

# Influence of Social Environment and Principal's Leadership on Teaching Achievement in Private Vocational Education in Nanchang, China

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**To Link this Article:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v15-i6/25816> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v15-i6/25816

**Published Date:** 25 June 2025

## Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to interrelate the social environment, principal leadership style, and teaching accomplishments in independent vocational education institutions in Nanchang, China. By means of well-designed and closed-end questionnaire, data was collected from 384 respondents of six vocational schools in Nanchang. The questionnaire, adopted from reliable previous studies, was carefully designed to measure the demography, social environment, principal leadership styles, and teaching achievement dimensions (respective to teaching performance, student satisfaction, skills acquisition and employability). The study makes use of the Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS) for analysis, incorporating descriptive statistics to address the first objective, providing data on the existing state of things and profile of the sampled institutions. To achieve the second objective, inferential analysis, i.e. correlation analysis was carried out on the basis of collected data to investigate on relationship between the social environment, principal leadership styles and teaching achievement. The third and fourth objectives were to perform a regression analysis to determine the impact of social environment and principal leadership on teaching achievement. This sample is selected purposively from six vocational colleges, and each college represents an equal portion of the population. These colleges include Nanchang Vocational University, Jiangxi University of Software Professional Technology, Jiangxi Tellhow Animation College, Jiangxi University of Science and Technology, Jiangxi Technology Business Polytechnic, Nanchang Vocation Institute of Film and Television Communication etc. The proposed study aims to provide valuable information on the dynamics of private vocational education in Nanchang, which would provide practical implications for educational leaders, policymakers, and practitioners. By using a strong methodology and concentrating on one cluster of leadership styles, the research was intended to offer fine-grained suggestions to improve the social ecology, the leadership effectiveness and the teaching success of the private secondary vocational education institutions in Nanchang. Results showed that transformational leadership and a supportive social context were positively related to teaching effectiveness, while constrained

opportunities to learn from multiple sources and differences in leadership quality were unbeneficial. Recommendations include increased industry alliances, leadership development opportunities, and the need to address resource disparities for better academic performance.

**Keywords:** The Social Environment, the Principal's Leadership, Teaching Achievement

### **Introduction**

The goal of the current study is to investigate the interaction between social context and principal leadership on the achievement of the instructional goal at Nanchang private TVET institutions in China (Jagers et al., 2019). In order to offer much-needed information to policymakers, educators, and school leaders, the study targets to investigate the link between the societal context, principal leadership and educational quality (Liu & Hallinger, 2018; Li, 2020). In particular, evidence from Park, Lee, and Cooc (2019) and Kaso (2021) shows that it is possible to contribute to improving private vocational education by examining the relationship between leadership style, teaching quality and external environment.

Educational Improvements in Nanchang; China; Jiangxi There have been praiseworthy educational developments in Nanchang, the provincial capital of Jiangxi, China as witnessed by Zhou (2022) and confirmed by Kaso (2021). Private vocational schools have been an important source of promoting educational development in this area by providing specialized education necessary for students in multiple fields (Qiao et al., 2018). Kaso (2021) underlines the importance of private vocational education in Nanchang schools.

When we look at the administration of private Vocational and Technical Education institutions, a major concern is on the leadership style of the principals, the decision-making skills of the principals and their roles in creating conducive learning environment and how it related to teaching and learning outcomes (Park, Lee, & Cooc, 2019; Kaso, 2021). The fact that administrators play a critical role in promoting a supportive school climate is emphasized by Qiao et al., (2018). Leadership types (including autocratic, authoritarian, democratic, laissez-faire, transactional, and hybrid) can strongly influence teaching performance and work to form the social climate of a university.

The main purpose of this study was to analyze the effects of social climate and leadership on students' academic performance at private vocational education institutions in Nanchang, China. The study aimed to investigate the effect of the social space on academic achievement, and to evaluate the role of the principal as a leader in the field. Seeking to improve the quality of private vocational education in Nanchang overall, the study sought to examine the complex connections between social context, educational principal leadership, and academic achievement. It was expected that the pursuit of these research goals would lead to the improvements of private secondary vocational school education, providing more effective educative services for the students and their schools in Nanchang.

By exploring the social atmosphere in the private VETIs, an overall model was established that provided explanation about the interrelationship of the various impacting factors on students' academic lives. Through factors of peer interactions, cultural norms, and institutional climate, the study examined how the contextual values influence student learning outcomes and ordinary student success (Guo et al., 2022).

This complex intervention study was aimed at tapping into existing social infrastructure on the one hand, and potential challenges/highlights in promoting continuous learning to enhance achievement and wellbeing on the other (Taff et al., 2022). Moreover, the study demonstrates the crucial role of leadership at the level of private vocational education institutions, especially leadership in principalship. The study aims to examine how the leadership styles and decision-making in tandem with organizational strategies of principals shape the education sub-sector. Given its objective, the purpose was to analyze the role of leadership practices in the context in which the learning environment is constructed and it is possible to empower from both by teachers and Users.

And thus, it was achievable to have higher academic results and operational results on the institution. The study reinforced the aim of this communication, in terms of finding up the optimum leadership practice and concerning improvement plans in the context of private vocational education institutions environment (Mohd Adnan et al., 2019). What makes the project look so different is, it was never about improving academics for the student by way of giving quality education. The study, along with the study, took a holistic process to explore the complex interplay involving the social context, principal leadership, and academic achievement. To construct an integrated view of the various educational problems occurring in private VET, the study applied multidisciplinary perspectives and methodologies that bring together various dimensions that constitute the education field (Taylor et al., 2021). It sought to unveil the underlying web of relations between social context, leadership correlates, and student outcomes, knowing that the spectrum of influences bearing on the learning process is vast. Through the iterative series of analyses and synthesis of the empirical evidence, the study has sought to generation and provide the targeted information and specific recommendations for the betterment of the educational practices and policies in the private vocational education of Nanchang.

Finally, this research aimed to contribute to the current discussion on education quality and reform in Nanchang by adding important insights to the knowledge pool of what factors influence student outcomes among students of PVEIs. This study explored the social context around interactional dimensions and effective leadership that contribute to educational outcomes in order to provide interventions programs, and the programs that are effective may improve the academic achievement level and equity in Nanchang private vocational colleges. Aim of the Research The collaborative research and engagement of stakeholders aimed to create a culture of continuous improvement in education in Nanchang. The study hypotheses are:

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a significant relationship between the social environment and teaching achievement in private vocational education institutions in Nanchang, China.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a significant relationship between the principal's leadership and teaching achievement in private vocational education institutions in Nanchang, China.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is a significant influence of social environment towards teaching achievement in private vocational education in Nanchang, China.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is a significant influence of principal's leadership towards teaching achievement of private vocational education institutions in Nanchang, China.

**Literature Review**

Characteristics of the social environment in private vocational education in China It can be seen that the vocational education of private Sphere in China the social background is a complex and is an important point as the face of the China education. It addresses so many things like the company culture, colleague engagement, constituent engagement and support structures. Some are defined on educated masses Li et al. (2023). But organizational culture, for example, mediates the environment for organizational matters —the way things are done— how you teach and student teacher relationships. Tran (2023) further notes that the organizational culture is the foundation to success in developing the collaboration and sharing among stakeholders and also student learning.

Once more, the social context of PVE institutions in Nanchang, China was a complicated system, the factors in the system are interrelated and both of them can influence the performance of the students together. It reaches into extracurricular life and the relationships, mind-sets and advancement opportunities that students are presented. A significant feature of this environment is the organizational culture, that is characterized by the shared values, norms, and routines that direct actions within an organization (Lubis et al., 2020). The culture of private vocational education organisations is affected by the history of the institution, leadership practices and stakeholder demands.

Simultaneously, peer networks which represent another feature of the social environment, emphasize the value of cooperative learning and knowledge exchange among students. As expressed by Lim (2020), to illuminate the influence of peer interaction on academic tier and pupil motivation. More generally, particularly in the Chinese further education which lays stress on practical skills and industrial knowledge, peer cooperation benefits students from the development of the skills to improving their overall education. So, Kang (2024) states. The more that campusa are conscientious about providing a positive student environment that encourages diversity, the more likely students will have opportunities to assist one another to achieve academic success (Whitmer, 2021). Such multi-dimensional analysis of social environment reflects as a comprehensive understanding, which is naturally formed by integrating various authors with opposing views and a latter circumstance, there is no need to treat it as one.

An open organizational culture dwelling on transparency, togetherness and innovation encourages students to be more involved in their own learning through the powers of motivation, cooperation and solidarity (Sethi, 2024). Peer relationships are also influential in determin~ing the social climate in vocational schools. Interactive peer relations foster sharing of knowledge, mutual support, and the learning and practice of social competencies such as maintaining conversations, working in groups and dealing with disputes (Tinto et al., 2020). Sometimes, peer interaction can also present obstacles such as peer pressure, social isolation, and bullying, that can affect adversely students well-being and learning achievement.

*Top of Form*

Botelho (2020) consolidates these cover values, beliefs, principles, guidelines and practices held in common by members of the academic communities. The private higher vocational education institutions' organisational culture in China is subject to cultural traditions, social

values and historical inertia, which are unique to the locality. This according to Khan et al. (2020) suggest that the current organizational environment plays a crucial role in the type of social climate of a learning community. The power of school culture should not be minimized in providing a context for learning, nurturing, and mitigating the tensions that may exist between students and between students and teachers.

One of the elements of peer interaction as described by Kupers et al. (2020): The students with each other in their groups would likely work together, target the same experiences and quite possibly even interact with each other. Student-to-student interaction in Chinese private vocational education is conditioned by a combination of cultural elements, such as collectivism and the social stratification. It is in these engagements that the nurturing intercourse is developed that like the fertile soil prompts academic and personal maturation. For good educational environment such positive attitude among students towards their peers should be increased. Friends, exchange of thought are established a good goodwill environment of education<sup>37</sup>.

Student engagement Chukwuedo et al. (2021), is an existing phenomenon of students engaged in learning and serves as a foundation to private vocational education. The history and background of teacher-student relationships in China is the most direct influence of getting Chinese students involved in teaching and learning. As Amerstorfer and others (2012) posit, the need for trust, respect and communication in successful student engagement (and learning) is a lesson in itself for learners. Teachers who develop positive relationships with their students freely help to make classroom conducive for learning, and this effort will motivate the students more to work towards attaining excellence in their academic pursuits.

**Theoretical Framework**

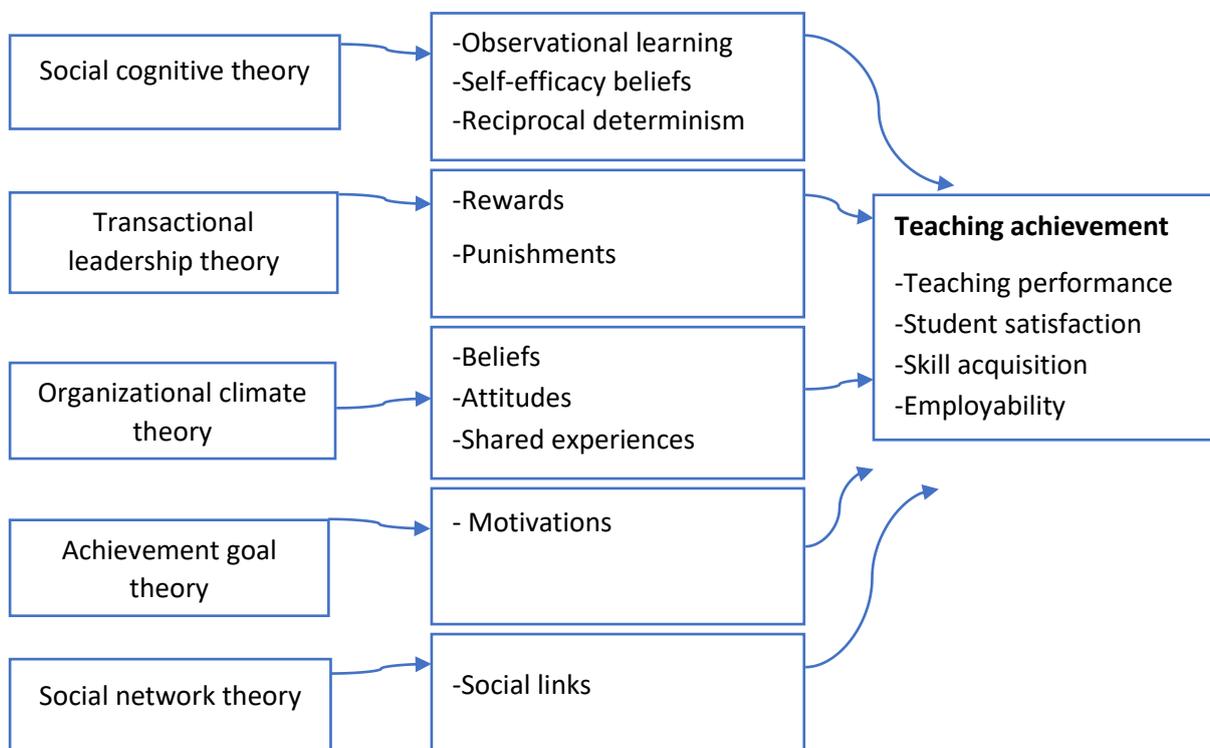


Figure 1: Theoretical framework

**Conceptual Framework**

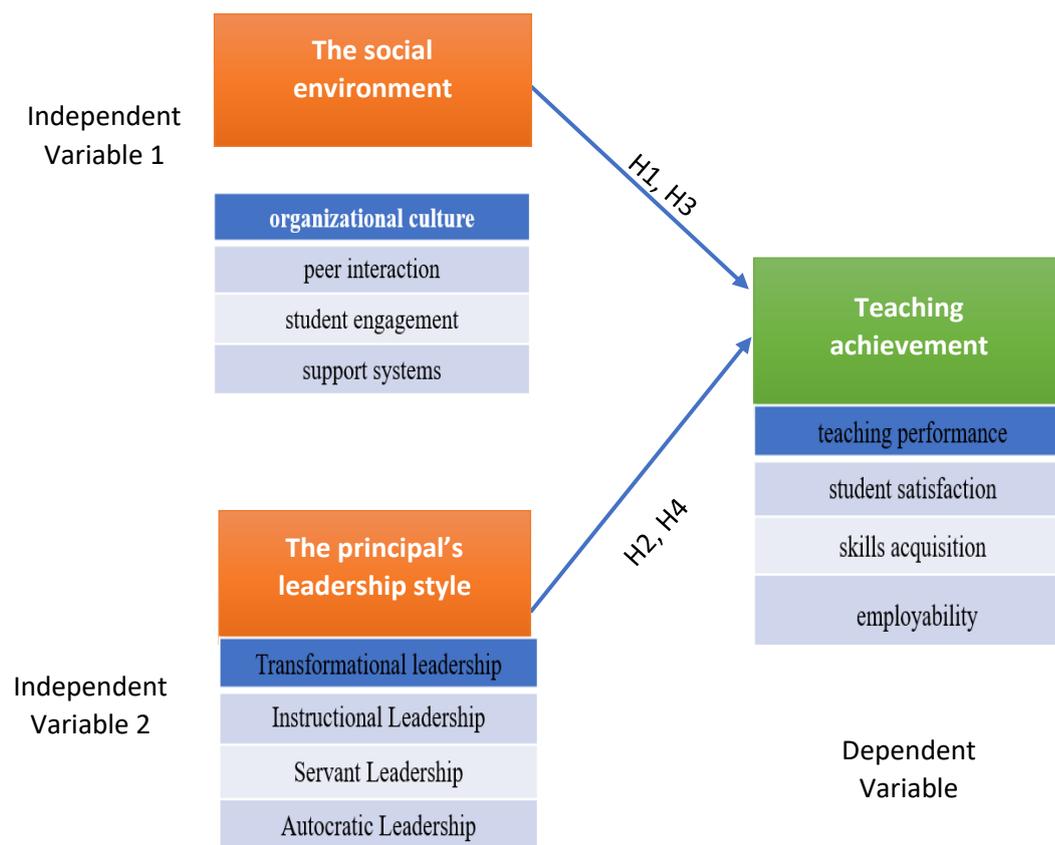


Figure 2.2: The Conceptual framework

**Research Methodology**

In this research, quantitative research methods were used to examine exactly how much the social environment and the principal's leadership all influence the teaching achievement of Nanchang's private vocational programs. Quantitative methodology allows for an objective analysis, wide data gathering, and for reaching out to the mutual effects of the variables in order to have a holistic picture of educational dynamics. In order to assess the relationships among the social environment, principal leadership, and teaching performance in Nanchang's private vocational education schools, quantitative data was gathered and tested.

The calculation sample size for this paper is N= 384 with a population 77,905 students as represented in the Table 3.1 Sample size calculation due Krejcie, J.R., & Morgan, D.W.(1970). This approach was applied to determine the adequate sample size in relation to the target population size and the desired confidence level. In addition, in order to retain responses to cover every question and to allow for any possible errors in the filling out of the questionnaires,400 were initially selected to represent the target population. So we have this extra buffer here to account for incomplete, or incorrect responses.

Descriptive analytics was used to analyze the demographic information obtained from the study participants and to test RQ1: The social environment, principal's leadership styles, and teaching achievements in private vocational colleges in Nanchang, China.

The inferential analysis in the present study contained correlation and regression analysis (multiple linear regression utilized), which was an immediate way to answer research questions. The linear relationship between those parameters, based on the questionnaire, was analysed with use of Pearson's correlation coefficient.

### Results and Analysis

Predictor	Teaching Performance	Student Satisfaction	Skills Acquisition	Employability
<b>SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT</b>				
Organizational Culture	$r = .103^* / \beta = .009$ ( $p < .001$ )	$r = .078 / \beta = .009$ ( $p = .000$ )	$r = .073 / \beta = .019$ ( $p = .000$ )	$r = .406^{**} / \beta = .109$ ( $p = .000$ )
Peer Interaction	$r = .115^* / \beta = .203$ ( $p < .001$ )	$r = .029 / \beta = .212$ ( $p = .000$ )	$r = .089 / \beta = .103$ ( $p = .000$ )	$r = .490^{**} / \beta = .103$ ( $p = .000$ )
Student Engagement	$r = .128^* / \beta = .009$ ( $p < .001$ )	$r = .113^* / \beta = .012$ ( $p = .000$ )	$r = .124^* / \beta = .019$ ( $p = .000$ )	$r = 1.000^{**} / \beta = .069$ ( $p = .000$ )
Support Systems	$r = .128^* / \beta = .009$ ( $p < .001$ )	$r = .018 / \beta = .008$ ( $p = .000$ )	$r = .110^* / \beta = .009$ ( $p = .000$ )	$r = .074 / \beta = .049$ ( $p = .000$ )
<b>PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP</b>				
Transformational	$r = .010 / \beta = .019$ ( $p = .203$ )	$r = .051 / \beta = .009$ ( $p = .100$ )	$r = .153^{**} / \beta = -$	$r = .153^{**} / \beta = -$
Instructional	$r = .050 / \beta = .203$ ( $p = .123$ )	$r = .078 / \beta = .903$ ( $p = .231$ )	$r = .080 / \beta = -$	$r = .080 / \beta = -$
Servant	$r = .062 / \beta = .009$ ( $p = .342$ )	$r = .039 / \beta = .109$ ( $p = .210$ )	$r = .092 / \beta = -$	$r = .092 / \beta = -$
Autocratic	$r = .030 / \beta = .009$ ( $p = .023$ )	$r = .020 / \beta = .009$ ( $p = .111$ )	$r = .046 / \beta = -$	$r = .046 / \beta = -$

The study of the relationship between the social environment and teaching achievement of private secondary vocational schools in Nanchang, China presents the following main findings: the peer interaction and students' engagement play an important role in predicting learning achievement of students as evidenced by multiple indicators. Peer dialogue was a particularly strong predictor; it was highly positively correlated with teaching performance ( $r = 0.115$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and very significantly related to employability ( $r = 0.490$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Regression analyses supported this, showing that peer interaction had the largest standardized effect  $\beta$  ( $= 0.203$ ,  $p < .001$ ) on the teaching effectiveness as well as significantly contributes to students' satisfaction, skills development and employability. Student engagement also indicated significant positive correlations and regression effects on all dimensions of teaching achievement, especially on employability ( $r = 1.000$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), thus highlighting the important role played by active-learning participation and involvement in preparing students for the workplace.

Organizational culture and support, however, had smaller effect sizes on teaching performance, despite being statistically significant. Significant positive correlation is found between organizational culture and employability ( $r = 0.406$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) indicating that an integrated nurturing institutional culture makes students employable. But its immediate effects on teaching quality, student satisfaction, and skill learning is small. Support systems also were influential contributors, although to a lesser extent, on teaching ( $\beta = 0.009$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and skill transferability ( $\beta = 0.009$ ,  $p = .000$ ). These results suggest that while the

existence of support structures and institutional values are important, their direct influence on teaching outcomes is less than that of peer and engagement effects, emphasizing the role of social learning patterns as much as of structural mechanisms.

With respect to the principal's leadership, there were consistently weak to moderate correlations between leadership styles and teaching performance measures. Transformational leadership was found to be correlated in a small to moderate but significant way with skills acquisition and employability ( $r = 0.153$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ) implying that it plays some role in creating student competencies and career readiness. Yet, the results of the regressions suggested that no leadership style (i.e., transformational, servant, autocratic) had strong and statistically significant direct effects on teaching performance and student satisfaction. Instructional Management demonstrated the largest standardized beta ( $\beta = 0.203$ ) for teaching performance, however, it's not significant ( $p = 0.123$ ). These findings imply that although types of leadership may have secondary effects or may work through larger institutional climate as mediators, they do not have the same direct impact on measurable teaching results as the more proximal and interactive social environment factors.

### **Conclusion**

This research offers researchers and educators an overall view of the Status Quo in Internet and New Media department at Jiangxi University of Software Professional Technology and helps in understanding what is happening to vocational education. The result highlights the fact that experiential learning experience and incorporation of new technologies in the curriculum are essential to prepare students for the modern workforce. The report also emphasises the importance of industry collaboration and government policy in determining quality and relevance in vocational education.

It also found some problem areas, specifically in terms of resources (not enough of them) and the curriculum not being closely enough aligned with industry. The authors acknowledge that the limitations of the study—limited to one school, inability to track cohort data for long-term impact—provide opportunities for future research as to the scope and implications of vocational education.

Finally, as the research suggests, there are still more space for updating the educational system, the curriculum and the international, the industry and the government support to promote the development of vocational education in China. The results of this study add to the larger discussion of what can be done to improve the quality and efficacy of vocational education, and serve as a template for other schools that wish to enhance their curriculum and prepare students for the demands of an increasingly dynamic workplace.

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