

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FACULTY OF NURSING TEACHERS' PERCEIVED LEADERSHIP AFFINITY AND WORK ENGAGEMENT IN SHANDONG YINGCAI COLLEGE, CHINA

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Abstract: This study aimed to determine the levels of teachers' perceived leadership affinity and their work engagement at Faculty of Nursing Program in Shandong Yingcai College, and to compare the differences with different demographic background variables, as well as to explore the correlation between nursing teachers' perceived leadership affinity and work engagement in Shandong Yingcai College. The study took all the nursing teachers of Shandong Yingcai College as the research object, a total of 168 valid questionnaires were collected through convenient sampling method to conduct the statistical analysis. The findings were as follows: (1) The overall level of teachers' perceived leadership affinity in Shandong Yingcai College was high, while the overall level of work engagement was medium; (2) There were significant differences in nursing teachers' perceived leadership affinity with different genders, ages, professional titles, and teaching years; (3) There were significant differences in nursing teachers' work engagement with different ages, professional titles and teaching years; (4) There was a significant positive correlation between perceived leadership affinity and work engagement. Discussion around each finding and the recommendations for the nursing teachers in Shandong Yingcai College were provided.

Keywords: Nursing Teachers, Leadership Affinity, Work Engagement

Introduction

With the increasing pressure on employees and more and more work tasks, organizations are also actively looking for ways to improve employees' work mood and enhance their work engagement. At present, in the field of organizational management, the leader's leadership style has become a hot topic of discussion. The relationship between superiors and subordinates is a variable describing the relationship between employees and leaders. The use of leader affinity will increase the communication between leaders and employees. As a new leadership style, leader affinity is an effective weapon for

managers to enhance employees' work engagement. Leaders amuse employees by joking and telling funny stories to enhance employees' work enthusiasm and enthusiasm (Martin et al., 2003).

International scholars have studied the academic theme of affinity leadership for many years. At the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, researchers represented by Malone (1980) showed great interest in workplace humor. They tried to combine workplace humor with organizational leadership to discuss the role of leadership affinity in organizations. The empirical study found that leadership affinity can improve employees' subjective well-being and job performance (Mei & Xu, 2016), which revealed that leadership affinity can have a positive effect on employees and improve their work engagement.

Teachers, as the creators of school educational practice and its historical process, are the main force driving the work of the school, and their active engagement is the key to the success of educational change in schools. Teachers' work engagement is a positive psychology and state, which can effectively reduce and alleviate work pressure, burnout and leaving behavior, and improve personal and school performance. However, at present, Chinese college teachers are in a state of load and perseverance, and their professional survival is not optimistic (Liu, 2020). The survey data found that Chinese teachers work 45.3 hours per week, the longest working hours in the world, and various professional development activities are up to 62.8 days in a year, which is twice as much as the international average, but the satisfaction level is lower than the international average (Chen, 2017). Shandong Province in order to further promote the high-quality development of higher education, vocational education, the end of 2022 to establish universities, disciplines, specialties, after the construction of a quality monitoring system, in 2023 to start a new round of education teaching audit and evaluation work, continue to improve the school internal evaluation reform and teaching quality assurance system, the work of the teachers put forward a higher demand. In the face of heavy work pressure, college teachers in the schoolwork may appear to reduce the input, mechanical input, negative input and so on, unhealthy working mood and state will bring negative impact on the teachers' body and mind, teachers even appeared to be not conducive to the development of the school of the reverse input. Therefore, to enhance and maintain teachers' positive work input is the realistic demand for the smooth development of education in schools.

In recent years, Shandong Yingcai College, in order to strengthen the construction of teaching management team and improve the comprehensive quality and business ability of school managers, has gradually carried out the training of school managers on the topic of business literacy capacity enhancement, and promoted the application and sharing of high-quality teaching management experience and achievements within the school to better serve the work of teachers in the school. This study focuses on the current situation of perceived leadership affinity and work engagement of nursing teachers in Shandong Yingcai College and investigates the correlation between perceived leadership

affinity and work engagement of college teachers.

Research Objectives

(1) To identify the current level of nursing teachers' perceived leadership affinity at Faculty of Nursing in Shandong Yingcai College, China.

(2) To identify the level of nursing teachers' work engagement at Faculty of Nursing in Shandong Yingcai College, China.

(3) To compare the differences in nursing teachers' perceived leadership affinity and work engagement with different background variables (gender, age, education, title, and years of teaching experience) in Shandong Yingcai College, China.

(4) To explore the correlation between nursing teachers' perceived leadership affinity and their work engagement in Shandong Yingcai College, China.

Literature Review

Research Related to The Concept of Leadership Affinity

According to Wang (2023), affinity and humor leadership refers to the positive and positive words and actions to make employees laugh, bring a relaxed and pleasant organizational atmosphere, so that employees are more able to feel the ease and pleasure of the workplace, so that they can cope with the work with a positive attitude, as far as individuals are concerned, affinity and humor leadership has a positive role in promoting the attitudes and well-being of the employees. Meanwhile, Guo (2021) believed that affinity leadership humor refers to a kind of affinity, positive, proactive, benign humor, leaders voluntarily use verbal or non-verbal ways to interpret the events in a humorous way, so as to amuse the employees. This way can ease the tension of the staff, enhance the interaction with the staff, and bring the relationship with the staff closer. Leadership affinity creates a relaxed and happy atmosphere, adapting to the needs of today's enterprises in which employees want to relieve stress, is a new style of leadership in line with the times, and is welcomed by employees. Jia & Liu (2021) pointed out that there are three characteristics of affinity humor leadership, one is on behalf of the leader's goodwill gesture of goodwill, the second is able to create a relaxing and pleasant atmosphere, and the third is to a certain extent to the traditional norms of a slight violation.

Zhu, Xi & Su (2019) pointed out that "affinity" is not equal to "humor", humor is a kind of intentional behavior of an individual who aims to make others laugh by sharing funny behaviors, and the success of the effect of humor relies on the experience and judgment of the receiver himself, while the affinity character cannot be formed easily through intentional performance, but slowly emanates from the inside and outside the temperament in daily life, and intentional imitation only makes people feel pretentious. The success of the humor depends on the recipient's own experience and judgment,

and the affinity of the character is not formed easily through intentional performances, but in daily life slowly from the inside out of the temperament, deliberate imitation will only make people feel pretentious, so the affinity leader is a very easy to get along with people in life, they communicate with people in communication and exchange and interaction, often in the position of the other party, this character makes its relationship with most people This character makes their relationship with most people more harmonious. In the development of strategy text, establish goals, affinity leadership will often take into full account the possibility of reality, have a clear goal, in the subordinate specific completion process, can take the initiative to greet, to provide as much help as possible; affinity leadership psychological characteristics are not good at criticizing, comfortable with the status quo, good at accommodating and tolerant of other people, and used to the internalization of the problem, and at the same time, affinity leadership is very much attached to the team's harmonious atmosphere.

Tan (2013) claimed that the affinity of the leader is to mingle with the staff, the staff as relatives, no official tone, no frame, no perfunctory, treating people in a humane way, more to find the advantages of subordinates, more understanding of the difficulties of subordinates, more to help subordinates solve problems, affinity should be a leader should have the basic qualities of the foundation of its leadership and complementary, in addition to the attention should also be paid to, on the Leader affinity, if you can't deal with things fairly, just use the skills of affinity and power, but also not enough to maintain cohesion in the long run.

Research Related to The Concept of Work Engagement

Ma (2023) stated that the concept of work engagement is a positive and complete emotional and cognitive state related to work. Liang (2023) pointed out that work engagement is a positive and persistent emotional cognitive state of work, which can be divided into three levels: dedication, vitality and focus. Li (2023) explained that a monograph means that an individual can feel happy in his work, concentrate on his work and reach the level of selflessness, and is unwilling to withdraw from his work and do other things. Wu (2023) pointed out that work engagement is an organization in which individuals combine their own and work roles, put their energy into work, and fully display their own state in the organization. It reflects employees' active physical, cognitive and emotional involvement in work. Individuals with high degree of work engagement, whether working alone or with others, they will have strong physical activity, have a keen and concentrated sense of consciousness, and be able to communicate emotionally with work and other personnel in the organization.

Lei (2022) defined work engagement from three perspectives, i.e., self and work role fitness, personal resource engagement, and the opposite side of burnout, and argues that the third is the most operational, i.e., work engagement is to some extent a manifestation of the opposite side of burnout. Extending to the teaching profession, teachers' work engagement refers to the positive emotional and cognitive state of teaching and learning, which is manifested in the behavior of vigor, dedication and

concentration on teaching and learning. Recently, Rong (2023) pointed out that work engagement is a positive psychological state, which belongs to the scope of organizational behavior research, in the scope of positive psychology, managers should be more concerned about the positive psychological factors of the employees, because the positive psychology can better promote the improvement of employee satisfaction and the completion of the work performance, so as to promote the development of the organization. In the work, employees are fully committed to the process of work, through self-efforts and struggles, to express the true feelings of individuals, so as to focus on the process of work, while personal disengagement refers to the inability of employees to be fully engaged in their work roles, and there is a clear boundary with the role of the work of the employees, about the employees of personal disengagement is mainly from the employee's self-defense and self-effacement.

Introduction to the Nursing Program at Shandong Yingcai College

Established in June 1998, Shandong Yingcai College has 10 faculties and departments, 39 undergraduate majors and 42 specialized majors, with more than 20,000 teachers and students, and has a certain reputation and influence in the industry. The goal of Shandong Yingcai College is to effectively solve the fundamental problem of "what kind of people to train, how to train people, and for whom to train people", to take up the sacred responsibility of educating people for the Party and the country, and to realize its own healthy development along with the economic and social development of the country. The party committee of private colleges and universities is in charge of the direction of school running, ideology, ideological and political construction, and major social responsibilities, so as to ensure that the political direction is not deviated, the growth of students does not fall behind, and the high-quality development is not derailed.

Nursing major for Shandong Province, private higher education characteristics of the school professional construction projects, is the school's key construction specialties. There are 64 teachers, including 29 teachers with the title of associate senior or above or doctoral degree, and 100% of the lecturers have the title of lecturer or above or master's degree or doctoral degree. The college has created a student education and management service system which is based on the principle of "building a moral character" and provides all-around services for students' growth and success through the five frameworks of creating a brand (Nightingale brand), building a system (comprehensive quality credit), building a mode (school and college common education, home and school common education), providing a platform (personalized cultivation), and caring for a group (special student group). Teachers of nursing program in Shandong Yingcai College show a better trend of work engagement and higher motivation.

Methodology

In this study, the total population of nursing teachers from Shandong Yingcai University was

384, who were selected as the research objects. Referring to Morgan (1970)'s requirements for sample size, 190 nursing teachers were given questionnaires. 168 valid questionnaires were recovered, with a recovery rate of 89%. Based on the literature read, the Questionnaire on the Relationship between Perceived Leadership Affinity and Job Engagement of Nursing Teachers in Shandong Yingcai College of China was developed. In addition to the personal basic information of college nursing teachers, the perception of leadership affinity questionnaire adopts the seven level Likert scale method, from 1 to 7, representing very inconformity, inconformity, slightly inconformity, uncertainty, slightly consistent, consistent, very consistent.

The work engagement questionnaire adopts a 7-point Likert scoring system. From 1-5, it represents very non-conformance, non-conformance, uncertainty, conformance, and very conformance, all of which are integer values from 1 to 5 (the larger the value, the stronger the importance). The respondents to the questionnaire need to fill in based on their own real situation.

Results

Demographic Analysis of the Respondents

Table 1: Basic Information on The Distribution of The Sample

Demographic Variables	Group	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	28	16.7
	Female	140	83.3
Age	25 Years and Under	15	8.9
	26-30 Years Old	109	64.9
	31-40 Years Old	32	19.0
	41-55 Years	2	1.2
	56 and Over	10	6.0
Educational Background	Diploma	0	0
	Undergraduate	10	6.0
	Master's Degree	122	72.6
	Doctoral Degree	36	21.4
Title	No Title	87	51.8
	Junior Level	42	25.0
	Intermediate Level	16	9.5
	Senior Level	23	13.7
Years of Teaching	5 Years and Under	105	62.5
	6-10 Years	43	25.6
	11-20 Years	7	4.2
	21 Years and Over	13	7.7

The researcher collected 168 valid questionnaires filled out by nursing teachers, and through the questionnaire filling out data, the nursing teachers of Shandong Yingcai College who participated in the survey were mostly female, and the number of female teachers in the survey sample was 140, more than 80% of the total number of female teachers, and the number of male teachers was only 28.

From the age distribution of nursing teachers, 64.9% of the teachers are between 26-30 years old, 32 teachers are between 31-40 years old, accounting for 19.0%, 15 teachers are 25 years old and below, accounting for 8.9%, 10 teachers are 56 years old and above, accounting for 6.0%, and there are only 2 teachers between 41-55 years old. In terms of educational qualifications, most nursing teachers have master's degree, numbering 122, or 72.6% of the total, 36 teachers have doctoral degree, or 21.4%, and 10 teachers have bachelor's degree. In terms of titles, the number of teachers with no titles or ungraded titles is the largest, with 87 teachers, accounting for 51.8% of the total, 42 teachers with junior titles, accounting for 25.0%, 23 teachers with senior titles, accounting for 13.7%, and the number of teachers with intermediate titles is the smallest, with 16 teachers. In terms of the number of years of teaching experience, 105 teachers, or 62.5% of the total sample, have been teaching for five years or less, 43 teachers, or 25.6% of the total sample, have been teaching for 6-10 years, 13 teachers, or 7.7%, have been teaching for 21 years or more, and the smallest number of teachers, or 7, have been teaching for 11-20 years.

The Current Level of Nursing Teachers' Perceived Leadership Affinity and Work Engagement

By analyzing the sample data with descriptive statistics, it can be seen that the overall mean value of nursing teachers' perceived leadership affinity was 5.59, indicating that nursing teachers' perceived leadership affinity level was high. Through the descriptive statistical analysis of the overall work engagement and the data of each item, the results of the analysis in also showed the overall mean value of the nursing teachers' work engagement was 4.13, indicating that the overall level of work engagement was high.

Differences in Nursing Teachers' Perceived Leadership Affinity

H1: There are significant differences in nursing teachers' perceived leadership affinity with different background variables (gender, age, education background, professional title, years of teaching) in Shandong Yingcai College, China.

According to the study hypothesis H1, independent samples t-test or one-way ANOVA was used to compare the differences in perceived leadership affinity of nursing teachers with different gender, age, education background, professional title and teaching years.

1) To compare the differences in perceived leadership affinity of nursing teachers of different genders, independent samples t-test method was used. The overall P value of perceived leadership affinity was 0.005, less than 0.01, reaching a significant level, indicating that teachers of different genders have significant differences in perceived leadership affinity, and female teachers have higher levels of perceived leadership affinity than male teachers.

2) To compare the differences of perceived leadership affinity among nursing teachers of different ages, one-way ANOVA was used. The overall P value of perceived leadership

affinity was 0.001, reaching a significant level, indicating that teachers of different ages have significant differences in perceived leadership affinity, and teachers aged 25 and below has the highest level of perceived leadership affinity.

3) To compare the differences in perceived leadership affinity of nursing teachers with different educational backgrounds, one-way ANOVA was used. The overall P value of perceived leadership affinity was 0.108, greater than 0.05, which did not reach a significant level, indicating that there is no significant difference between teachers with different educational backgrounds in perceived leadership affinity.

4) To compare the differences in perceived leadership affinity of nursing teachers with different professional titles, one-way ANOVA was used for testing. The overall P value of perceived leadership affinity was 0.029, less than 0.05, reaching a significant level, indicating that teachers with different professional titles have significant differences in perceived leadership affinity, and teachers with intermediate professional titles had the highest scores.

Differential Analysis of Nursing Teachers' Work Engagement

H2: There is a significant difference in nursing teachers' work engagement with different background variables (gender, age, educational background, professional title, years of teaching) in Shandong Yingcai College, China.

According to the study hypothesis H2, independent samples t-test or one-way ANOVA was used to compare the differences of work engagement levels of nursing teachers with different gender, age, education background, professional title and years of teaching.

1) To compare the differences of work input of nursing teachers of different genders, independent samples t-test method was used. The overall P value of work engagement was 0.056, greater than 0.05, which did not reach a significant level, indicating that there was no significant difference in the level of work engagement of teachers of different genders.

2) To compare the differences of work engagement levels of nursing teachers of different ages, one-way ANOVA was used. The overall P value of work engagement was 0.001, reaching a significant level, indicating that there are significant differences in the level of work engagement of teachers of different ages, and teachers aged 25 and below had the highest level of work engagement.

3) To compare the differences of work engagement levels of nursing teachers with different educational backgrounds, one-way ANOVA was used. The overall P value of work engagement was 0.070, greater than 0.05, which does not reach a significant level, indicating that there was no significant difference in the level of work engagement of teachers with different degrees.

4) To compare the differences of work engagement levels of nursing teachers with different professional titles, one-way ANOVA was used. The overall P value of work engagement was 0.025, less

than 0.05, reaching a significant level, indicating that there was a significant difference in the level of work engagement of teachers with different professional titles.

5) To compare the differences of work engagement levels of nursing teachers with different teaching years, one-way ANOVA. The overall P value of work engagement was 0.016, less than 0.05, reaching a significant level, indicating that there was a significant difference in the level of work engagement of teachers with different teaching years, and the level of work engagement of teachers with teaching years of 5 years or less was the highest.

Correlation Analysis between Nursing Faculty's Perceived Leadership Affinity and Work Engagement

According to the study hypothesis H3, Pearson correlation analysis method was used to verify whether there was a significant correlation between the perceived leadership affinity of nursing teachers and the level of work engagement. The analysis results are shown in Table 4.14. There was a significant positive correlation between perceived leadership affinity of nursing teachers and work engagement, with a correlation coefficient of 0.832. Among them, there was a positive correlation between teachers' perceived leadership affinity and various dimensions of work engagement to varying degrees, so the study hypothesis H3 was established.

Table 2: The Correlation between Teachers' Perceived Leadership Affinity and Work Engagement

Variables	Work Dynamics	Work Concentration	Work Dedication	Work Engagement
Relationship Building	0.759**	0.781**	0.769**	0.794**
Positive Emotions	0.747**	0.744**	0.763**	0.777**
Equal Status	0.749**	0.771**	0.760**	0.784**
Perceived Leadership Affinity	0.796**	0.810**	0.810**	0.832**

Note: *P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001.

Discussion

Based on the above findings, this study briefly discusses the following aspects.

The findings of this study found that nursing faculty had overall higher levels of perceived leadership affinity and higher overall levels of work engagement, consistent with the findings of Min (2019) and Hui (2022). In the context of the whole educational change, teachers cannot be alone, and teachers' workload increases, which adversely affects teachers' level of work engagement (Tian & Zeng, 2021).

Through difference analysis, the study found that there were significant differences in perceived leadership affinity among teachers of different genders, and the perceived leadership affinity level of female teachers was higher than that of male teachers. There are significant differences in perceived leadership affinity among teachers of different ages. The overall trend is that the older the teachers are,

the lower the perceived leadership affinity level is. This may be because young teachers are more concerned by leaders and have more daily communication with leaders due to their unskilled business and insufficient teaching experience (Mao, 2017).

There was no significant difference in perceived leadership affinity among teachers with different educational backgrounds. Teachers with different professional titles have significant differences in perceived leadership affinity, and teachers with intermediate professional titles have the highest scores. There were significant differences in the level of relationship building perceived by teachers with different teaching years, and with the growth of teaching years, teachers' perceived leadership affinity level is lower. There was no significant difference in the level of teachers' work engagement between different genders, which is inconsistent with the research results of Peng (2019).

The reason may be the difference caused by different research samples. There are significant differences in the level of work engagement of teachers of different ages. In general, the level of work engagement of young teachers is high, which is similar to the research results of Wang and Wang (2022). This showed that there was no significant difference in the level of work engagement of teachers with different educational backgrounds. There are significant differences in the level of teachers' work engagement with different professional titles. Teachers without professional titles or without grades have the highest scores.

On the whole, the higher the professional titles, the lower the level of teachers' work engagement, which is consistent with the empirical research results of Zhu (2013). There were significant differences in the level of work input of teachers with different teaching years. Teachers with five years or less of teaching years have the highest level of work input. With the increase of teaching years, the level of work input of teachers decreases. Because teachers with short teaching years lack practical teaching and scientific research knowledge, and have limited experience accumulation, more time and energy are needed to meet the challenges in work.

Through Pearson correlation analysis, the study found that there was a significant positive correlation between perceived leadership affinity and work engagement of nursing teachers, and there was also a positive correlation between perceived leadership affinity and various dimensions of work engagement to varying degrees. With the improvement of perceived leadership affinity, teachers' work engagement level is getting higher and higher, and existing research has reached the same conclusion (Ge, 2016; Jiang, 2020).

Affirmative leadership humor can make the working atmosphere in colleges and universities more pleasant through the transmission of humor. Teachers are affected by the humor style and become relaxed physically and mentally. In this process, they can improve their own work autonomy, which is conducive to teachers' involvement in work tasks with a full emotional state, and effectively stimulate teachers' interest in work, so as to increase the level of devotion to work emotionally and energetically.

Conclusions

In this study, firstly, by organizing the literature related to leadership affinity and work engagement, we found that there is a correlation between teachers' leadership affinity and work engagement. Secondly, the research subjects were identified, and the scale of teachers' leadership affinity and work engagement was designed. Finally, the data analysis method was used to justify the study hypothesis, and the following conclusions were obtained by statistically organizing and analyzing the data in the questionnaire and the results of the study.

1) From the current situation of leadership affinity and work engagement of nursing teachers in Shandong Yingcai College, nursing teachers have a higher level of perceived leadership affinity and a higher overall level of work engagement.

2) From the perspective of differences in perceived leadership affinity of nursing teachers under different demographic background variables, there are significant differences in perceived leadership affinity of nursing teachers of different genders, ages, professional titles, and teaching years, while there are no significant differences in perceived leadership affinity of nursing teachers of different educational backgrounds.

3) From the perspective of different demographic background variables, there are significant differences in the level of work engagement of nursing teachers of different ages, professional titles, and teaching years, while there are no significant differences in the level of work engagement of teachers of different genders and educational backgrounds.

4) From the perspective of the correlation between perceived leadership affinity and work engagement of nursing teachers, there is a significant positive correlation between perceived leadership affinity and work engagement.

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