

# President's Strategic Leadership Factors Affecting Organizational Effectiveness of Private Universities in Hunan Province

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## Abstract

The objectives of this research were: (1) To determine components of president's strategic leadership and organizational effectiveness of private universities. (2) To investigate president's strategic leadership affecting organizational effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province. (3) To propose the guidelines for improving president's strategic leadership affecting organizational effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province, the People's Republic of China.

The research used mixed methodology which were qualitative research and quantitative research. Population was teachers of private universities in Hunan Province, with a total of 11871 persons. The sample size was determined by the Krejcie and Morgan's Table (1970) that obtained by a proportional stratified random sampling technique, totaling 375 persons. Instruments used for data collection included semi-structured interviews form, a five-points rating scale questionnaire and focus group discussions form. The statistics used for analyzing the data were descriptive statistics and MIMIC- Model analysis.

The research results revealed that (1) There were three president's strategic leadership factors of private universities in Hunan Province which were strategic vision and planning formulation leadership, decision making and execution leadership, talent introduction and management leadership. The organizational effectiveness were long term planning and resource allocation, administrative and operational management, academic management and quality assurance. (2) The president's strategic leadership include strategic vision and planning formulation leadership, decision making and execution leadership, talent introduction and management leadership altogether had statistical significant direct affects at  $p < 0.01$  on organizational effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province with the predictive power of 44.60 percent; (3) The guidelines for improving the organizational effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province consisted of 15 guidelines.

**Keywords:** President's Strategic Leadership Factors; Organizational Effectiveness; Private University; Hunan Province

## Introduction

As of the end of 2023, there were a total of 10912 private schools (excluding training institutions) in Hunan Province, with a total of 2.614 million students enrolled, accounting for 38.8% of the total number of schools in the province and 17.9% of students, respectively. At present, private education in Hunan has formed a development situation from preschool education to higher education, from academic education to non academic education, with diverse levels and types, and full of vitality. Private education has become an important component of the education industry. According to the list of universities released by the Ministry of Education, there are a total of 35 private higher education institutions in Hunan Province, including 21 private undergraduate universities, with a total of 11871 on duty faculty and staff, and a total of 239391 registered university students. As a result, Hunan Province, as a major education province, has a large number of private universities with distinct characteristics. However, it also faces challenges such as funding shortages, weak teaching staff, and imperfect management systems. The quantity and quality of its private universities have an important impact on the regional economic and social development. As the leader of the university's development, the president's strategic leadership has become a key factor in promoting the sustainable development of the university and enhancing organizational effectiveness.

The research on the strategic leadership of Chinese private university presidents has developed in the context of the socialist market economy system and education system reform with Chinese characteristics. This research field has gradually emerged since the early 21st century, especially after the promulgation of the China Private Education Promotion Law (2002), private higher education has gained legal status and development space, and the demand for research in related fields has also increased. Zhang Yan (2021) systematically reviewed the theoretical development of strategic leadership and looked forward to future research directions in "Research on Strategic Leadership: Recent 20 Years and Future Research Directions". Qi Xiaolin (2023) pointed out in "The Role Positioning Conflict and Role Creation of the President of Private Undergraduate Universities" that the President plays multiple roles in promoting the development of universities, facing conflicts and challenges in role positioning. It is urgent to achieve effective role transformation and creation through the exercise of strategic leadership.

Based on the current situation of private universities in Hunan Province, focusing on the relationship between president's strategic leadership and organizational effectiveness of private universities, the research exploring how presidents can enhance the organizational effectiveness of universities through strategic leadership. Through in-depth analysis and empirical research of existing literature, from a theoretical perspective, the research will enrich the theoretical system of the relationship between president's strategic leadership and organizational effectiveness, providing a new perspective for subsequent research; From a practical perspective, the research results will provide guidance for private universities to improve their management level, optimize resource allocation, and improve education quality; From a policy research perspective, the research will provide a basis for education administrative departments to formulate relevant policies and promote the healthy development of private higher education; From a sociological perspective, the research will promote educational equity, promote social harmony and progress; This has important theoretical and

practical significance for promoting the development of private higher education, improving education quality and management level, and achieving educational equity.

### Research Objectives

(1) To determine components of president’s strategic leadership and organizational effectiveness of private universities.

(2) To investigate president’s strategic leadership factors affecting organizational effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province.

(3) To propose the guidelines for improving president’s strategic leadership factors affecting organizational effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province, the People’s Republic of China.

### Research Hypotheses

1.4.1 H1: Strategic vision and planning formulation leadership has a statistically significant direct effects on organizational effectiveness.

1.4.2 H2: Decision making and execution leadership has a statistically significant direct effects on organizational effectiveness.

1.4.3 H3: Talent introduction and management leadership has a statistically significant direct effects on organizational effectiveness.

### Conceptual Framework

By analyzing and synthesizing the theoretical framework, the key variable in the research as conceptual framework was shown in the following figure 1.1.

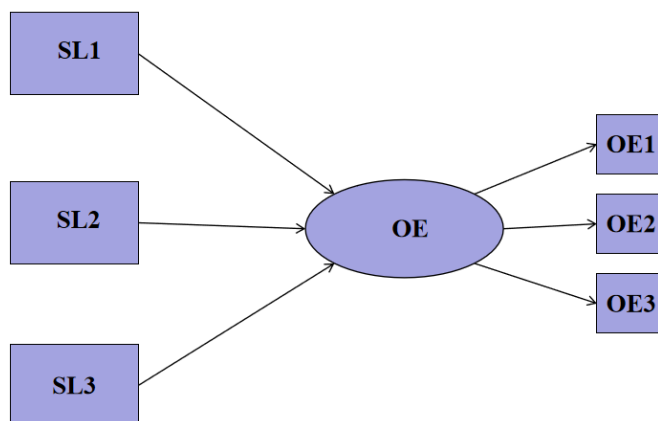


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

These variables: The independent variables were Strategic Vision and Planning Formulation Leadership(SL1), Decision Making and Execution Leadership (SL2), Talent Introduction and Management Leadership(SL3). The dependent variables were Long Term Planning and Resource Allocation(E1), Administrative and Operational Management (E2), and Academic Management and Quality Assurance (E3).

## **Research Methodology**

### **1. Research Design**

The research adopts a mixed method both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative method by collected and analyzed syntheses numbers of documents and related research, and from interviewed the key informants. The quantitative research was applied for deriving these factors from phase 1 and collected data from the respondents to developing the questionnaire. Propose the guidelines for improving president's strategic leadership factors affecting organizational effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province through focus group discussions.

### **2. Population and Sample**

The research population was randomly selected from these 21 private universities in Hunan Province which consists of 11871 people, including managers and regular teachers. The sample size was determined by the Krejcie and Morgan's Table (1970) that obtained by a proportional stratified random sampling technique, totaling 375 samples.

### **3. Research Instruments**

Phase1: The instrument for collecting data consists of 3 parts. Firstly, collect data from the review literature and use a data record table. Secondly, after analyzing the content of the literature review, the researchers will require 5 experts to screen out the necessary president's strategic leadership factors and organizational effectiveness of private universities, using a semi-structured interview form.

Phase2: The researchers used a 3 parts questionnaire.

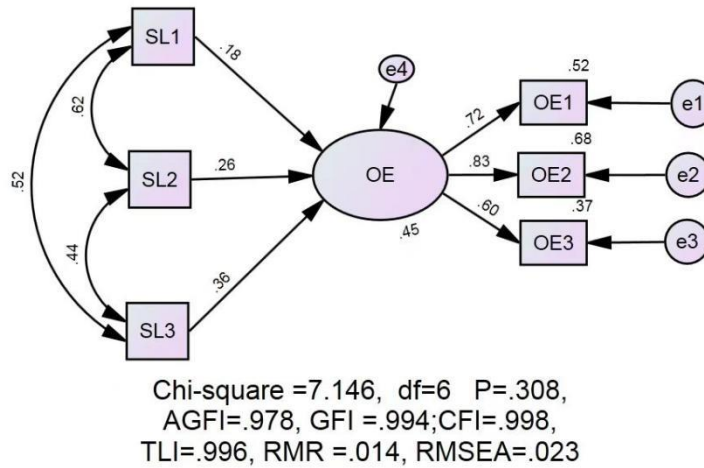
Part 1: Demographic variables, general information of respondents

Part 2: The independent variables, the 3 factors of president's strategic leadership; and the dependent variables ,the 3 components of organizational effectiveness of a private universities in Hunan Province, totaling 97 items, each statement used Likert (Likert, R. 1932) .Use a rating scale of 1-5 to measure (on a five points scale); After IOC and Try out, leave only 60 items, among them, 30 items are about the three factors of president's strategic leadership, another 30 items are about the three components of organizational effectiveness. To be precised and specific, 10 items are about strategic vision and planning formulation leadership; 10 items are about decision making and execution leadership; 10 items are about talent introduction and management leadership; 10 items are about long term planning and resource allocation; 10 items are about administrative and operational management; 10 items are about academic management and quality assurance.

Part 3: Suggestions and Supplementary Opinions (Open ended).

The president's strategic leadership and organizational effectiveness of private universities requires respondents to determine the degree to which each statement reflects the validity components. Each statement using the Likert 5-points scale (1932); The 5-points rating in each item were:





**Figure 2** MIMIC Model analyze of president's strategic leadership affecting organizational effectiveness

Figure 2, only one time without the modified, then the model fitted with the empirical data, the fit index obtained by AMOS software program.

Table 1 Show statistical value of the president's strategic leadership factors affecting the organizational effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province

Latent and observable	Un-standardized factor loading	Standardized factor loading	S.E.	C.R.	p	R <sup>2</sup>
OE <--- SL1	1.000	0.261				0.26
OE <--- SL2	1.243	0.363	0.629	1.975	0.004	0.36
OE <--- SL3	1.651	0.722	0.698	2.364	0.001	0.72
OE1<--- OE	0.164	0.827	0.058	2.857	0.000	0.83
OE2<--- OE	0.176	0.604	0.061	2.88	0.000	0.60

OE3<--- OE	0.135	0.261	0.048	2.828	0.000	0.26
OE<--- All of AL1 to AL3						0.446

(1)The regression weight between SL1(Strategic vision and planning formulation leadership) and OE is less than .0001 ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicates a significant level. Therefore, strategic vision and planning formulation leadership have a positive and significant impact on organizational effectiveness.

(2) The regression weight between SL2 (Decision making and execution leadership) and OE is .004. According to the value standard  $p < 0.01$  (significant level), .004 indicates a significant level. Therefore, decision making and execution leadership have a positive and significant impact on organizational effectiveness.

(3) The regression weight between SL3(Talent introduction and management leadership) and OE is .001, indicates a significant level. Therefore, talent introduction and management leadership factors have a positive and significant impact organizational effectiveness.

Table 1 Show statistical value of the president’s strategic leadership factors affecting the organizational effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province. The president’s strategic leadership include strategic vision and planning formulation leadership, decision making and execution leadership, talent introduction and management leadership altogether had statistical significant direct affects at  $p < 0.01$  on organizational effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province with the predictive power of 44.60 percent.

## Discussion

### Discussion on the Main Findings Regarding Objective 1

There are three factors of President’s Strategic Leadership of private universities in Hunan Province, including: (1) Strategic vision and planning formulation leadership; (2) Decision making and Execution leadership; (3) Talent Introduction and Management leadership. There are three components of Organizational Effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province: (1) Long term planning and resource allocation; (2) Administrative and operational management; (3) Academic Management and Quality Assurance. The main conclusions are as follows: these factors can be used to improve the President’s Strategic Leadership and the Organizational Effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province. At the same time, they can also contribute academically; have certain positive impacts at practical, policy, and social levels; and bring expected benefits to different groups in multiple fields such as educational management, policy making, academic research, educational practice, economic development, social culture, and international cooperation. By enhancing the president’s strategic leadership ability, we can promote the overall development of private higher education and make modest contributions to achieving the dual goals of quality and equity in education.

### Discussion on the Main Findings Regarding Objective 2

Through the analysis of exploratory factors, the derived model factors are most suitable for the president's strategic leadership factors and components of organizational effectiveness. Then, a multi-indicator multi-cause (MIMIC) model was used for analysis to examine the relationships between multiple observed variables and multiple latent factors. Through model analysis, the research obtained good model results based on data.

On one hand, the good model results were achieved due to the effectiveness of the research tool design based on theoretical analysis. On the other hand, this also reflects the important relationship between president's strategic leadership and organizational effectiveness. However, beyond the data itself, the authenticity and validity of the data model require verification through relevant expert fields and practical application. To better illustrate the validity of this model, further expert analysis and practical validation are necessary.

### Discussion on the Main Findings Regarding Objective 3

The main finding is that, in this era of innovative competition, it is necessary to break free from the constraints of traditional administrative and leadership styles while pursuing high-quality innovative higher education. Through feasible strategic leadership and organizational Effectiveness, and by implementing effective academic management, quality assurance, administrative management, and operational management, the overall competitiveness of the universities can be comprehensively enhanced, achieving high-quality educational goals. This will lead to the continuous advancement and innovation in higher education, improve educational quality, promote sustainable development of the university, and provide effective management guidelines for presidents and administrators.

## Recommendations

Based on the research results of the research, recommendations are made in three areas:

### 8.1 Recommendation for policy formulation

#### 1. Strategic Vision and Planning Formulation Leadership

(1) Establish a Clear and Inspiring Vision: Set a clear and inspiring vision that provides a clear direction and purpose for the institution. This vision should resonate with a wide audience and encourage educators, students, and other stakeholders to actively engage.

(2) Conduct Comprehensive Environmental Analysis: Perform a thorough analysis of both internal and external environments. This involves identifying opportunities, threats, strengths, and weaknesses to inform strategic decision-making.

(3) Set Clear Strategic Goals: Define clear, specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) strategic goals. These goals should align with the vision and guide the overall development direction of the institution.

(4) Develop Detailed Plans and Implementation Steps: Create detailed plans and steps for implementation, including action plans, timelines, and responsibility assignments. Ensure a systematic approach to implementing the strategy and monitor progress to adjust plans as needed.

(5) Allocate Resources Efficiently: Allocate resources, including human, financial, and material resources, to support the achievement of strategic goals. This requires developing resource allocation strategies to ensure efficient use of resources and making adjustments as necessary.

## 2. Decision Making and Execution Leadership

(1) Establish Transparent and Efficient Decision-Making Mechanisms: Ensure that the decision-making process includes the participation and opinions of a wide range of stakeholders. Develop clear decision-making standards and procedures to ensure the scientific and rational nature of decisions.

(2) Develop Detailed Execution Plans: Formulate detailed execution plans that include specific action steps, timelines, and responsibility assignments. Ensure that each task has a designated responsible person and provide the necessary resources and support to ensure the smooth implementation of the plans.

(3) Establish Effective Progress Monitoring Systems: Regularly evaluate the implementation of plans through key performance indicators (KPI) and milestones. Identify and resolve issues in a timely manner to ensure that projects are completed on schedule.

(4) Implement Comprehensive Risk Management Strategies: Identify potential risks and develop countermeasures. Regularly assess and update risk management plans to address new challenges and changing environments, ensuring the stable progress of projects.

(5) Establish Feedback Mechanisms: Collect and analyze data and opinions during the execution process. Regularly report progress to the team and stakeholders, using feedback to continuously improve execution strategies and enhance overall performance.

## 3. Talent Introduction and Management Leadership

(1) Identify Current and Future Talent Needs: Clarify the required skills and job requirements. Conduct a talent needs analysis to ensure that the recruited talents meet the institution's development goals and strategic needs.

(2) Develop Effective Recruitment Strategies: Implement diverse recruitment channels and methods. Utilize social media, professional recruitment websites, and campus recruitment to attract outstanding talent, ensuring that the recruitment process is fair and transparent.

(3) Establish Scientific Talent Selection Mechanisms: Include written tests, interviews, skill assessments, and background checks. Evaluate candidates' abilities and potential from multiple dimensions to ensure the selection of talents that meet job requirements.

(4) Implement Comprehensive Performance Management Systems: Set clear performance goals and evaluation standards. Conduct regular performance evaluations, providing constructive feedback to help employees continuously improve their performance and skill levels.

(5) Establish Effective Incentive Mechanisms: Include salaries, bonuses, promotion opportunities, and non-material incentives. Use diverse incentive measures to stimulate employees' work enthusiasm and creativity, enhancing their sense of belonging and loyalty.

## 8.2 Practical Application Recommendations

### 1. The President as an Innovator of the University's Strategic Vision

The president should apply innovative thinking in their work practice, design interdisciplinary projects, lead the organization in developing teaching and innovation skills, and improve the overall quality of leaders. This enables them to create ambitious yet achievable visions and communicate effectively to accomplish key strategic tasks within the organization. Conduct comprehensive internal and external environmental analyses to identify the school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Use data and research results to support strategic decision-making. Develop detailed plans and implementation steps, including action

plans, timelines, and responsibility assignments, to ensure the smooth implementation of plans and establish monitoring mechanisms to evaluate progress and adjust strategies promptly.

#### 2. The President as a Leader of the University Organization Team

The president should strengthen team leadership, optimize project management mechanisms, and improve resource effectiveness to ensure effective project implementation. Establish team reward mechanisms to encourage teamwork and enhance work effectiveness, fostering a culture of mutual assistance and cooperation. Develop effective recruitment strategies, including diverse recruitment channels and methods. Evaluate candidates' abilities and potential from multiple dimensions to ensure the selection of talents that meet job requirements. Implement comprehensive performance management systems, set clear performance goals and evaluation standards, conduct regular performance evaluations, and provide constructive feedback to help employees improve their performance and skill levels.

#### 3. The President as an Enhancer of the University Work Atmosphere

The president should enhance psychological resilience, self-awareness, and work motivation, and improve university management levels. Use methods such as in-depth interviews and technical seminars, focusing on combining psychological safety with team cohesion to enhance the core competitiveness of universities. Implement comprehensive risk management strategies to identify potential risks and develop countermeasures. Regularly assess and update risk management plans to ensure the stable advancement of projects. Establish feedback mechanisms to collect and analyze data and opinions during the execution process, using feedback to improve execution strategies and enhance overall performance. Allocate human, financial, and material resources reasonably to support strategic goals and adjust dynamically as needed.

### **8.3 Recommendations for Further Research**

1. Enhancing the President's Strategic Leadership of Private Universities in Hunan Province: Focus on talent development and work motivation from a scientific and democratic perspective, proposing specific management strategies for private universities in Hunan Province in the new era. Construct innovative administrative management pathways to effectively enhance the innovation capabilities, management effectiveness, and effectiveness of higher education institutions.

2. Improving organizational effectiveness and work effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province: Enhance the existing administrative management systems of universities. Through reforming and innovating the current organizational effectiveness systems, private universities in Hunan Province can continuously improve the overall effectiveness of education and teaching. Further explore the relationship between president's strategic leadership and organizational effectiveness to provide theoretical basis and practical guidance for improving education and social service quality, and propose targeted suggestions and measures.

3. Exploring the Relationship between President's Strategic Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness: Researchers need to collect and analyze relevant data using scientific and rigorous methods. Based on the research results, provide targeted suggestions and measures to improve leadership levels and enhance the teaching, research, and social impact of higher education.

By implementing the above recommendations, support in-depth research and exploration for the management of presidents of private universities in Hunan Province,

cultivating leadership with innovative organizational effectiveness. Additionally, by setting industry standards and building organizational effectiveness, the overall effectiveness of private universities in Hunan Province will be promoted, making a positive contribution to the development of higher education in Hunan and the improvement of president's strategic leadership levels.

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