect on transformational leadership style of leaders toward subordinate teachers' perception, and there is no significant difference between different education level leaders' transformational leadership style toward their subordinate teacher's perception. This research is significant for Chinese universities in today's Chinese society. This paper had contributed much to the universities when it is facing a complicated situation (COVID - 19 outbreak, new Chinese policy reform and cash shortage). At this moment, transformational leadership



leaders are playing a significant role in Chinese universities. They have much attention and ability to lead their follower to achieve target goals at this moment.

According to Chinese universities, they can apply this research to check whether they have transformational leadership leaders or not. And the leaders of Chinese universities also can know how to get good subordinate teachers to follow them to achieve goals. The shareholders of Chinese real universities can know how to select a good transformational leadership leader if they want this kind of leader to help them to change at this moment, and let transformational leadership leaders bring their subordinate teachers to create more new ideas to be different and more competitive in Chinese universities.

But this research also has some limitations. First of all, not all kinds of leadership in Chinese universities can be measured, check how they affect the creative idea of their staff. And then, because of the limitation, not all kinds of Chinese universities are applied in this research, and not all of the mediating factors are applied to check how they affect the relationship between leaders' transformational leadership and subordinate teachers' creative behavior. In future research, this limitation can be improved.

## References

- Alghamdi, M. G., Topp, R., & AlYami, M. S. (2018). The effect of gender on transformational leadership and job satisfaction among Saudi nurses. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 74(1), 119-127.
- Antonopoulou, H., Halkiopoulou, C., Barlou, O., & Beligiannis, G. N. (2021). Transformational leadership and digital skills in higher education institutes: during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Emerging Science Journal*, 5(1), 1-15.
- Azim, M. T., Fan, L., Uddin, M. A., Abdul Kader Jilani, M. M., & Begum, S. (2019). Linking transformational leadership with teachers' engagement in the creative process. *Management Research Review*, 42(7), 837-858.
- Boamah, S. A., Laschinger, H. K. S., Wong, C., & Clarke, S. (2018). Effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and patient safety outcomes. *Nursing Outlook*, 66(2), 180-189.
- Buil, I., Martínez, E., & Matute, J. (2019). Transformational leadership and employee performance: The role of identification, engagement and proactive personality. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 77(2), 64-75.
- Cetin, M. O., & Kinik, F. S. F. (2015). An analysis of academic leadership behavior from the perspective of transformational leadership. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 207(1), 519-527.
- Chen, C., Yu, C., & Zhang, Y. (2020). The Transformational Leadership of Water-Intensive Enterprises to Social Loafing: The Mediating Role of Person-Organization Fit. *Journal of Coastal Research*, 104(SI), 940-944.
- Chi, N. W., & Pan, S. Y. (2012). A multilevel investigation of missing links between transformational leadership and task performance: The mediating roles of perceived person-job fit and person-organization fit. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 27(1), 43-56.
- Herman, H. M., & Chiu, W. C. (2014). Transformational leadership and job performance: A social identity perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(1), 2827-2835.
- Hogg, M. A. (2001). A social identity theory of leadership. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 5(3), 184-200.
- Khan, A., Bibi, S., Lyu, J., Garavelli, A. C., Pontrandolfo, P., & Perez Sanchez, M. D. A. (2020). Uncovering innovativeness in spanish tourism firms: The role of transformational leadership, OCB, firm size, and age. *Sustainability*, 12(10), 3989.
- Klaic, A., Burtcher, M. J., & Jonas, K. (2018). Person-supervisor fit, needs-supplies fit, and team fit as mediators of the relationship between dual-focused transformational leadership and well-being in scientific teams. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 27(5), 669-682.



- Kwon, J. O., & Kang, J. M. (2019). The Effect of Person-Environment Fit (Person-Job Fit, Person-Organization Fit, Person-Supervisor Fit) and Job Embeddedness on Turnover Intention in Clinical Nurses'. *Journal of the Korea Convergence Society*, 10(3), 307-317.
- Lai, F. Y., Tang, H. C., Lu, S. C., Lee, Y. C., & Lin, C. C. (2020). Transformational leadership and job performance: the mediating role of work engagement. *SAGE Open*, 10(1), 1-11.
- Le, B. P., Lei, H., Phouvang, S., Than, T. S., Nguyen, T. M. A., & Gong, J. (2018). Self-efficacy and optimism mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and knowledge sharing. *Social Behavior and Personality: an International Journal*, 46(11), 1833-1846.
- Mahmood, M., Uddin, M.A., & Fan, L. (2019). The influence of transformational leadership on teachers' creative process engagement: A multi-level analysis, *Management Decision*, 57(3), 741-764.
- Munir, F., & Aboidullah, M. (2018). Gender Differences in Transformational Leadership Behaviors of School Principals and Teachers' Academic Effectiveness. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 40(1), 99-113.
- Top, C., Abdullah, B. M. S., & Faraj, A. H. M. (2020). Transformational leadership impact on teachers' performance. *Eurasian Journal of Management & Social Sciences*, 1(1), 49-59.