Guidelines for Improving Mid-level Administrators Leadership of
Private Undergraduate Universities in Guangdong

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were 1) to study the current situation of the Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong, 2) To develop the guidelines for improving Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong, 3) To evaluate the suitability and feasibility of the guidelines for improving Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong. The sample group were 210 Mid‑level administrators from 5 private undergraduate universities in Guangdong. The Interview group was 10 high-level administrators and 5 high-level experts. The research instruments were questionnaire, structured interview and evaluate form. The statistic to analyze the data were percentage, mean, standard deviation and content analysis.

The results were found that 1) the current of mid‑level administrators leadership in private undergraduate universities in Guangdong is at a medium level. Considering the results of this research aspects ranged from the highest to lowest level were as follow: the highest mean was Cultural Leadership, followed by Interpersonal Leadership, Educational Leadership , Political Leadership and Structural Leadership was the lowest mean. 2) The guidelines for improving mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong, including 5 aspects, with a total of 25 measures: 1) 4 measures for improving Structural leadership, 2) 6 measures for improving Interpersonal leadership, 3) 4 measures for improving Educational leadership, 4) 4 measures for improving Cultural leadership , and 5) 7 measures for improving Political leadership. 3) The suitability and feasibility of guidelines for improving mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong in 5 aspects were at highest level.

Keywords: Guidelines for Improving, Mid-level Administrators Leadership, Private Undergraduate
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Introduction

  With the development of the global education market, private universities have received more and more attention and development around the world. Due to the particularity of private universities, such as differences in ownership structure and business model, the leadership of Mid‑level administrators in private universities has become an important research field. Scholars around the world have begun to pay attention to the leadership style, decision-making ability, and organizational change of Mid‑level administrators in private universities, in order to promote the sustainable development of private universities and improve the quality of education. Numerous studies suggest that middle administrators contribute significantly to the strategy (Xu Guodong and Hu Zhongfeng, 2013)

  China's private universities have developed rapidly in recent years and have become a part of China's higher education system that cannot be ignored. However, due to historical reasons, economic pressure, personnel training and other factors, private universities are facing many challenges and problems. In response to these problems, it is of great significance to study the leadership of Mid-level administrators in private universities. By studying the leadership ability of Mid‑level administrators, we can reveal the role and influence of Mid‑level administrators in private universities in organizational reform, teaching quality improvement, and personnel training, and provide theoretical and practical support for promoting the sustainable development of Chinese private universities. From the perspective of management, the leadership of Mid‑level administrators in private universities directly affects the operation and development of the organization. (Ren Ke .2020). They need to rationally allocate resources, formulate strategies and goals, and coordinate the work of various departments on the premise of ensuring the quality of teaching. By studying the leadership characteristics and methods of Mid‑level administrators, we can help promote the sustainable development of Chinese private universities. From the perspective of education quality, the leadership of Mid‑level administrators in private universities is crucial to improving teaching quality. They need to formulate and implement effective educational strategies, cultivate excellent teachers, establish a scientific curriculum system, and create a good learning environment. By studying the leadership practice and experience of Mid‑level administrators, it can provide useful reference and guidance for improving the education quality of Chinese private universities. (Wanxi, 2009). In addition, due to China's regional differences and the large number of private universities, Mid‑level administrators of private universities in different regions face their own specific leadership challenges. For example, in more developed coastal areas such as Guangdong, Mid‑level administrators of private universities need to deal with more complex market competition, brain drain and other issues. Therefore, it is of more practical significance to study the leadership of Mid-level administrators in private universities in Guangdong.

  Guangdong Province is one of the regions with the most active development of private universities in China. Guangdong has a large number of private universities of various types, covering various disciplines. Studying the leadership of Mid‑level administrators in private universities in Guangdong can more specifically analyze the roles, responsibilities, and challenges of Mid‑level administrators in private universities in the region. At the same time, as a frontier area of reform and opening up, Guangdong has rich economic and educational resources, and the leadership

requirements for Mid‑level administrators of private universities are also more complex and diverse. Therefore, studying the leadership of Mid‑level administrators in private universities in Guangdong will help to understand and promote the development and innovation of private universities in Guangdong.

According to the key points of great significance the researchers have studied the concept of the leadership of Mid‑level administrators in private universities in Guangdong for promoting organizational development, improving education quality, responding to challenges and changes, and cultivating talents and innovative spirits. These research results will provide theoretical and practical support for private universities in Guangdong, promote their sustainable development, and provide reference and reference for private universities in other regions.

Objectives

1. To study the current situation of the Mid-level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong.

2. To develop the guidelines for improving Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong.

3. To evaluate the suitability and feasibility of the guidelines for improving Mid-level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong.

Scope of the Research

1. Scope of Content

1.1 Concept of Educational Administration

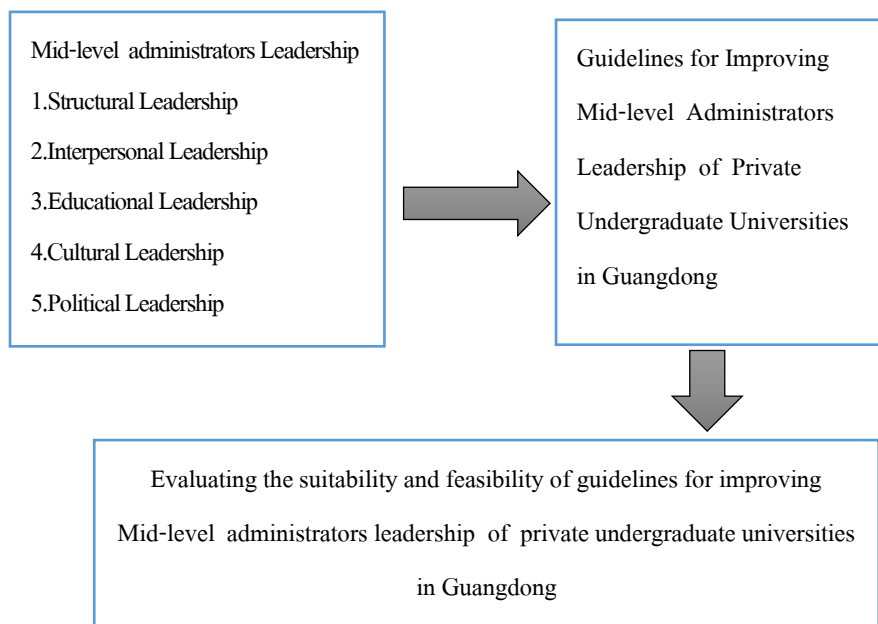1.2 Concept of Leadership

2. Scope of Population

2. 1 To analyze the current situation of the Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong. The population included 460 mid‑level administrators from 5 private undergraduate universities in Guangdong Province. The sample groups. According to the sampling table of Population and the Sample Group, the sample group of this research was 210 Mid-level administrators.

2. 2 To develop the guidelines for improving Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong. The interviewees in this research were 10 high-level administrators in universities in Guangdong. The qualifications of interviewees are as follows: 1) 1) Mid‑level administrators of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong Province; 2) must have a deep understanding of leadership; 3) must be willing to participate in recorded structured interviews; 4) must be willing to check their interview records for verification.

2. 3 To evaluate the suitability and feasibility of guidelines for improving Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong were 5 high‑level experts in Guangdong. The

qualifications of the experts are as follows: 1) Mid-level administrators of private undergraduate universities who have been engaged in more than 5 years; 2) from different universities; 3) with senior professional title or doctoral degree, and have a deeper understanding and research of the work of Mid-level administrators.

Research Framework

Figure 1 Research Framework

Research Methodology

    Phase 1: Studying the current situation of the Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong.

    Phase 2: To develop the guidelines for improving Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong.

    Phase 3: To evaluate the suitability and feasibility of the guidelines for improving Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong.

    This research is a mixed methods research. The research method is divided into 3 steps as follows

    Phase 1: Studying the current situation of the Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong.

    The population / Sample Group

    The population included 460 mid‑level administrators from 5 private undergraduate universities in Guangdong Province. According to the sampling table of Population and the Sample Group, the sample group of

this research was 210 mid-level administrators from 5 private universities in Guangdong. Determining the number of samples according to the table of Krejcie and Morgan (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970), by using stratified random sampling and simple random sampling.

Research Instruments

The instrument to collect the data for objective one, to analyze the current situation of the Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong. was a questionnaire. The questionnaire designed was based on Mid‑level administrators Leadership in 5 following aspects: 1) Structural Leadership 2) Interpersonal Leadership 3) Educational Leadership 4) Cultural Leadership 5) Political Leadership. The questionnaire has a reliability value of 0.988.

Data Collection Method

The researcher requested requirement letter form the graduate school, Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University for requiring collecting the data from 210 Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong. A total of 210 questionnaires with 100 percent

Data Analysis

The current situation of the Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong in five following aspects: 1) Structural Leadership 2) Interpersonal Leadership 3) Educational Leadership 4) Cultural Leadership 5) Political Leadership, was analyzed by Mean and standard deviation.

Phase 2: To develop the guidelines for improving Mid-level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong.

The Key informant

The interviewees in this research were 10 high‑level administrators from private undergraduate universities in Guangdong, who were selected by purposive Sampling. The qualifications of interviewees are as follows: 1) at least 5 years of work experience in mid‑level administrator in private universities, 2) a deep understanding of the leadership, 3) graduated with master's degree or above.

Research Instruments

The instrument to collect the data for objective two, to develop the guidelines for improving Mid-level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong was a structured interview. The structured interview designed based on phase 1, the current situation Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong in 5 following aspects: 1) Structural Leadership 2) Interpersonal Leadership 3) Educational Leadership 4) Cultural Leadership 5) Political Leadership.

Data Collection Method

The researcher requested requirement letter form the graduate school, Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University for requiring interviewing the high‑level administrators from 5 private undergraduate universities in

Guangdong. The researcher interviews the high‑level administrators one by one through an online platform or face-to-face depending on the interviewee's convenience.

Data Analysis

The structured interview about guidelines for improving Mid-level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong was analyzed by content analysis.

Phase 3: To evaluate the suitability and feasibility of the guidelines for improving Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong

The Key informant

The experts for evaluating the suitability and feasibility of the guidelines for improving Mid‑level administrators were 5 high‑level administrators in private undergraduate universities in Guangdong. The qualifications of the experts are as follows: 1) at least 5 years of work experience in high‑level administrator in private universities, 2) have extensive experience in leadership, 3) have senior title or doctoral degree, 4) academic title is associate professor or above.

Research Instruments

The instrument to collect the data for objective three, to evaluate the guidelines for improving Mid-level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong was an evaluation form. The evaluation form designed based on the guidelines for improving Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong in 5 following aspects: 1) Structural Leadership 2) Interpersonal Leadership 3) Educational Leadership 4) Cultural Leadership 5) Political Leadership

Data Collection Method

The researcher requested requirement letter form the graduate school, for requiring to invite the expert to evaluate the guidelines. The researcher distributed the evaluation form to high-level administrators. A total of 5 evaluation form.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this research, the researcher analyzes the data by package program, as follows: The evaluation of the suitability and feasibility the guidelines for improving Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong was analyzed by Mean and standard deviation.

Research Findings

1. The analysis result about the current situation of mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong.

Table 1 The mean and standard deviation of the current situation of the Mid-level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong in five aspects

	Mid-level administrators leadership	$\overline{\mathrm{X}}$	S.D	level	Order
1	Structural Leadership	3.40	0.84	Medium	5
2	Interpersonal Leadership	3.51	0.81	High	2
3	Educational Leadership	3.50	0.83	High	3
4	Cultural Leadership	3.53	0.81	High	1
5	Political Leadership	3.50	0.83	High	4
	Total	3.49	0.82	Medium	

According to table 1, the data showed that the current situation of the Mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong in five aspects was at medium level ($\overline{\mathrm{X}} = 3.49$). Considering the results of this research aspects ranged from the highest to lowest level were as follow: the highest mean was Cultural Leadership ($\overline{\mathrm{X}} = 3.53$), followed by Interpersonal Leadership ($\overline{\mathrm{X}} = 3.51$), Educational Leadership ($\overline{\mathrm{X}} = 3.50$), Political Leadership ($\overline{\mathrm{X}} = 3.50$), and Structural Leadership was the lowest mean ($\overline{\mathrm{X}} = 3.40$).

1) Structural leadership was at medium level. Considering the results of this research aspects ranged from the highest to lowest level were as follow: the highest mean was mid‑level administrators actively participate in school operation planning and goal setting to ensure the smooth operation of the school, followed by mid‑level administrators can task assignment according to the needs of the organization and the capabilities of employees, and mid‑level administrators can plan the development goals of the organization was the lowest mean.

2) Interpersonal leadership was at high level. Considering the results of this research aspects ranged from the highest to lowest level were as follow: the highest mean was mid‑level administrators can communicate smoothly with teachers and other staff, followed by mid‑level administrators can build trust and team cohesion, and mid-level administrators can strive for education resources for the school was the lowest mean.

3) Educational leadership was at high level. Considering the results of this research aspects ranged from the highest to lowest level were as follow: the highest mean was mid‑level administrators need to have possess effective organizational skills, followed by mid-level administrators can use their expertise to participate in instructional instruction, educational program development, and supervision, and mid‑level administrators can lead the school's educational thoughts, directions and goals was the lowest mean.

4) Cultural leadership was at high level. Considering the results of this research aspects ranged from the highest to lowest level were as follow: the highest mean was mid‑level administrators can

understand and transfer organizational values, followed by mid‑level administrators can actively participate in and shape organizational culture, and mid-level administrators can lead change was the lowest mean.

5) Political leadership was at high level. Considering the results of this research aspects ranged from the highest to lowest level were as follow: the highest mean was Mid-level administrators can possess political awareness, followed by Mid‑level administrators can promote the smooth achievement of school goals by creating a positive atmosphere and mediating internal conflicts, and Mid‑level administrators can build political alliances was the lowest mean.

2. The guidelines for improving mid‑level administrators leadership in 5 aspects, with a total of 25 measures: 1) 4 measures for improving Structural leadership, 2) 6 measures for improving Interpersonal leadership, 3) 4 measures for improving Educational leadership, 4) 4 measures for improving Cultural leadership , and 5) 7 measures for improving Political leadership shown as figure 2.
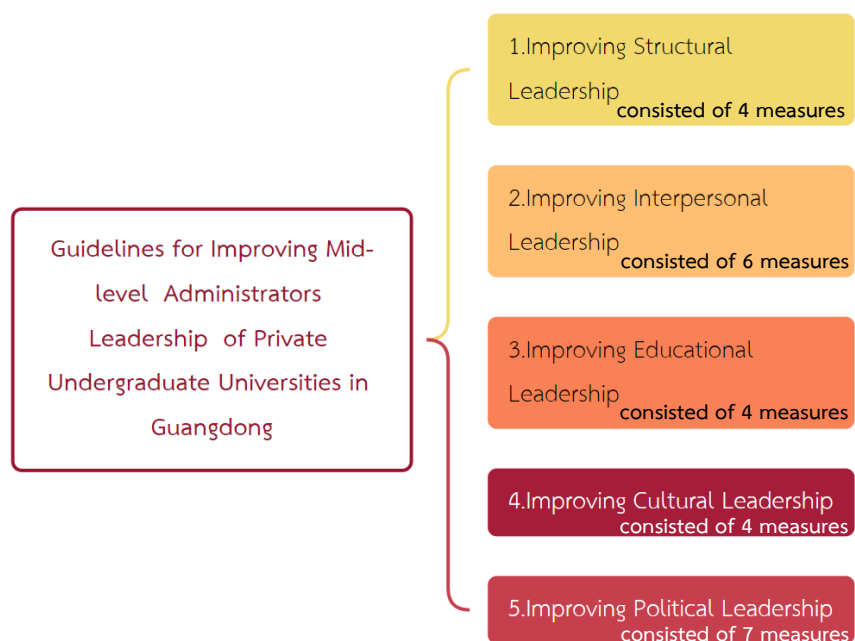
Figure 2 Guidelines for Improving Mid-level Administrators Leadership of Private Undergraduate Universities in Guangdong

2. 1 Improving structural leadership consisted of 4 measures: 1) Formulate clear school development goals, fully consider the actual situation of the school and the needs of teachers and students, and formulate feasible development goals; 2) Optimize the organizational structure, better integrate the resources, and improve the management efficiency; 3) Establish a scientific decision‑making system to realize the long‑term development of the school; 4) Establish a reasonable incentive and evaluation system to stimulate the enthusiasm and creativity of mid-level administrators.

2.2 Improving interpersonal leadership consisted of 6 measures: 1) Establish a good interpersonal relationship, and enhance team cohesion through team-building activities and regular communication meetings; 2) Learn to listen to and respect others, listen to the opinions of others patiently, give positive feedback, and enhance the cohesion of the team; 3) Cultivate the ability to solve conflicts and deal with complex interpersonal relationships, solve problems fairly and objectively, and win the trust and respect of all parties; 4) Encourage team members to take responsibility and reach their potential, provide feedback and constructive criticism to help them improve and improve; 5) Keep learning and reflecting, summarize experience and lessons, and constantly improve their leadership style and communication skills; 6) Enhance the ability to innovate and adapt to change.

2.3 Improving educational leadership consisted of 4 measures: 1) Update educational concepts and improve professional skills; 2) Optimize the management and allocation to provide resource guarantee; 3) Keep learning and reflecting, and summarize the experience and lessons learned; 4) Establish a clear educational vision and goals.

2.4 Improving cultural leadership consisted of 4 measures: 1) Improve cultural awareness and play a leading role; 2) Find the correct cultural positioning and improve the construction planning; 3) Strengthen cultural concepts and highlight characteristics and guidance; 4) Understand the school's core values and integrate them into your daily management.

2.5 Improving political leadership consisted of 7 measures: 1) Strengthen the study of political theory and improve political awareness; 2) Strengthen political practice and improve the ability to solve practical problems; 3) Understand the law of contradictions and master the handling skills; 4) Pay attention to school conflicts and strengthen communication; 5) Attach importance to the contradictions outside the school, and strive for win-win cooperation; 6) Have the ability to innovate and learn, constantly explore new development models and paths, and inject new impetus into the development of the school; 7) Strengthen democratic awareness, strengthen democratic management, improve the system and system, and attach importance to process supervision.

3. Evaluate the suitability and feasibility of guidelines for improving mid-level administrators of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong, shown that table 2

Table 2 Mean and standard deviation of expert evaluation of guidelines for Improving mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong in 5 aspects

	Guidelines	Suitability			Feasibility		
		$\overline{X}$	S.D	Level	$\overline{X}$	S.D	Level
1	Improving Structural Leadership	4.67	0.49	Highest	4.64	0.50	Highest
2	Improving Interpersonal Leadership	4.61	0.51	Highest	4.65	0.49	Highest
3	Improving Educational Leadership	4.67	0.54	Highest	4.67	0.49	Highest
4	Improving Cultural Leadership	4.44	0.54	High	4.64	0.50	Highest
5	Improving Political Leadership	4.68	0.47	Highest	4.59	0.50	Highest
	Total	4.61	0.51	Highest	4.64	0.50	Highest

According to table 2, the suitability of guidelines for Improving mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong in 5 aspects were at highest level. Considering the results of this research aspects ranged from the highest to lowest level were as follow: the highest level was Improving Political Leadership, followed by Improving Structural Leadership, Improving Educational Leadership and Improving Cultural Leadership was the lowest level.

The feasibility guidelines for Improving mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong in 5 aspects were at highest level. Considering the results of this research aspects ranged from the highest to lowest level were as follow: the highest level was Improving Educational Leadership, followed by Improving Interpersonal Leadership and Improving Political Leadership was the lowest level.

Discussion

1. The current situation of mid‑level administrators leadership of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong in 5 aspects was at medium level. Considering the results of this research aspects ranged from the highest to lowest level were as follow: the highest mean was cultural leadership, followed by interpersonal leadership, and structural leadership was the lowest level. The related to the research of Zheng Yanxiang (2005) emphasized the need to define leadership from an organizational perspective, and proposed a theoretical model that includes the five dimensions of structural leadership, interpersonal leadership, political leadership, cultural

leadership and educational leadership. He believes that through an in-depth study of these five dimensions, there can be a better understanding of the connotation of principal leadership. This leadership theory also applies to mid‑level administrators in universities.; In term of Interpersonal leadership was at high level. This is because the mid‑level administrators of Guangdong private undergraduate universities pay attention to building trust and team cohesion, motivate team members, strengthen communication, and promote the development and growth of employees. Despite some achievements in interpersonal leadership, there is still room for improvement. This is consistent with the results of some studies. Related to Sun Lingling's concept (2022,p33)show that Interpersonal leadership skills need to be strengthened most, with low scores in caring for the real needs of staff and meeting the needs of faculty. The research of Ma Lan (2020, P25) shows that interpersonal leadership is above the middle level, and effective interpersonal leadership can effectively improve the development of the organization and accelerate the implementation of advanced educational management concepts such as school education and democratic management.

2. The guidelines for improving mid‑level administrators leadership in five aspects was at highest level, which contain 25 guidelines. There are 4 guidelines for improving Structural leadership, 6 guidelines for improving Interpersonal leadership, 4 guidelines for improving Educational leadership, 4 guidelines for improving Cultural leadership, and 7 guidelines for improving Political leadership. The researcher has chosen measures to Improving interpersonal leadership the reason that the development of interpersonal leadership is crucial to improve the leadership ability of mid-level administrators leaders in private undergraduate universities in Guangdong Province. Through effective communication, a focus on team member growth, conflict resolution and consensus building, and continuous learning and reflection, mid-level administrators can better lead the team towards common goals. This guideline is consistent the research of Li Junqi (2022) studied on a topic of "Leadership Research from the Perspective of Values - Taking "Chen Shi Shi Shi Jia" as an Example" the results of some studies. Administrators should only with strong professional skills in education and teaching can we lead and make teaching demonstration for teachers, establish authority among teachers, put forward suggestions for teachers' professional development, urge teachers to improve the quality of classroom and improve the effect of classroom teaching.

3. The suitability and feasibility of guidelines for improving the mid‑level administrators of private undergraduate universities in Guangdong in 5 aspects were at highest level with the values between 4.00 and 5.00, which means the guidelines for improving mid-level administrators leadership are suitability and feasibility. measures to improving educational leadership was highest level, indicating the high suitability and feasibility of the guideline. This is because of the guidelines were summarized from the current surveys and interviews and analyzed using the mean and standard deviation, which showed the highest level of suitability and feasibility. The suitability and feasibility of improving interpersonal leadership was highest level, indicating the high suitability and feasibility of the guidelines. Related to concept of Chen Xiaohui (2019) of guidelines for improving

Educational leadership, It is proposed to update the educational concept, improve the professional skills, optimize the management allocation, provide resource guarantee, attach importance to the school‑based curriculum, and carry forward the characteristics of the school. The guideline of this research has good suitability and feasibility.

Recommendations

1. Recommendations in implementation

1.1 Structural leadership; As a middle‑level administrators, should make clear school development goals, fully considering the actual situation of the organization and the needs of teachers and students and provide training and development plans for mid-level administrators to help them improve their planning and management skills and meet their needs for career development.

1.2 Interpersonal leadership; As a middle‑level administrators, should strengthen their own ability building and improve professional quality; pay attention to team building and enhance team cohesion; strengthen communication with superiors and subordinates and establish a good communication mechanism; cultivate the strategic vision and executive ability of mid-level administrators; and establish good interpersonal relationship.

1.3 Educational leadership; As a middle-level administrators, should strengthen training and learning to improve the educational vision and values of mid-level administrators; encourage mid-level administrators to participate in education reform and practice and accumulate practical experience; establish effective incentive mechanism to stimulate the enthusiasm and creativity of mid-level administrators.

1.4 Cultural leadership; As a middle‑level administrators, should strengthen the training of innovation concept and enhance the innovation consciousness; to provide the opportunities for innovation practice and exercise the innovation ability; 3) to establish innovation incentive mechanism to stimulate the innovation potential; and to build an innovation platform to provide rich innovation resources and information support.

1.5 Political leadership; As a middle-level administrators, should strengthen the study of political theory and improve the political consciousness and cooperation consciousness of mid-level administrators; strengthen practical training and enhance the coordination and cooperation ability of mid‑level administrators; strengthen the training of communication ability and improve the efficiency of communication and cooperation between mid-level administrators and all parties

2. Recommendations for further research

2.1 Construction of leadership model: Through large sample survey and data analysis, build a leadership model suitable for Mid-level administrators of private universities in Guangdong Province. This model can include various leadership traits, skills, behaviors, etc., providing clear goals and paths for cultivating and improving the leadership of Mid-level administrators.

2.2 Research on leadership development strategy: Develop a series of leadership development strategies based on the leadership model. For example, through training, guidance, practice and other methods, to help Mid-level administrators to improve the leadership elements involved in the model.

2.3 Expand the scope of research: In addition to Mid-level administrators, future research can also include senior managers and other management-level managers into the research scope, so as to form a more comprehensive leadership research system.

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