

# THE RELATIONSHIP STUDY OF TEACHER'S PERCEPTION OF THEIR LEADERSHIP CAPACITY AND TEACHING COMPETENCE AT BAOSHAN EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL, SHANGHAI, CHINA

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**Abstract:** The primary purpose of this research study was to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and competence at Baoshan Experimental School, Shanghai, China. The research instrument was a questionnaire for investigating the teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and competence adopted from the previous studies. A total of 120 teachers who were full-time teachers working at the school participated in this study during the academic year of 2020.

Mean and Standard Deviation were used to identify teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and determine teachers' level of competence. Then, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was then used to determine the significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of leadership capacity and their competence.

The findings showed that teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and professional competence were high. Moreover, the correlation analysis result showed a strong positive relationship between teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and competence at Baoshan Experimental School, Shanghai, China.

**Keywords:** Teachers' Perceptions; Leadership Capacity; Competence

## Introduction

This article presents the following sub-headings sections, including Background of The Study, Statement of The Problems, Research Questions, Research Objectives, Research Hypotheses, Theoretical Framework,

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## Conceptual Framework, Scope of the Study, Definition of Terms, and Significance of the Study.

Teaching and learning are considered essential in education; teachers must have sufficient professional knowledge and skills to implement the class leadership arts into all educational activities (Gilchrist, Myers, & Reed, 1997). Hargreaves (2017) mentioned that teacher leadership and professionalism were essential in providing learners with teaching and learning activities. Therefore, for school leaders, it was also necessary and important to focus on teachers' leadership capacity and teaching competence.

Teachers play multi-roles in the teaching and learning process; very often, they are the classroom leaders, and their qualities are related to the student's achievement and the quality of school (Loveless, 2018). Teachers' job requires a high degree of moral and social responsibility, good leadership, and professional skills (Gilchrist, Myers, & Reed, 1997).

Shanghai Baoshan Experimental School was located on Friendship Road in the political, economic, cultural, and commercial center of Baoshan District. It was developed based on the merger of the former Baogang No.1 Middle School and Youyi Road Primary School. Baoshan Experimental School was a large-scale public nine-year experimental school in Baoshan District, which is also a window school displaying the characteristics of Baoshan District.

News broadcast on September 10 reported that the National Education Conference was held in Beijing on September 10. Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, President of China, and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, attended the meeting and delivered an important speech. He stressed that under the strong leadership of the party, fully implement the party's education policy, adhere to the guiding status of the maxim. Adhere to the education of socialism with Chinese characteristics development road; adhere to the socialist direction of running a school, based on the basic national conditions, follow the rules of education, reform and innovation in solidarity, perfect personality, develop human, cultivating talents, the well-being of the people as the work target, cultivation of art comprehensive development of socialist builders and successors, and accelerate the modernization of education, construction of education powers, do a good job in the people's satisfactory education.

UNESCO's report (2009) has recommended that teachers' competence and leadership development studies should be continuously emphasized and encouraged to contribute to Education for Sustainable Development Goals.

The 21st century demands sustainable development and advocates the concept of sustainable development education, development, and pedagogy for teacher capacity development.

Teachers' leadership capacity and competencies were the keys to achieving the educational goal to help improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools (Weimer, 2012). Teachers' competence and good classroom leadership skills can promote students' learning with an in-depth understanding and build a good learning climate and the teacher-student relationship.

Shanghai Baoshan Experimental School was established in 1996 as a nine-year system school. In building the school, the school keeps exploring the research direction of combining teaching and practice. In 2004, the school participated in the Environmental Population and Development (EPD) Education Project Study organized by the United Nations Educational, Liberal Arts Organization. Meanwhile, the national projects carried out by the school during the same period included a comparative study on the teaching mode and curriculum integration of nine-year education schools and a survey of the digitization of the integrated matrix management mode of nine-year education schools. The cognitive relationship between teachers' leadership and competitiveness was studied. However, the national projects were conducted based on school administrators' evaluation of the teachers.

The school leaders focus on teachers' competence, which is the school's competitiveness. Hence, the school administrators often evaluate the teachers' competence, but no studies have been conducted to determine their perception of their leadership capacity and competence. Therefore, this researcher was interested in studying teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and competence. This Shanghai school was concerned about how to enhance teachers' career development from different means.

### **Research Objectives**

The research objectives in this research were set out as follows:

1. To identify teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and competence at Baoshan Experimental School, Shanghai, China.
2. To determine the level of teachers' perceptions of their competence at Baoshan Experimental School, Shanghai, China.
3. To determine if there is a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and competence at Baoshan Experimental School, Shanghai, China.

## **Literature Review**

*Lambert's (1998) Leadership Capacity Theory*

According to Lambert (2003), "senior" leadership was characterized by six key characteristics: (a) broad-based, skilled participation in leadership, (b) shared vision leads to project consistency, (c) survey-based use provides information for common decision-making and practice, (d) reflects broad participation, cooperation, and collective responsibility, (E) reflective practice and take innovation as the criterion, and (f) improve students' performance steadily.

According to Pierce's (2007) and Lambert's (2003) definition of leadership, Leadership was also one of the six principles that affect students' achievement in high-performance schools. According to the results of some studies, implementing these six characteristics or principles was of great significance for guiding students.

Leadership is an essential part of the organization; when people work in a group or organization for a particular reason or purpose, they always need a leader to lead the organization with a shared goal (Lambert, 1998). Leadership is necessary for today's modern era and is closely linked to all aspects of human life (Hargreaves, 2017).

The concept of leadership in the education field was always focusing on the teachers' leadership capacity. As Gilchrist, Myers, & Reed (1997) stated, leadership can be compared to an organization's ability to lead and sustain this effort when key employees leave. Still, for schools, the quality of teachers' leadership may affect the work of the principals, teachers, parents, community members, and students. Focusing on teachers' leadership needs, the school provides teachers with more empowerment and specific conceptual understanding to strengthen their leadership in the school-based management process (Harbison, 2009).

As Loveless (2018) mentioned, developing leadership requires collaborative work, participation in climate-building, sharing a sense of mission with colleagues, promotion of team processes, good communication, understanding of transitions and changes in their impact on people, and mediation of conflicts with a constructive perspective. Though every leader has their own characteristics, specific leaders' inherent characteristics and abilities in the implementation process were not significantly different.

For the 21st century, effective teachers' leadership was based on the concept of leadership capacity that was often taught in various leadership theories

(Weimer, 2012). Lambert (1998) defined leadership as "extensive and skilled participation" in leadership (p.9). Then Lambert (1998) also described the characteristics of six components, including: (1) broadly, skilled in leadership work, (2) Shared vision solution consistency, (3) based on the exploration, the use of information to provide information for decision making and practice together, (4) roles and responsibilities, manifests the broad participation, collaboration, and collective responsibility, (5) to reflect on practice, the last structure (6) is a student of a high level or improved the achievement steadily. Lambert's leadership theory will lead to two crucial points as a special characteristic of leadership: (1) Breadth of involvement and understanding and skills of the people involved; (2) Understanding and skills involve innovations that go beyond knowledge, including courses, schedules, or structures.

Lambert (1998) explicitly affirmed in her book that leadership development in schools was a broad concept, separated from people, discrete sets of roles, and individual behaviors. The concept of leadership in educational institutions, especially schools, needs to serve as a comprehensive concept for the school community. It must be widely communicated to those who also hold a collective responsibility to the organization rather than to individual leaders. The author emphasizes that leadership is about learning, building meaning, and collaborating. This affirmation strongly encouraged teachers and school communities to promote collaboration and collective responsibility rather than individual performance. Further discussion (Lambert, 2003) on teachers' leadership concepts attached great importance to the aspect that teachers and the school community work together to promote the collective responsibility of the community teaching and learning process to improve student's learning quality for educational development process results.

Lambert (1998) believed that leadership was a broad term that refers to leadership, a leader's ability that has been widely used in the past 20 years. However, in 2003, Lambert put forward four key points in teacher leadership construction, regarded as the decisive factors of teacher leadership. These four points were also reappointed by Pierce (2007) as he further developed the School Leadership Survey (LCSS) based on these four main components, including: (1) A strong focus on Shared vision, (2) reflection and innovation, (3) collaboration and collective responsibility, and (4) student achievement and development. To ensure that the study of teachers' leadership capacity has a strong theoretical basis, the researcher also focuses on the four components to assess the teachers' leadership capacity. The researcher believes these four components are important for teachers' leadership capacity building; if the school leaders could focus on these teachers' leadership capacity components, it would benefit the stakeholders in the school and community. Next section

reviews more about these four components of teachers' leadership capacity.

*Teacher Teaching Competence theory was developed by Medley's (1977)*

A common definition of teaching competence was related to skills, performance, ability, and knowledge. Thus, the term has been used carelessly as a definition. Ability becomes meaningless when it is used arbitrarily to refer to the body and mind. However, when it was used to describe a particular job analysis, it was important to relate professional requirements and performance standards. Ability needs more than skills and knowledge. It requires the right and appropriate attitude, which ultimately translates into behavior. The main theory of this study was teachers' teaching competence and effectiveness based on Medley (1977).

Teaching competence refers to presenting knowledge and skills, the ability and attribute to perform a function effectively. In the field of education, experts introduced the term "professional," which refers to eight professions: doctors, engineers, lawyers, architects, nurses, accountants, and surveyors, including the teaching profession. The term consists of a professional and two words ability to understand better terms and their definitions make sense. Occupation can be defined as intelligence-based learning, and the purpose of the training was to provide better services to others and to qualify them for decent treatment wages or clear professional fees competency was defined as knowledge, skills, understanding, values, attitudes, and aspirations, which lead to and reflect human behavior in a specific field of the world. Therefore, ability was different from skill, defined as the ability to easily perform complex actions with accuracy and adaptability. In the context of the EU, teacher teaching competence should include the following aspects: (a) assumptions about learning, (b) educational purposes, (c) social expectations and demands on teachers, (d) available resources, priorities, and political, (E) status (f) perceived external or international pressure, (G) existing traditions and cultures, and (H) broader social context and environment. Environmental education happened.

Competency refers to knowledge, skills, abilities, or attributes that enable one to perform a function effectively. In education, experts came up with the term "major," which refers to eight majors: Doctors, engineers, lawyers, architects, nurses, accountants, and surveyors, internationally recognized occupations including teachers. The term is made up of two words that are professional and capable of having a better understanding of the term and its definition. An occupation can be defined as a kind of vocational training based on knowledge, learning, and skills to serve others better. It entitles them to a decent working salary or definite professional fee. Medley (1977) also

mentioned that teachers need to produce ideal ability learning results from the interaction between teachers and students, in which assessment and teaching adjustment enhance learners' success. It's called the ability to evaluate.

Teachers' professional teaching competence includes the following nine aspects:

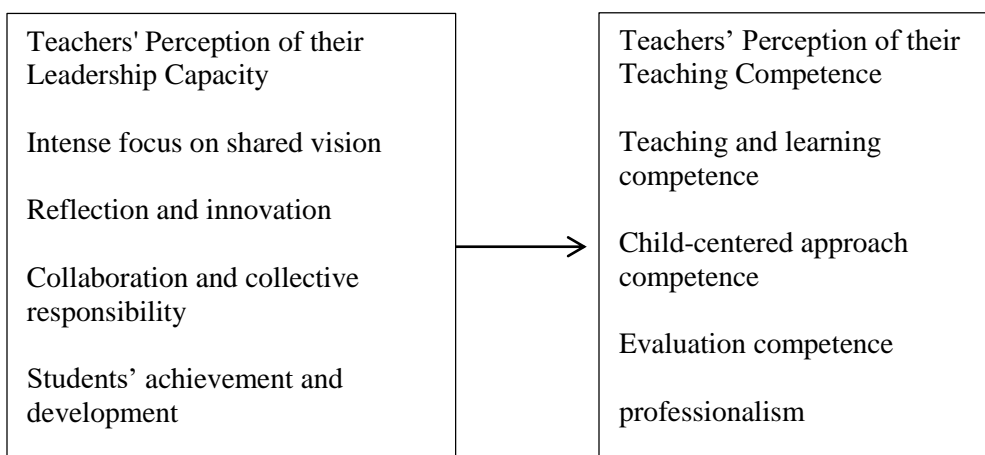
- 1) Domain teaching competence refers to the competency of teachers related to disciplines. Earlier, teaching ability was a top priority, but now teachers were seen as facilitating students to interact with content rather than as a transmitter of old concepts.
- 2) Research competencies: It refers to the ability to research methods and technologies to help teachers develop themselves and their careers. These abilities improve the comprehensive ability of teachers.
- 3) Curriculum competencies: It includes curriculum development ability and curriculum implementation ability. These abilities have both theoretical and practical abilities.
- 4) Emotional Competencies: It includes teachers' and students' morality, belief, values, anxiety, attitude, empathy, motivation, and so on. Learning needs emotional support to produce positive emotions in the teaching process. These abilities can improve students' willingness to learn. The emotional ability helps teachers become effective teachers.
- 5) Lifelong Learning Competencies: It was related to teachers' continuous learning ability, and it was also the responsibility of teachers to cultivate students' lifelong ability.
- 6) Social Cultural Competencies: It refers to social and cultural knowledge, a background of learners and teachers, issues of democracy and human rights, local and national values, team spirit, and cooperation with others. Teachers' social culture Competency promotes the practice of a humanistic approach and social theory.
- 7) Communication Competencies: It includes voice, body language, speech, intonation, touch, sign language, eye contact, etc. They include internal and interpersonal communication skills.
- 8) Information and Communication Technology Competencies include technologies to help generate, store, or communicate information. ICT teaching competence was very important in the process of learning and teaching in communication.
- 9) Environmental Competencies: It includes environmental knowledge and skills, management of ecological resources, rational use of natural resources, and keeping clean. These capabilities were the safety required by ecology and environment.

The concept of teacher teaching competence should not be limited to teachers'

tasks in school but should be discussed from different dimensions as described above. This study focuses on Teachers' teaching competence under the conceptual framework.

### Conceptual Framework

This research aimed to identify teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and competence at Baoshan Experimental School, Shanghai, China. Figure 1 below presents the conceptual framework of this study. The essential components from the left side were based on Lambert's (1998) Leadership Capacity theory, and on the right side was based on teacher teaching competence and teacher teaching competence theory developed by Medley (1977).



**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for this Study**

### Research Instrument

This study was to attain information and data on teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and teaching competence in relation to their performance as teachers and educators. In order to accomplish the study, the researcher used a questionnaire to do the survey and fulfill the objective of this research. The target population for this study was all the full-time teachers currently teaching at Baoshan Experimental School, Shanghai, China, in the academic year of 2020.

The questionnaires were divided into two parts according to the research purpose. Questionnaire Part I was adopted from Lambert's (2003) Leadership Capacity School Survey (LCSS), recognized and widely used for leadership capacity improvement. Subsequent to its conceptual framework, questions



number 1-5 assess the component of Intense Focus on Shared Vision, questions number 6-8 assess the component of Reflection and Innovation; questions number 9-12 assess the component of Collaboration and Collective Responsibility, and questions number 13-15 assess the component of Student Achievement and Development.

In questionnaire part II, the researcher adopted the research questions originally developed by Medley (1977) in his Teachers' teaching competence questionnaire. The questionnaire was used by Kavinda (2014) in his study of teachers' perceptions of teaching competence before. These questions are utilized to identify teachers' perceptions of their teaching competence level at Baoshan Experimental School, Shanghai, China.

## Findings

### *Research Objective one*

In table 1, the overall mean score for teachers' perception of student achievement and development was 3.72, regarded as high. In addition, the highest score was 3.79 with "I am willing to develop criteria regarding individual and shared work." The lowest score was 3.63, with "I concern and care for the quality of outcomes."

To summarize all these quantitative results for teachers' perception towards their leadership capacity, especially with these four key components as the study Survey Part 1 identified, Table 1 below shows the summary of all the components, with the mean scores and standard deviations for each component of the leadership variable.

Table 1. *Summary of Means and Standard Deviations for Leadership Capacity*

Leadership Capacity	M	SD	Interpretation
Intense Focus on Shared Vision	3.60	1.07	High
Reflection and Innovation	3.49	1.01	Moderate
Collaboration and Collective Responsibility	3.56	1.10	High
Student Achievement and Development	3.72	1.05	High
Total	3.59	.63	High

### *Research Objective two*

Table 2 above shows the total mean score for teachers' perception towards Learning Environment was 3.65, which was regarded as high. Among all the items, the highest score was 3.78 with "I exhibit cooperative behavior in working within the school community"; the lowest score was 3.55 with "I make effective use of time."

To present the general overview of the 30-research questions, which represented four components of teachers' competence, Table 2 demonstrates the overall mean scores of each component. The highest observed mean score was 3.73 with component 4- Professionalism, which reflected that teachers were regarded as highly professional. The lowest mean was with the component 1-Teaching and Learning Competence, which had a score mean of 3.58. However, based on interpretation criteria, it was still interpreted as high; this component was regarded as relatively lower than the other three.

Table 2. *Summary of Means and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Competence*

Teachers' Competence	M	SD	Interpretation
Teaching and Learning teaching competence	3.58	.099	High
Child-centered Approach teaching competence	3.66	.044	High
Evaluation teaching competence	3.73	.034	High
Professionalism	3.65	.049	High

### *Research Objective three*

Research objective three was to determine the significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and professional teaching competence at Baoshan Experimental School, Shanghai, China.

According to research objective three, the researcher applied Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to investigate and determine the significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and competence.

The survey result of teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and professional teaching competence was shown in the following Table 19. The results confirmed that there was a strong positive relationship between teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and competence at Baoshan Experimental School, Shanghai because the correlation( $r$ )value was .730  $p=.001$  which was  $< .05$ .

Table 3. *Pearson correlation between Teachers' Perceptions on Their Leadership Capacity and teaching competence at Baoshan Experimental School, Shanghai*

	Teachers' Leadership Capacity		Conclusion
Teachers' Competence	Pearson Correlation	.730**	There is a significant relationship
	Sig. (2 – tailed)	0.01	

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2- tailed).

## **Conclusion**

According to the statistical analysis of survey instruments obtained from 120 respondents and the findings of teachers' perceptions at Baoshan Experimental School, this study's conclusions based on each objective were the following:

The teachers' overall leadership capacity was high, as perceived by themselves. The highest mean was with component 4, "Student Achievement and Development," and the lowest mean score was with component 2, "Reflection and Innovation."

The teachers' overall competence was also high. The highest was with component 4- Professionalism, which reflected the teachers were regarded as highly professional. The lowest was with the component 1-Teaching and Learning Competence, but it was still interpreted as high.

## **Discussion**

The following discussion of about findings of this study was based on the conclusion.

Firstly, according to the statistical data analysis from 120 teachers at Baoshan Experimental School, the study found teachers' overall leadership capacity as perceived by themselves was high. The highest mean was with component 4, "Student Achievement and Development," and the lowest mean score was with component 2, "Reflection and Innovation."

I was happy that the teachers' perception of component 4, "Student Achievement and Development," was the highest. This was consistent with the finding of Ting's (2019) finding in her study of teachers' perceptions towards principals' leadership capacity at the international school in Thonburi, Thailand. As Lambert (2003) also explained, high leadership capacity at the school depended a lot on monitoring and responding to student achievement. Monitoring student achievement, networking, and collaborating to respond to this factor was key.

Secondly, this study found that teachers' overall competence was also high. The highest was with component 4- Professionalism, which reflected the teachers were regarded as high professionalism. The lowest was with the component 1-Teaching and Learning Competence, but it was still interpreted as high.

However, it was found that Teaching and Learning Competence was regarded as relatively lower than the other component; it might be teachers' self-

reflection and expectation still that they were expected to learn more teaching and learning competence, especially this year when the Covid 19 situation happened, many teachers suddenly felt their ICT teaching competence might not enough, as they mentioned to this researcher in some conversations.

Education is the main pillar of human resource development, and teachers are the main and most important actors in realizing qualified and highly competitive human resources (Weimer, 2012).

When teachers have high leadership capacity, personal values and beliefs can be developed proportionally, and the school will develop in a better and highly competitive direction. This ensures integrated leadership capacity is consistent in schools and can reduce conflict, and the ideal work climate can be created automatically. Teachers' leadership capacity and professional teaching competence were believed to be the main foundation of the change process in achieving sustainable competitiveness of schools or organizations.

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