

# ORGANISATIONAL CULTURES AND TEFL LECTURERS' PERSONAL EXPERIENCES: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY AT CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

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## ABSTRACT

Examining the similarities and differences between the prevalent administrative cultures in China and the personal experiences of TEFL teachers is the primary goal of this exploratory study. Improving understanding of the connections between these two types of interactions is their goal. The purpose of this research is to provide light on how different types of institutional practices, bureaucratic processes, and different types of governance affect professional duties and personal health. The study's overarching goal is to learn how these factors affect the split. Academic autonomy, evaluation methods, and workload allocation are all areas where administrative cultures may have an effect on faculty members' private life. Individuals' cultural backgrounds impact their adaptability and ability to balance work and life. Each of these is influenced by the culture of the organisation. The study uses qualitative observations to provide insight on the difficulties experienced by TEFL instructors during teaching. Hierarchical administration, a lack of individual autonomy, and resistant cultural norms all contribute to making these problems even more severe. Some of the characteristics are listed below. Opportunities for career advancement and communication among people of different religious and ethnic origins are also emphasised in the research. So, looking at the intricacies of academic life in China through the lens of administrative cultures is crucial. That is why it is crucial to have regulations that strike a balance between micromanaging institutions and micromanaging professors. They should give this section a lot of thought. The study's findings add to the current conversations on how university management affects the daily lives of foreign instructors in today's globally integrated classrooms.

**Keywords:** Academic autonomy, evaluation methods, micromanaging institutions, micromanaging professors, Hierarchical administration.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is of utmost importance to teach English to speakers of other languages in countries where English is not the official language. This need has arisen as a direct result of the exponential expansion of higher education institutions throughout the world. China is quickly rising to the position of leading employer in this sector globally. In addition to meeting the rigorous academic requirements of their field, international faculty members often have the challenge of understanding and adapting to their employers' complex administrative cultures. There is a wide variety of administrative cultures shown in the existing management practices, bureaucratic frameworks, and institutional concepts. Many other kinds of administrative cultures exist as well. Companies' day-to-day activities are obviously impacted by these cultures. The academic, professional, private, and personal lives of faculty members are impacted by the cultures of these organisations. When it comes to academic freedom, workload allocation, and performance assessment, administrative cultures in China significantly impact

TEFL instructors. Even when they're not in class, these technologies have the potential to improve professors' social lives, health, and quality of life in general. Understanding how lecturers' personal experiences impact their teaching effectiveness, work happiness, and long-term commitment to the institution is crucial, since these characteristics are strongly connected. That is why this understanding is crucial. A large body of literature on the foundational aspects of China's system for managing universities is now accessible. However, the perspectives of TEFL instructors who are not native English speakers have received surprisingly little attention. Things in this country are different from those in the US. To better understand the objective, it can be helpful to examine the ways in which administrative cultures impact the daily lives of professors (Li et al., 2024). By examining the academic climate of Chinese institutions together with all of its challenges and opportunities, the article paints a comprehensive picture of the issue. Hierarchical management, a lack of autonomy, and ingrained cultural norms are all issues. That need fixing. Opportunities to network with individuals from many walks of life and advance in one's career are also present. The study's overarching goal is to add to the conversation around faculty wellness, globalisation, and the management of higher education. One way to achieve this goal is to exchange data with educators and school administrators from all across the globe (Yan & He, 2025).

## **2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

More and more Chinese students have enrolled in English language classes in the last several decades. More international faculty members are needed at academic institutions as a result of this development. This is in more demand now than it was in the past. China's efforts to internationalise its higher education system rely heavily on TEFL teachers. Their role in helping the government achieve its goals of improving global communication and competitiveness is a major factor in this. One distinctive feature of TEFL is its emphasis on "Teaching English to speakers of other languages." Both their work and personal life are significantly impacted by the administrative institutions they are a part of, but much more so by the culture in which they live and work (Wang et al., 2024). Whatever they do for a living, this remains true. The administrative organisations they are a part of aren't the only ones they significantly impact. Every aspect of Socio-Culture is influenced by Confucian traditions, collectivist ideals, and hierarchical social standards. This includes people's interactions, the functioning of institutions, and the way they encounter each other on a daily basis. All of these factors have significantly impacted the evolution of Socio-Culture. Teachers from other countries may encounter both favourable and unfavourable circumstances in this cultural context. Could these two things really take place? It would be more beneficial for them to engage in traditional Chinese activities while in China, such as hosting guests, establishing friendships (*guanxi*), and volunteering. A deeper appreciation for one another's cultures and a more cohesive society could result from this. Stress, misunderstandings, or a sense of isolation might result from power dynamics, differing communication styles, and expectations for compliance. Those things are probably responsible for causing these things to occur. Additionally, the people involved may find things more complicated due to these differences. It is vital to comprehend the socio-cultural effects on the personal narratives of TEFL instructors who work with students from diverse linguistic backgrounds. This exemplifies the interconnected nature of cultural ideals, academic life, and individual welfare in classical Chinese educational institutions. The reason for this occurrence is now crystal evident (Wu & Shafait, 2024).

## **3. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH**

This study examines the perspectives and life experiences of university and high school teachers in China. To accomplish this objective, these institutions will use the existing English

as a Foreign Language instructors already employed. This inquiry will concentrate on the relationship between individuals' perceptions and their real experiences. This research has many objectives. First, it needs to know what drives lecturers. Second, it wants to know how those ticks change their job and personal life. Third, it wants to know what all of this implies for the health of the lecturers, their ability to adapt, and their ability to do well in varied cultural settings. The goal of this project is to go at these processes and find ways to make changes to institutional norms, better the academic and social environment in Chinese higher education, and make things easier for foreign professors. Each of these objectives represents an outcome that may be achieved via the examination of these methods. The goal of this research is to better understand these processes and come to findings that might help institutions change their policies. Insights will be very important for reaching this aim.

#### **4. LITERATURE REVIEW**

There has been a lot of study in the field of international education on how cultural factors affect the viewpoints of foreign scholars. They gathered the information from several online sources. Listening to this CD has given me a new appreciation for the cultural and socioeconomic diversity in China. Collectivism, deference to authority, and social peace are highly valued in Socio-Culture. These values are heavily influenced by Confucian traditions. Integrity impacts one's relationships with coworkers and other people in one's daily life. These concepts influence one's professional and private lives. Many studies have shown that academics' views of autonomy, authority, and academic independence are shaped by administrative structures and cultural norms. As a result, adjusting to all the requirements of teaching and grading could be rather challenging. What transpired causes it to occur. Certain foreign academics may find it challenging to communicate with their Chinese colleagues due to the more indirect and complex communication styles used by Chinese enterprises (Ng et al., 2024). The official routes of communication in China are notoriously vague and secretive, so this makes sense. Cultural practices such as guanxi, also known as social networking, play a crucial role in establishing personal and professional relationships. Guanxi refers to a social networking practice. Even while these things could bring people together, they also make areas without these networks more vulnerable to stress. Teachers who take part in community events may have a deeper understanding of the culture, a stronger sense of belonging, and improved cross-cultural communication with their pupils, the research found. Throughout the investigation, this idea is stressed. Loneliness, miscommunication, and an absence of social support are some of the many negative outcomes that may result from cultural differences. Teachers who have never dealt with students from diverse ethnic backgrounds may find this very useful. This and similar research demonstrate that TEFL teachers' personal and professional life are significantly influenced by Chinese cultural norms. Working in Chinese schools impacts these educators' adaptability, pleasure, and happiness, among other positive traits (Khatibi & Shamsi, 2024).

#### **5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- What is the effect of perception on the TEFL lecturers' private experiences in Chinese universities?

#### **6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

##### **6.1 Research Design**

The quantitative data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 25. The odds ratio and 95% confidence interval were used to ascertain the strength and direction of the statistical link. The researchers developed a statistically significant criterion at  $p < 0.05$ . A descriptive analysis was performed to determine the key characteristics of the data. Quantitative approaches are often

used to evaluate data obtained from surveys, polls, and questionnaires, as well as data modified by computational tools for statistical analysis.

**6.2 Sampling:** Research participants filled out questionnaires to provide information for the research. Using the Rao-soft programme, researchers determined that there were 630 people in the research population, so researchers sent out 730 questionnaires. The researchers got 700 back, and they excluded 30 due to incompleteness, so researchers ended up with a sample size of 670.

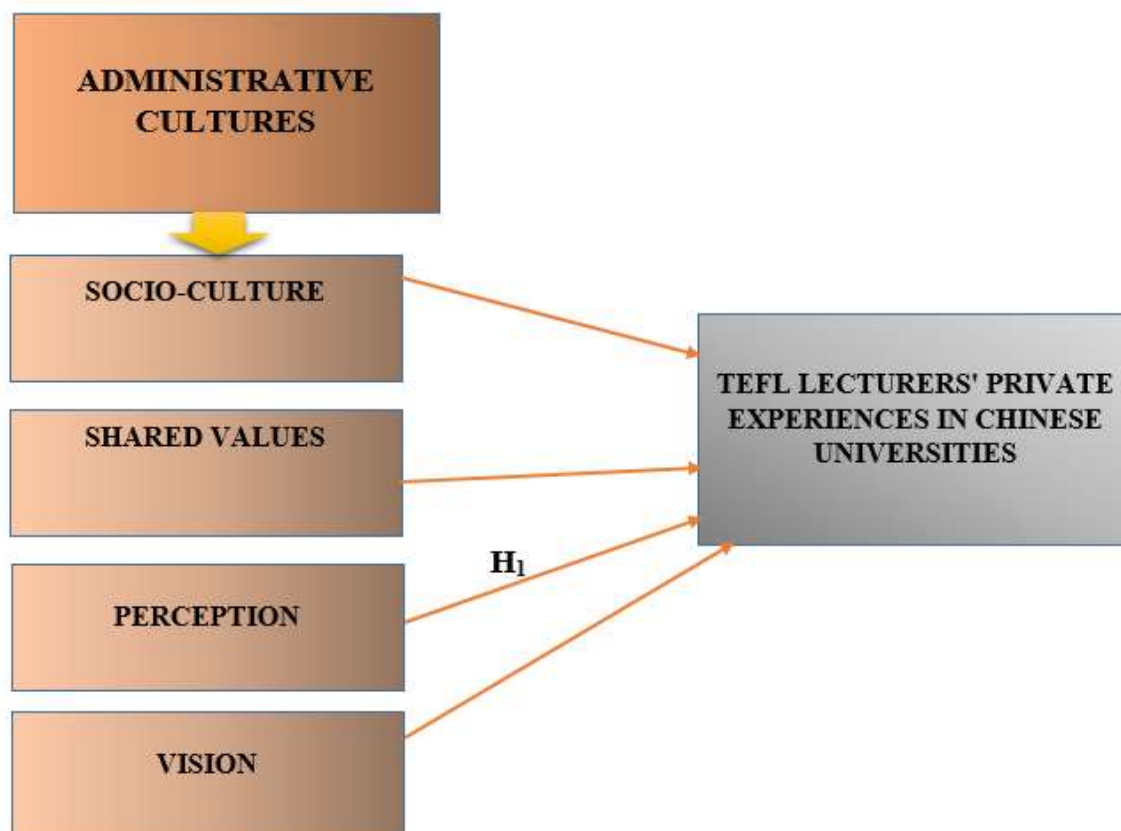
### 6.3 Data and Measurement:

The primary method of data collection in the research was a questionnaire survey. Part A of the survey asked for basic demographic information, while Part B used a 5-point Likert scale to collect responses on characteristics related to online and offline channels. Many sources, largely online databases, provided the secondary data.

**6.4 Statistical Software:** With the help of SPSS 25 and MS-Excel, ran the statistical analysis.

**6.5 Statistical Tools:** Using descriptive analysis, to understand the data on a basic level. The researcher must use ANOVA to analyse the data.

## 7. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



## 8. RESULT

### ❖ Factor Analysis

A common use of Factor Analysis (FA) is to uncover latent variables within observable data. In the absence of definitive visual or diagnostic indicators, it is customary to use regression coefficients for evaluations. In FA, models are crucial for success. The objectives of modeling are to identify errors, intrusions, and discernible correlations. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test is a method for evaluating datasets generated by multiple regression analyses. The model

and sample variables are confirmed to be representative. The data indicates redundancy, as seen by the figures. Reduced proportions improve data comprehension. The KMO output is a numerical value ranging from zero to one. A KMO value ranging from 0.8 to 1 indicates a sufficient sample size. The below quantities are considered suitable, according per Kaiser: The subsequent approval standards established by Kaiser are as follows:

A lamentable 0.050 to 0.059, insufficient 0.60 to 0.69

Middle grades often span from 0.70 to 0.79.

Exhibiting a quality point score between 0.80 and 0.89.

They are astonished by the range of 0.90 to 1.00.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Sampling Adequacy Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic: 0.957

The outcomes of Bartlett's test of sphericity are as follows: The degrees of freedom for the chi-square test are around 190, with a significance level of 0.000.

**Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>		.957
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	<b>Approx. Chi-Square</b>	3252.968
	<b>df</b>	190
	<b>Sig.</b>	.000

This illustrates that claims made for sampling reasons are valid. Researchers used Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to assess the significance of the correlation matrices. A sample is deemed good based on the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin criteria when the result is 0.957. The p-value derived from Bartlett's sphericity test is 0.00. The correlation matrix is not an identity matrix, as shown by a statistically significant outcome from Bartlett's sphericity test.

❖ **INDEPENDENT VARIABLE**

• **Administrative Cultures**

Leadership, policymaking, and employee conduct at educational institutions are shaped by what are known as "administrative cultures." The term used to describe these ways of living is "institutional cultures." These types of organisational cultures are known as administrative structures. People that observe this culture often refer to it as "administrative cultures." The administrative culture of Chinese institutions is defined by bureaucratic procedures, performance-based evaluation systems, and hierarchical management structures. These characteristics further illuminate the nature of Chinese company administration. The university sets rules, manages the faculty, and communicates expectations to both domestic and foreign instructors. The office culture is the most influential factor in determining the appearance of the workplace. This is due, in large part, to the fact that they contribute to an environment that is conducive to teachers' work and growth. Their presence or absence governs office operations

as an independent variable. Their position of power is the reason for this. Their impact on TEFL instructors' levels of professional autonomy, the allocation of tasks, and the availability of resources is substantial. In order to better understand how institutional governance frameworks affect the lives, careers, and happiness of TEFL instructors in Chinese institutions, this research will look at both the direct and indirect effects of these frameworks. This will help them comprehend the impact of these frameworks on several aspects. The work cultures that are present (Wall, 2024).

#### ❖ **FACTORS**

##### • **Perception**

A multiplicity of distinct but interrelated elements influence the development of perspective within the framework of firsthand testimonies from TEFL instructors now employed in Chinese educational institutions. These items all have something to do with each other. These teachers are currently working in China. The cultural framework in which individuals think about their experiences via the lens of local conventions and expectations, as well as their interactions with people from different cultures, will have a big impact on their points of view. The institutional context and working circumstances that have a big effect on how individuals feel about their jobs include things like pay rate, workload, and alternatives for administrative help. This is because of the way the institutions and work environments are set up. The characteristics mentioned above have a big effect on how people see their professional identities. This is because these traits affect how individuals feel about their jobs. They feel at home there since they are part of the group and know individuals their age. But things like professional autonomy and academic freedom are what actually count when it comes to how happy individuals are with their teaching and research. The person's housing, mental health, and ability to manage their personal and professional life all impact their complete well-being, which in turn affects how they see things. Conclusion: The constraints of language and communication may either enhance or hinder the attainment of gratifying experiences, contingent upon one's viewpoint. It is essential to examine how the institution's structure influences educators' conceptions of their duties and the dynamics of their interactions with one another. These features combine to provide a confusing picture of how ESL instructors see and understand the environment around them when they are working (Morris & Mo, 2023).

#### ❖ **DEPENDENT VARIABLE**

##### • **TEFL Lecturers' Private Experiences In Chinese Universities**

Research in this Chinese university setting is based on first-hand accounts from TEFL instructors. These accounts demonstrate the personal, professional, and societal impacts of these occurrences. They fully absorb the institutional and cultural milieu in which they find themselves. A wide range of topics are discussed at these gatherings. Important elements include being able to work independently in class, getting along with classmates and teachers, enjoying one's work, and finding a happy medium between the two. How people go about their daily lives is shaped by China's larger cultural norms. There are many more aspects besides bureaucratic frameworks, evaluation systems, and administrative processes (including task allocation) that impact people's experiences. For many educators, this is the current reality. Several things may be in place to help educators feel comfortable and well-cared for. Among them are social skills, such as interacting with people of different backgrounds and forming friendships in one's neighbourhood. In this study, the experiences of individuals working as TEFL instructors are used as the dependent variable. Socio-Culture was one of the factors, including administrative cultures that may have set in motion the events described above. It is the fault of administrative cultures. These feelings were triggered by the experiences. This highlights the significance of the link between individual flexibility and institutional oversight in the context of higher education (Al-Hadhrami, 2024).

- **The relationship between Impact Of Perception and TEFL Lecturers' Private Experiences In Chinese Universities**

The personal experiences of TEFL instructors in Chinese institutions are significantly shaped by their perspectives, which serve as a prism for evaluating their professional and personal lives. This is because people's points of view operate as a lens through which they look at these two elements of their lives. When lecturers witness institutional rules that support them, fair treatment, and considerable cultural involvement, they often have private experiences that inspire, motivate, and make them feel like they belong. Professors may feel more at home at the institution after going through these activities. These types of things happen a lot. On the other hand, negative feelings like feeling left out of decision-making, coping with cultural misunderstandings, or perceiving excessive tasks as unjust may make someone feel worried, alone, and less healthy overall. Perception regulates the process by which academics assess difficulties and opportunities; this then influences their emotional reactions, coping strategies, and professional identity. Perception is a middle step in the process. Perception facilitates this process for its advantage. To comprehend the personal experiences of those who teach English to people who speak different languages, it's important to have a sense of perspective. This is because how someone sees things affects how they interact with their job and how they understand and make meaning of their education, which includes many different cultural settings. Because of this, this is still true (XIAOMENG & AGARWAL, 2024).

On the basis of the above discussion, the researcher formulated the following hypothesis, which was analyse the between Impact of Perception and TEFL Lecturers' Private Experiences in Chinese Universities.

***“H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Impact of Perception and TEFL Lecturers' Private Experiences in Chinese Universities.”***

***“H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between Impact of Perception and TEFL Lecturers' Private Experiences in Chinese Universities.”***

**Table 2: H<sub>1</sub> ANOVA Test**

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	39588.620	136	5657.517	1056.295	.000
Within Groups	492.770	533	5.356		
Total	40081.390	669			

This investigation yields remarkable results. The F value is 1056.295, attaining significance with a p-value of .000, which is below the .05 alpha threshold. This signifies the ***“H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between Impact of Perception and TEFL Lecturers' Private Experiences in Chinese Universities”*** is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected.”

## 9. DISCUSSION

Exploring the ways in which TEFL instructors' experiences connect with socio-cultural factors might provide light on the ways in which cultural values impact academic life and personal adaptation. The school's atmosphere is greatly affected by socio-cultural factors. Its hallmark

values are harmony, respect for authority, and collectivism. The company's culture dictates the kind of work that teachers should do. Adjusting to these cultural norms may be both thrilling and terrifying for many instructors who were born outside of the US. One way to learn about the local culture and broaden one's cultural perspectives is to participate in Chinese rites, festivals, and community activities. Its veracity is one of the event's most intriguing aspects. Teachers may help their pupils feel more integrated into society by engaging in activities like as visiting cultural events, contributing to guanxi networks, or incorporating Confucian principles into their lessons. This is what professors are able to do. Distinct cultural norms could make it more challenging for people to adjust to a new environment, which might increase their anxiety levels. In some cases, the usual hierarchical administrative procedures and indirect communication strategies utilised in one location could collide with the work histories of foreign teachers. Institutions that hire teachers with this background tend to be inclusive and welcoming of all kinds of people. Because of this, people may feel helpless in matters of education and personal direction. Confusion, misery, and a lack of agency over one's own life are some potential results. Although guanxi may be beneficial for those who are skilled at using it, it can also lead to feelings of isolation for those who struggle to establish meaningful relationships. Realising that guanxi is based on the principle of connection-making and -keeping is the first step. Personal connections, social networks, and overall wellbeing outside of work may be impacted by cultural variances. A person's life could be affected in every one of these areas by cultural obstacles. In international education, being able to collaborate with individuals of different cultural backgrounds and having cultural awareness are both crucial. This becomes very evident when people take a broader view of things. By instituting inclusive policies, providing mentorship, and organising orientation events, schools may ease the transition for faculty members and help them deal with culture shock. Because different cultures constantly promote mutual understanding, this is always within reach. But teachers may benefit much from encouraging their students to be adaptable, curious, and open to new experiences. The promotion is overseen by academics. In the end, Socio-Culture has many different impacts, some of which can aid progress and others of which might provide obstacles. This is due to the fact that it might impact them equally. One thing that sets Chinese university TEFL teachers apart from other types of connections is the complexity of their personal experiences.

## 10. CONCLUSION

TEFL teachers' personal experiences while working in Chinese schools are highly affected by what they already know about the culture, institutions, and social environment in which they operate. This is because TEFL teachers receive a lot of feedback from their students. There is a considerable need for teachers of English as a second language in China's colleges and universities. When academics accept professional independence, inclusion, and support, their health and happiness improve, and their drive and work satisfaction skyrocket. This is because studies have revealed that academics are surer of their capacity to control their careers. But instructors could not like their workload, cultural differences, or lack of integration, which might make their relationships with pupils less satisfying. These views may stem from the expectation to interact with pupils. Lecturers' perceptions influence their comprehension of the connections, difficulties, and opportunities they encounter, becoming perception a crucial mediator. This is where they can see how important perception is. Perception is incredibly important for these and other reasons. It is very important for administrators and lawmakers who want to improve the personal and professional lives of international faculty members, create an inclusive and productive academic environment, and make sure that people from different cultural backgrounds can interact with each other to have a good understanding of these dynamics in the university setting.

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