Motivating Teaching Staff in Times of Change in Chinese Universities

MOTIVER LE PERSONNEL ENSEIGNANT A L'EPOQUE DE CHANGEMENT DANS LES UNIVERSITES CHINOISES

Zhang Hongping[1]

Abstract: This paper aims to explore the ways to motivate teaching staff in times of change in Chinese higher educational institutions, and the compatibility of these ways with Chinese culture.
Key words: motivation, teaching staff, change

Résumé: Cet article vise à explorer les moyens de motiver le personnel enseignant à une époque de changement dans les établissements d'enseignement supérieurs, et la compatibilité de ces moyens avec la culture chinoise.
Mots-Clés: motivation, personnel enseignant, changement

INTRODUCTION

The global social and economic forces throughout the modern world have brought about profound changes to education. Governments in different countries keep shaping their educational policies constantly, which has triggered a series of external changes. These external changes together with some internal ones have made the educational institutions generate new styles of management. Although the educational management is multi-dimensional, the management of staff is the most important aspect in the innovation of managerial approaches. The people-oriented managerial style puts staff at the very heart of administrators' work. All the organizational activities are centered upon the performance of staff. However, the performance quality of the working staff is correlated to staff's motivation. In modern educational research, motivation has gradually attracted educators' attention. Therefore, most of this article is to be devoted to the theme of motivating staff in educational organizations.

The main purpose of this paper is to probe the insights of motivation in education, and especially in higher education in China. It intends to help Chinese university senior or middle managers to achieve the organizational improvement and effectiveness in times of change via reviewing relevant literature from the Western nations. In the subsequent part, after building the theoretical foundation, the paper goes on to introduce some recent means employed by the Chinese universities to motivate staff and evaluate the

effectiveness of those means. Whether those means are compatible with Chinese culture will be analysed since the concept of culture has become increasingly significant in educational management. Another key point to be covered in this paper is that how educational managers adapt their styles of leadership to the changing context within their organizations from the perspective of motivating staff to the full extent. Thus, this research is conducted on the basis of answering some key questions:

How does culture impact on motivation in education?

Why is it important to motivate teaching staff in times of change?

How can staff be motivated?

In addition to the illustration of the major points mentioned above, the challenges facing the Chinese universities in the 21st century will be dealt with at the end of this paper. In the light of those present challenges, the article will point out some areas for future research in the area of motivation in education.

As a subject teacher in a Chinese university with approximately fourteen years of classroom experience, I keep wondering how the teaching staff can be motivated to give high performance by the university leaders besides teachers' self-motivation. This paper is inspired by this curiosity, so when I focused upon motivation in education in my paper, I narrowed it down to how to motivate academic teachers in Chinese higher education. My personal interest caused me to come up with this issue as the major concern of my assignment although I

am aware that non-teaching staff have made absolutely necessary contributions to the running of universities.

RATIONALE FOR MOTIVATING TEACHING STAFF IN CHINA

Before reviewing the relevant literature, I feel it necessary to introduce briefly the present state of Chinese higher education and state clearly the rationale for motivating teaching staff in Chinese universities. Higher education plays a key role in China's development. The higher educational organizations, which plan to achieve the purpose of training specialists for all lines of work, include universities, colleges, and institutes. In respect of the funding and administration, the regular institutions of higher education are divided into three categories: those directly under the Ministry of Education (MOE), those under other ministries, and those under provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities. Universities and colleges provide four or five year courses for undergraduates to get Bachelor's degrees, three year courses for postgraduates to get Master's degrees, and additional three year courses for Ph.D. students to get Doctor's degrees. Vocational colleges offer two or three year diploma courses. Institutes enroll few students and focus on academic and scientific research. The university or college calendar is generally divided into two semesters (some are trying a three-term system). It is highly competitive for students to enter a university or college since the MOE has set up a very strict centralized enrolment system for the admission to universities and colleges. Students are required to pass the National Entrance Examination (NEE), which usually takes place in every July, to enter a university or college. Now there is no age limit for the examination candidates. Entrance examinations are also required for those candidates who have completed a first degree and then apply for postgraduate and Ph.D. studies (http://www.Chinese-embassy.org.za/eng/13828.html).

More and more importance has been attached by the government to Chinese higher education after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The striking development of higher education can be reflected in the spectacular increase in the number of regular (common) institutions: from 201 in 1952 to 1071 in 1999. In 1999, 248 institutions were under direct control of various ministries and commissions of the central government. 871 adult institutions offered seats to those candidates who have passed the Adult NEE (http://www.Chinese-embassy.org.za/eng/13828.html). During the Cultural Revolution the NEE was stopped and the higher education system actually ceased to function. Since 1978 China's higher education mechanism has been brought back to normal and experienced reorganization. A series of educational reforms have been conducted by the government in the 1980s. According to Deng Xiaoping, the higher education institutions were expected to function as "a front-line force in scientific research" (Deng, 1984, p.61). The 1985 educational reform initiated the marketisation of higher education institutions. In the last two decades' radical reforms have built a changing environment for the universities and colleges. Therefore, the significant changes brought about by economic modernization, marketisation, and globalisation pushed Chinese higher education institutions to face challenges of the twenty-first century. The fundamental reforms consist of five dimensions: education provision, management, investment, recruitment and job-placement, and the inner-institute management. However, management reform is of primary importance and difficulty. (http://www.edu.cn/HomePage/english/statistics/education/index.shtml). Chinese universities and colleges are aiming to train creative talents with all-round abilities. The development of human resources and the great improvement in the nation's cultural, scientific and technological levels are of primary significance to China's catching up with the most advanced countries in the world.

"The transition to mass higher education is a global phenomenon" (Randall, 2002, p.190). As a developing country, China is carrying out the policy of expanding higher education since the government is aware that high-level technical and intellectual skills are essential to the nation's knowledge-based economies (ibid.). In addition, China's "open door" economic policies implemented in 1985 boosted the social demands on all-round ability graduates. Therefore, people are expecting better educational service from higher education. The fundamental social and economic changes have exerted inevitable pressure on higher education. Effectiveness and improvement of higher education institutions are becoming increasingly the major concern of people. Quality and efficiency stand at the very heart of organizational effectiveness and improvement. To meet the needs of changing times and the society, universities and colleges are shifting their emphasis of work to quality of teaching and learning and organizational cost-effectiveness. This leads to greater effort on achieving this purpose through efficiency in use of resources and effective management. Thus senior managers as well as middle managers are trying a number of different approaches to make the most of teaching staff, to keep a stable teacher team, to prevent teachers from quitting their jobs and shifting to other lines of work, and to avoid a decline of teaching quality. To ensure the teaching quality, they make some policies at institutional level to arouse the teachers' incentive to offer high-level service – teaching. Under proper and happy working conditions, teachers are encouraged to give high performance both in classroom teaching and academic research.

By the end of 1998, Chinese universities and

colleges have recruited 407,000 full-time teachers (http://www.edu.cn/20010101/22284.shtml). A key question is: what mainly affects these academic staff's behaviour? It occurred to the managers and administrators that motivation is a key factor although it is not the only factor (Lawler, 1973). It goes without saying that leading a workforce where there is a lack of motivation is a problem. Thus, the management of motivation stands at the very heart of successful management of people within an organization (Anderson, 2003). Evans has argued that the most potent influence on teacher motivation is leadership (Evans, 2001). At present, leaders in Chinese universities and colleges are facing a great challenge of motivating staff in addition to formulating some policies to discipline staff. What administrative mechanism is the most appropriate for leaders in Chinese universities and colleges to motivate teachers? What recent means have the managers employed to fill teachers with enthusiasm in times of change? Are these means compatible with the Chinese culture, especially the organizational culture? These are some key questions that need to be answered.

REVIEWING THE LITERATURE

Definition of motivation

Prior to the analysis of motivating teachers in Chinese universities and colleges, the literature review will focus on what motivates teachers and how they are motivated. Managers who seek the answers will often look to motivation theory for assistance. Although the highly complex human nature makes managing people not an easy task for educational administrators, understanding human behaviour can be a most rewarding experience (Dornyei, 2001). Thanks to many researchers, various human motivation theories have been delved into from the perspectives of social psychology and social behaviourism. Tracing out these theories may take the definition of motivation as a starting point since a thorough understanding of motivation helps administrators manage subordinates more effectively. However, different researchers and psychologists have provided diverse definitions of this term. According to Everard and Morris (1996, p.20), motivation means 'getting results through people' or 'getting the best out of people'. Colin Riches' articulation about motivation is that "it refers to individual differences with regard to the priorities, attitudes and aspects of life style that people seek to fulfil in work" (Riches, 1994, p. 224). Psychologists usually define it as "the processes involved in arousing, directing, and sustaining behavior" (Ball, 1977, p. 2). Perhaps a precise definition is very difficult due to the complexity of motivation. Yet, the study of motivation conducted by most researchers and psychologists has

one thing in common: the concept of motivation involves *motives* and *needs* .

How people are motivated

Stemming from human mental processes, motive*s* and needs are linked to human behaviour and at the same time serve as the determinants of human performance. Furthermore, they are the internal drives of an employee, offering guidance to employees' behaviour, which makes an important contribution to their higher performance. The further understanding of motives and needs can be provided by the motivation theories. Although researchers and psychologists uncover the nature of motivation in different approaches, these theories can be generally classified into three categories: content theories, process theories (Riches, 1994; Beardwell et al., 2004), and integrated theories. The content theories, put forward by Maslow (1970) and Herzberg (1966), are concerned with how behaviour is driven and directed, that is to say, needs or values must be satisfied. The process theories, represented by Vroom (1964) and Adams (1965) and Locke (1968), intend to clarify why employees behave in a particular way, i.e. to explain a choice of action. Then the integrated theories, suggested by Ford (1992), attempt to create a more holistic framework on the basis of combining various motivation theories.

In an organization, employees may differ in characteristics, which makes management of motivation extremely complex. Different employees work to satisfy different needs. Some people work for money to satisfy their physical needs, others work for achieving their life goals. People may also work for the companionship their jobs offer. Various needs drive people to hold different jobs. Sigmund Freud uncovered the secret of people's diverse needs through his motivation theory. He held the view that forces within the individual were correlated to behaviour. A closed psychical energy system exists in each person. The aim of energy – goal satisfaction drives people to satisfy their needs although the form of energy may change from person to person. Apart from its positive effect, energy can also be repressed. (Pintrich and Schunk, 2002). Goal setting is central to the management of motivation.

Further understanding of this point can be reached by the goal theory proposed by Locke (1968). He argues that motivation is goal directed and closely related to a person's three cognitive processes, which involve staff's perception of the task they are told to fulfil, evaluation of its importance, and followed by formulation of intentions – target setting. The motivational benefits of goals are decided by three principles: goal difficulty, specificity, and acceptance. Difficulty of goals excites people to face challenge and at the same time leads to higher performance and greater motivation. At this point, unrealistic goals should be avoided. If the goal is unattainable, working staff will lose interest and enthusiasm to achieve it. Specific goals

result in better subsequent performance than general ones since staff are better directed.

This also concurs with Vroom's expectancy theory (1964). Goals should be consistent with teacher role and task expectations to ensure motivation. If staff accept the task after their evaluation to a greater extent, the goal will have far more positive impact on their performance. Vroom concludes that staff's performance which is closely related to their efforts will lead to rewards. Positive rewards can motivate staff highly. At this point, relating staff's performance to their pay is an effective approach to achieving motivation. The managerial implications from Vroom's theory help leaders diagnose organizational problems and solve them. Neider (1980) argues that leaders should be aware that people offer a good job only when they expect their efforts to produce good results. For this reason, teachers' participation in goal setting cannot be neglected. In the light of Locke's theory, it is rewarding for leaders to set specific goals which are challenging and yet realistic. This theory provides clear implications for performance management in educational organizations.

Maslow (1970) is well-known for his hierarchy of needs. When he examines human needs, he divides human needs into five levels:

Physiological

Safety/security

Belonging/social

Self-esteem/ego

Self-actualisation

These needs are arranged in the form of a pyramid with the physiological need at the most basic level. Maslow's theory highlights the hierarchy of needs on the assumption that behaviour is motivated by unsatisfied needs and lower level of needs must be satisfied before higher levels of need. However, a gap exists between the theoretical ladder of needs and the practical situation of needs especially in education. Teaching is quite different from other social activities, especially university teaching which consists of classroom teaching and academic research. Generally speaking, an individual may not be interested in the higher-level needs if his or her lower level needs are deprived. Actually, teachers have basic human needs that should be satisfied. Unlike factory workers, however, university teachers' higher level of needs may be fulfilled even if they are under poor working conditions or lack the sufficient basic salary to live on because of a high level of intrinsic motivation through love of teaching for its own sake. Under these circumstances, McGregor's Y theory (1970) which is drawn on Maslow's model can be applied to practice. According to the Y theory, teachers are self-motivated and are committed to teaching because of rewards attached to achievement. Motivation happens when the high levels of self-esteem and self-actualisation are fulfilled. Yet, it is not likely that all teachers are self-motivated. Some teachers are concerned only about physical conditions or financial reward. McGregor's X theory (1970) can explain explicitly why these people only pursue lower levels of satisfaction. As a result, leaders or decision-makers cannot generate a basket of one-fits-all measures to motivate all the teaching staff in the organization.

What affects people's motivation

What is mentioned above is concerned with how people are motivated. Another problem is what factors influence people's motivation, that is to say, what affects people's behaviour. In the context of education, many factors impact on teacher motivation: working conditions, reward and pay, chance of promotion, and so on. There exist so many motivators that a checklist is needed to articulate this clearly. However, owing to the limited space here, only a few of them can be analysed, which are regarded as particularly significant in the context of human resource management in universities. Generally, motivators may be identified as two categories: physical/material types (working conditions, housing, pay, appraisal system etc.) and spiritual types (morale, ethos, verbal praise, promotion, professional training, support etc.). The general term for all of these is job satisfaction.

Herzberg (1966) developed a two-factor theory when he perceived work motivation from the angle of the causes of job satisfaction. A dividing line is drawn clearly between the two factors, 'motivators' (satisfiers) and 'hygiene' factors (dissatisfiers). On the one hand, motivators are intrinsic to the job itself. They are closely linked to job content such as desire for achievement, sense of responsibility, performance recognition, job potential, job significance, personal growth. On the other hand, 'hygiene' factors are extrinsic to the job. They generally include working conditions, organizational policies, leadership and management, supervision, salary, social status, job security, interpersonal relations. These two distinct factors have different effects on people's motives at work. The absence of factors that lead to satisfaction does not necessarily lead to dissatisfaction, whereas the removal of factors that lead to dissatisfaction does not necessarily result in satisfaction. Nias (1989) has developed Herzberg's theory by identifying another group of factors: negative satisfiers which are not part of the job process. These factors refer to things like good human relationships, school organization. The removal of negative satisfiers may result in more job satisfaction. The implications lying in these approaches to motivation enable leaders to find out positive and negative factors – diagnose the contextual problem. Thus, the awareness of different satisfiers can help generate informed organizational policies and in the end lead to successful leadership.

Moreover, whether the staff are treated fairly is another necessary factor leaders should take into account in the process of initiating motivation. Adam's (1965) equity theory is based on the belief that whether individuals in an organization are motivated depends on to what extent they feel satisfied with the way they are treated in comparison with that of the others. Staff strive for equity between their inputs (their contribution to the job) and outputs (their reward from the job) in relation to others' They value fair treatment within or outside an organisation. If inequity or an unfavourable ratio of inputs and outputs from the staff's perception exist, it is very likely that staff will be demotivated, which will make staff work less or undervalue others' work. Adam's theory seems to be useful for leaders to seek feasible and effective performance review system. This is further underpinned by Skinner's (1953) reinforcement theory. He states that individuals are willing to repeat their behaviour that leads to favourable outcomes. Leaders may find great potential in the application of an integrative theory constructed by Ford (1992): motivational systems theory. Ford's holistic framework provides a theoretical umbrella for the field of motivation. Staff's motivation is viewed on the ground of context. This theory offers leaders more applicable guidance in motivating staff.

When leaders intend to motivate staff, a wide range of factors should be considered. Motivation determinants vary in different contexts. Viewing people in the organizational context contributes to the application of motivation theories. Culture creates the context in which employees fulfill their jobs (Dimmock and Walker, 2002). Having different cultures, people are motivated by different ways. The contemporary trends in the study of educational management highlight the need to consider culture. As a consequence, it is vital for leaders to understand the cultural impact on motivation at two levels – the national or societal culture (macro level) and organizational culture (micro level).

ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EXISTING POLICIES IN CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

Chinese Cultural impact on motivation

During the past decade, the emphasis of the research in human motivation has been shifted to the great concern for the notion of culture. Researchers start to perceive motivation from the angle of sociocultural context rather than individuals. Human behaviour always stems from certain physical and psychological environment. The specific culture has a certain amount of influence on people's cognition, behaviour and achievement (Dornyei, 2001). So culture has shed a light on how and why people think and act as they do.

Despite the difficulty in defining this term, Hofstede (1991: 4-5) interprets culture as "patterns of thinking, feeling and acting" underpinning " the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another". His analysis of national culture offers stereotypical views about the societal environment of human behaviour. Five cultural dimensions have been identified as: power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long term/short term orientation. Hofstede's international surveys have been acknowledged as the most influential for more than two decades. Walker and Dimmock (2002) conducted more recent research on the basis of existing frameworks and developed six-dimensional model of national/societal culture and organizational culture. China has been found to display high power distance, collectivism in people's belief, etc. Walker and Dimmock analyse the issue of culture from very detailed and 360-degree perspectives. However, only those dimensions of particular relevance to the Chinese cultural context will be selected for detailed discussion. Those points that will be covered in the following part are directly linked to human motivation.

First and foremost, as far as power distribution is concerned, centralization and inherent inequities are perceived as the national features of China. Power is "commonly concentrated in the hands of a few" (ibid.: p.51). These national characteristics are fostered by the legacy of Chinese history. It stems from the feudalism that had dominated Chinese society for more than two thousand years. Hierarchy plays a part of a cornerstone in the political system. The respect for authority extends to relationships in educational organizations. The leaders' positional authority in a hierarchical structure is perceived to some extent in any organization. Moreover, Confucianism has had a profound impact on the Chinese educational system as well as the Chinese social norms. Many traditional aspects of Chinese culture are deeply rooted in the influence of Confucius (Bush and Qiang, 2002). Kong Fu Ze (551 B.C. – 479 B.C.) was called Confucius by Jesuit missionaries. This Chinese sage's philosophy, written in the Confucian *Four Books and Five Classics*, emphasized a respect for hierarchy, social order, human virtues. Thus, policies have been generated in the top-down model. When the university senior managers produce local policies, academic and non-teaching staff are rarely involved in the process of policy-making.

In addition, Chinese education is socialist-oriented. The impact of socialism on educational management is embodied in the role of the Communist Party secretary at different levels. Party branch secretaries play their key role in universities to ensure that the institutional policies and the running of the institutions are following the Party's direction. University teachers are under the leadership of party branch secretaries and presidents. Therefore, motivating teaching staff bears some

political colour. A number of Marxist theories and the motto of 'striving for communism' are employed by leaders to encourage staff for achieving high performance at work. These Chinese characteristics of motivation can be reflected by political study every Thursday afternoon. Following Bush and Qiang (2002), Chinese culture is perceived as distinctive, for the socialist values of the Communist Party have been integrated with traditional beliefs.

Secondly, built on Hofstede's (1991) division of cultural dimensions, Walker and Dimmock (2002) described another dimension of culture: group-oriented culture. In Chinese society, people tend to have tight ties between people. They are brought up with a collectivist consciousness, and are encouraged to place group goals above their personal goals. Collectivism captures the essence of this culture. Individual needs are subservient to collective needs. This ideology is strengthened by the legacy of Cultural Revolution – one piece of slogan: one's personal interests must be subordinated to the interests of the revolution. The striking values that can reveal Chinese people's characteristics include harmony, face-saving, filial piety and equality of reward distribution among peers. People's social status is traditionally identified by aspects of age, sex, kinship, and formal organizational position. This cultural feature needs the thorough understanding of educational managers.

Apart from the basic values provided by the national culture, it is wise for institution leaders to stress the importance of organizational culture. Within Chinese institutions, superficial practices mirror different symbols, heroes, and rituals (Hofstede, 1991). With the national culture overarching, organizational cultures vary from one institution to another. However, generally speaking, Chinese universities share some common organizational cultures. Most universities are outcomes-oriented, task oriented, tightly controlled. The management places emphasis on student learning outcomes. The exam results are linked to the measurement of teachers' performance. Teachers' job performance and productivity in terms of the amount of lectures and research publications are taken into major consideration by managers. Under the climate of tightly controlled culture, teachers tend to be strongly committed to the shared beliefs, values, and practices of their institutions. The staff's strong commitment might come from hierarchical supervision and tight control, or from their self-motivation (Walker and Dimmock, 2002). Bureaucracy exists in the operation of the institutional administrative mechanism. Staff feel that there is a lack of direct communication between policy makers and themselves, which may cause staff's demotivation. In brief, societal culture is slow to change due to its deep roots, whereas organizational culture can change more rapidly and can be managed and changed by institutional managers. Especially in times of change, it is advisable for managers to develop more collegial and inspiring culture in the organizational context,

which might motivate teaching staff better.

Evaluation of the means Chinese universities employed to motivate teaching staff

Like the development of Chinese society, the means for motivation in education has experienced decades of changes. It keeps changing with the variation of personnel system. Prior to the 1980s, university teachers held 'iron rice-bowls' (lifetime employment and welfare system). They were self-motivated or impelled forward by the ideal of communism. The motivating means had nothing to do with money and material rewards. Teachers were encouraged to give high performance to serve people all over the country. After the Cultural Revolution, Chinese government shifted its emphasis from revolution to growth in the national economy. On its way to the 'socialism with Chinese characteristics', fundamental reforms in the personnel system have been conducted since 1992. The introduction of labour contracts, performance-related rewards, and social insurance reforms resulted in profound changes in educational management. Apart from the spiritual motives, university management adopted various means to satisfy individual drives and needs.

Actually, there exist different organizational approaches to teachers' motivation. Universities are employing a wide range of means to give teaching staff incentives to demonstrate high teaching quality. Thus their particular focus is on improving professional performance – classroom teaching and academic research. The purpose of quality assurance is mainly achieved by performance review because universities are making great effort to meet the needs and expectations of consumers. These means generally include performance review, welfare systems, housing allocation, and working conditions, etc.

Performance review, also termed performance appraisal or performance assessment, stands out of all the means for motivating teachers. Chinese university administrators imported this appraisal system from the Western countries in the 1990s and created their own performance review schemes with 'Chinese characteristics' within their organizational context. It's implementation put more burden of accountability on teachers' shoulders.

The system in practice provides job descriptions for teachers. The general job descriptions in use articulate teachers' responsibilities, roles, and competences necessary for their teaching posts. Most universities have clear written documents of the requirements set for teachers. The annual workload of lectures and research publications varies from one university to another. The assessment of teachers' professional performance is conducted every academic year from both the departmental and individual perspectives. The assessment schemes cover classroom observation by line managers and peers, feedback from the students

about the teachers' classroom management, the amount of lectures and academic publications, and political performance. The assessment outcomes from the aspects mentioned above are tied to financial rewards. However, only individual assessment is closely linked to pay. Departmental excellence might be praised by the management publicly within the institution or just a small amount of money which symbolizes administrators' positive comment on this department.

Performance related pay (PRP) serves as a 'backbone' of the performance review schemes. The essence of it in the Chinese context is to relate teachers' performance to financial rewards. Before the 1990s, teachers received the same pay regardless of the diversity in their workload, teaching quality, and research capabilities. Management only prioritised teaching staff's communist mentality and political performance, which were difficult to manage and measure. Administrators neglected employees' lower level of needs. Over the last two decades, as the Cultural Revolution's influence on people's ideology gradually phased out, money and efficiency gradually came into people's minds. At present, Chinese people are no longer proud of poverty and thrift. Since the "open door policy" and economic reforms broadened people's visions, people strive for a higher standard of life. That is why PRP helps improve productivity and becomes a motivator in China, especially in the 1990s.

When PRP was newly introduced in educational institutions, teaching staff were greatly inspired. University teachers' pay was generally doubled. Universities formulated a quantitative workload and pay scale. Teachers are paid according to their titles in combination with their professional performance. Teachers are assessed against these standards. Teachers' pay consists of a basic salary that is funded by the government and a bonus or teaching post allowances. If they give extra lectures, they can get extra pay. The principle underlying PRP is similar to the piece-rate incentive pay system in business. But after years of practice of PRP, a decline can be seen in teachers' motivation at work. Major reasons might be multidimensional. The negative influences caused by PRP can be therefore attributed to:

The requirements set by managers are too demanding.

Inequity exists in the financial rewards in relation to equal performance.

The appraisal system needs to be perfected.

Line managers and peers (appraisers) who are responsible for appraisal are not trained.

The messages that can be found in these pitfalls are thought provoking. Teachers' job objectives should be challenging enough to generate employee commitment yet not too high to produce demotivation. Compared with their colleagues in one department or other departments, teachers who give the same performance but get different appraisal results or different pay feel that they are treated unfairly. Their demotivation should urge administrators to adjust appraisal schemes which embody the principle of equity. The appraisal system itself is problematic because of the difficulty lying in the assessment criteria. Unlike commercial products, the quality of teaching is much more difficult and complex to be assessed. Performance appraisal should focus on the standard of individual performance in achieving the job requirements (Greenhill, 1990). Yet to balance qualitative and quantitative criteria is not easy. Academic staff are looking forward to the construction of objective, professional, and effective performance indicators. A range of quantitative performance indicators should be created for evaluation purposes. Last but not the least, untrained appraisers cannot provide fair and valid assessment. Teaching staff expect that line managers can walk into their classrooms to get first-hand observation. Teachers hope that assessing outcomes is used positively. If outcome measures show a poor performance, staff should be entitled to support from their line managers and necessary professional training.

In addition to PRP, teachers are given opportunities of being selected to be 'excellent teachers' (*youxiujiaoshi*) for their outstanding professional performance every year. Those best teachers receive public praise in a formal organizational staff conference together with a certificate, or an extra rise in salary. However, one factor that may reduce teacher motivation is the limited quota for 'exemplary teachers'. Human relations (*guanxi*) play a negative role in this selection. Those who meet the standard but are not selected for praise may not be motivated. Keeping up with the progress in a market-oriented model of the economy, management takes into account other aspects of motivation in the running of institutions. The welfare system is on its way to perfection. All the university staff are included in the insurance and pension schemes. On holidays, welfare in the form of material benefits is offered to employees, which show the organizational concern for employees.

Another motivator, which is of pivotal importance, is the housing allocation. Housing conditions have become a hot issue on university campus. Newly constructed residential blocks or commercial residences have improved accommodation for employees. Some universities give priority to academic staff in terms of allocating subsidies. On the other hand, unfair housing allocation policy is sure to generate low motivation. Teachers' great commitment in their jobs comes from better housing conditions as well as better working conditions. Multi-media equipments are installed in refurbished classrooms. Parts of teaching buildings have been furnished with air-conditioners. New office towers give staff a fresh look of the old campus. This is a good example of Herzberg's (1966) theory of dissatisfiers. Removal of 'hygiene' factors might lead to better job satisfaction.

Apart from the motivators I listed above, schools and departments of some universities are empowered to generate income through recruiting adult students. This kind of departmental *chuangshou* serves as the major source of teachers' bonus payments. In the meantime, this phenomenon has a negative effect on quality assurance although teachers are highly motivated since income is often generated by sacrificing some efforts on achieving quality.

CONCLUSION

This paper briefly elaborates the general situation of teacher motivation in Chinese higher education. Reviewing the motivation theories in the western countries provides guidelines for Chinese educational administrators. The rationale for changing teachers' job-related attitudes positively might arm them with total understanding of the specific purpose of managing motivation. Nevertheless, they cannot only translate foreign approaches into local policies since cultural compatibility is usually problematic. On the basis of national cultural differences, managers are learning to create new organizational cultures with the aim of motivating their staff. They tend to use motivators, which have Chinese characteristics, to promote teachers' job commitment. The basket of measures for implementation aims to adapt Chinese higher education to the changing context. Motivating employees is a trying task for managers, let alone achieving this in times of change.

What is the challenge facing the Chinese universities in the twenty-first century? Under the influence of changing forces such as the market-oriented economy, advanced technology, progress of globalisation, and China's successful entry into WTO, universities are attempting to train future talents for economic growth. This educational objective is in close relation to enhancing the quality of higher education. With regard to a series of radical reforms, the personnel system and the allotment system reforms are central to the organizational changes. Since employees' attitudes toward work and their commitment are mainly responsible for quality assurance, management has adopted a variety of means to make employees perform to their full potential. Generally speaking, the means in implementation I have analysed in the previous section has proved to be a great success for boosting teacher motivation in Chinese context in spite of some pitfalls.

Nonetheless, organizational context keeps changing with the variation of external educational policies. Variations and change can be linked to the process of globalisation and the need to take into account both external pressures for change and indigenous culture. The actions managers have taken to affect staff's motivation need adjustment. There is much for managers to improve in their human resource management practice. Managers are expected to satisfy teachers' various needs and understand their problems. Within one organization, teaching staff demonstrate diversity of personality. Some teachers may show high performance by a decent pay; others may be eager to get recognized by management, colleagues and the society. The implementation of performance review has created a competitive atmosphere among teachers. Yet it can also cause stress which decreases teacher motivation. Teaching staff are highly motivated by the post responsibility system on the condition that it should be properly managed. There is still much to do to change the top-down model mechanism to a more collegial one. Communication between managers and staff cannot be neglected. This may add to the democratic climate of the organization, and teachers will feel that they are informed of what is happening in their workplace. The sense of being one of a group fills them with much enthusiasm. Therefore, if managers prioritise such aspects as satisfying teachers' needs, setting up feasible and effective appraisal and reward schemes, offering teachers necessary support, and creating a collegial organizational culture, they get the key to motivating teachers.

REFERENCES

Adams, J.. (1965). 'Inequity in social exchange', in Berkovitz, L. (Ed.) *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol.2. London: Academic Press.

Anderson, L.. (2003). 'A Leadership approach to managing people in education', in Kydd, L. Anderson, L. & Newton, W. (Eds.) *Leading People and Teams in Education*. London: Paul Chapman.

Ball, S.. (1997). *Motivational Psychology*. London: Academic Press, Inc. (London) Ltd.

Beardwell, I., Holden, L. & Claydon, T.. (2004). *Human Resource Management: a contemporary approach*. Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd.

Bush, T. and Qiang, H..(2002). 'Leadership and culture in Chinese education', in Walker, A. and Dimmock, C. (Eds.), *School Leadership and Administration*: *adopting a cultural perspective*. London: Routledge Falmer.

Deng, Xiaoping. (1984). *Selected Work of Deng Xiaoping* (1975-1982). Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.

Dimmock, C. & Walker, A.. (2002). 'School leadershp in context – societal and organisational cultures', in Bush, T. & Bell, L. (Eds.) *The Principles and Practice of Educational Management*. London: Paul Chapman.

Dornyei, Z.. (2001). *Teaching and Researching Motivation*. Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd.

Evans, L.. (2001). 'Delving deeper into morale, job satisfaction and motivation among education professionals'. *Educational Management & Administration*, Vol. 29 (3) pp. 291-306.

Everard, K. B. & Morris, G.. (1996). *Effective School Management* (3rd ed.). London: Paul Chapman.

Ford, M. E. (1992) *Motivating Humans: goals, emotions and personal agency beliefs*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Greenhill, R.T.. (1990). *Performance Related Pay for the 1990s*, Cambridge: Director Books Fizwilliam Publishing Ltd.

Herzberg, F.. (1966). *Work and the Nature of Man*. Cleveland: World.

Hofstede, G. H.. (1991). *Cultures and Organizations: software of the mind*. London: McGraw Hill.

http://www.Chinese-embassy.org.za/eng/13828.html (current version at 16 May 2004).

http://www.edu.cn/20010101/22284.shtml (current version at 16 May 2004).

http://www.edu.cn/HomePage/english/statistics/education/index.shtml (current version at 16 May 2004)

Locke, E. A.. (1968). Towards a theory of task motivation and incentives. *Organizational Behaviour and Human Performance,* vol.3, pp. 157-189.

Lawler III, E. E.. (1973). *Motivation in Work Organizations*. California: Brooks/Cole Publishing co.

Maslow, A.. (1970). *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper & Row.

McGregor, G. (1970) *The Human Side of Enterprise*. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.

Neider, L.. (1980). 'An experimental field investigation utilizing an expectancy theory view of participation'. *Organizational Behaviour and Human Performance*, vol. 26 (3), pp. 425-442.

Nias, J.. (1989). *Primary Teachers Talking: a study of teaching as work*. London: Routledge.

Pintrich, P. R. & Schunk, D. H.. (2002). *Motivation in Education*: *theory, research, and applications*. London: Pearson Education.

Randall, J.. (2002). 'Quality assurance: meeting the need of the user', *Higher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 56, No. 2, pp.188-203.

Riches, C.. (1994). 'Motivation', in Bush, T. & West-Burnham, J. (Eds.). *The Principles of Educational Management*. Harlow: Longman.

Skinner, B. F.. (1953). *Science and Human Behavior*. New York: Free Press.

Vroom, V.. (1964). *Work and Motivation*. New York: Wiley.

Walker, A. and Dimmock, C.. (2002). 'Cross-cultural and comparative insights into educational administration and leadership', in Walker, A. and Dimmock, C. (Eds.) *School Leadership and Administration: adopting a cultural perspective*. London: Routledge Falmer.

THE AUTHOR

Zhang Hongping, Born in 1968 in Jiangxi Province, female, Lecturer, obtained M.A. in Leeds University in UK. Zhongnan University of Economics and Law, Wuhan, Hubei, 430000, P.R. China.

E-mail: zhp955@126.com