



ISSN: 2586-6036

JWMAP website: <http://accesson.kr/jwmap>

doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.13106/jwmap.2024.Vol7.no5.73>

The Role of Transformational Leadership in Holistic Well-being of Vietnamese International Students: Focusing on Improving Adaptation and Satisfaction in Korean Universities

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Received: November 22, 2024. Revised: December 27, 2024. Accepted: December 27, 2024.

Abstract

This study explores the role of transformational leadership in promoting the holistic well-being of Vietnamese international students, with a specific focus on improving their college life adaptation and satisfaction in Korean universities. The research examines the structural relationships between transformational leadership, college life adaptation, and satisfaction among 297 Vietnamese international students attending seven universities in Seoul, Korea. The findings indicate that while charisma, a key component of transformational leadership, did not significantly influence either college life adaptation or satisfaction, motivation and intellectual stimulation positively affected college life adaptation, and motivation and individualized consideration enhanced college life satisfaction. The limited impact of charisma may reflect cultural and contextual factors, as Vietnamese students from collectivist cultures often prioritize practical and emotional support over symbolic or inspirational traits. Furthermore, the unique academic and social challenges faced in Korean universities may diminish the relevance of charisma relative to other leadership components. These findings suggest that enhancing motivation and intellectual stimulation can improve adaptation to college life, while focusing on individualized consideration can directly increase satisfaction. Moreover, the results hold broader relevance for international students from diverse cultural backgrounds who face similar challenges, underscoring the importance of culturally sensitive leadership and support strategies. This study provides valuable insights for the development of culturally responsive teaching and support systems in Korean universities to enhance the holistic well-being of Vietnamese international students throughout their academic journey.

Keywords : Transformational Leadership, Vietnamese International Students, College Life Adaptation, College Life Satisfaction

JEL Classification Code :

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Necessity and Purpose

In the era of globalization, South Korea's enhanced global standing has led to a consistent rise in the number of international students studying in the country (Ministry of Education, 2021). Currently, South Korea hosts approximately 160,000 international students, with Chinese students comprising 44.2% (67,348) and Vietnamese students representing 23.5% (35,843; Ministry of Education, 2021).

Despite the disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the enrollment of Vietnamese international students has continued to grow, driven by South Korea's economic development, cultural influence, and geographic proximity (Korea National Diplomatic Academy, 2021; Bae & Park, 2020). The increasing global appeal of Korean culture, combined with strengthened bilateral relations, suggests that the number of Vietnamese international students is likely to rise further (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea [MOFA], 2023).

However, the academic discontinuation rate among international students increased significantly by 27% in 2020 (Hwang, 2021). Vietnamese international students, in particular, face notable adaptation challenges, which contribute to higher discontinuation rates and present broader societal concerns (Hwang, 2021; Yoo, 2015). These challenges undermine not only the academic success of these students but also South Korea's academic reputation on the global stage (Tran, 2022). This situation underscores the urgent need for sustainable interventions aimed at improving retention rates and fostering the psychosocial well-being of international students.

To better understand these adaptation challenges, Berry et al.'s (1997) acculturation theory provides a critical framework. This theory conceptualizes cultural adaptation along two dimensions: the extent to which individuals maintain their original cultural identity and the degree to which they adopt the new culture. Based on these dimensions, Berry et al. (1997) propose four acculturation strategies: integration, where individuals simultaneously maintain their original culture while adopting aspects of the new culture; assimilation, where individuals abandon their original culture to fully embrace the new culture; separation, where individuals retain their original culture and reject the new culture; and marginalization, where individuals reject both their original and the new culture. While this model offers valuable insights, the process of cultural adaptation is often more dynamic and context-dependent than the theoretical categories suggest. Many individuals experience cultural adaptation stress, manifesting as emotional discomfort due to factors such as linguistic and cultural

differences (Berry, 1997). This stress is well-documented as a significant barrier to college life satisfaction and adaptation among international students (Choi, 2018; Lewthwaite, 1996).

The collegiate experience plays a pivotal role in developing life competencies and serves as a predictor of psychosocial adjustment in adulthood (Kim, 2014; Choi & Lim, 2018). Despite the growing body of research on the adaptation challenges faced by international students (Kim et al., 2018; Kwak, 2022), Vietnamese international students continue to encounter unique difficulties, particularly in navigating cultural transitions and linguistic barriers (Kim, 2014; Lim & Kim, 2011). These challenges exacerbate cultural adaptation stress, undermining academic persistence and life satisfaction (Nguyen, 2022). Effectively addressing these issues requires innovative approaches that extend beyond conventional support systems.

In this context, transformational leadership has emerged as a promising strategy for fostering self-directed adaptation among Vietnamese international students. Transformational leadership, which encompasses dimensions such as charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Burns, 1978; Ko et al., 2022), has been identified as an effective mechanism for enhancing adaptation and satisfaction in diverse populations of international students. Additionally, transformational leadership is particularly relevant for Vietnamese students from socialist countries, as it aligns with their cultural familiarity with charismatic leadership styles while simultaneously promoting the development of flexible problem-solving skills and intercultural communication abilities (Chang, 2013; Ho, 2018). This leadership approach equips Vietnamese students to mitigate cultural adaptation stress and effectively navigate South Korea's educational environment, which often emphasizes autonomy and self-motivation—traits less commonly cultivated in collectivist educational systems (Berry, 1997; Chun et al., 2006).

By cultivating transformational leadership, Vietnamese international students can actively engage with new environments while leveraging their cultural heritage as a strength. This approach enables their transition from collectivist educational frameworks to more self-directed learning systems, fostering enhanced self-motivation, problem-solving skills, and overall adaptation and satisfaction in college life (Kim, 2011; Park, 2023). Consequently, transformational leadership not only addresses the adverse effects of cultural adaptation stress but also contributes to broader objectives of academic and social integration among Vietnamese international students.

This study, therefore, examines the impact of transformational leadership capabilities on Vietnamese international students' college life adaptation and satisfaction. The primary objective is to establish a

theoretical foundation for designing programs that empower Vietnamese international students to develop transformational leadership skills. The findings are anticipated to provide practical implications for the formulation of international student support policies in South Korean higher education institutions.

To achieve these research objectives, this study addresses the following specific research questions:

1. What is the relationship between Vietnamese international students' transformational leadership capabilities and their college life adaptation?
2. How does transformational leadership influence Vietnamese international students' college life satisfaction?
3. What is the relationship between Vietnamese international students' college life adaptation and their college life satisfaction??

2. Research Hypotheses and Model

2.1. Research Hypotheses

2.1.1. Relationship Between Vietnamese International Students' Transformational Leadership and College Life Adaptation

Vietnamese international students' college life adaptation is influenced by environmental, psychological, and emotional factors, with particular emphasis on cultural adaptation strategies (Berry, 1997). Transformational leadership positively influences college life adaptation and satisfaction through charisma, motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Burns, 1978). Notably, charismatic leadership is culturally familiar to Vietnamese students, supporting their adaptation challenges (Chang, 2013; Ho, 2018). According to Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model, social environmental systems influence individual cognitive abilities and social adaptability. This theoretical foundation supports the research hypothesis that transformational leadership significantly affects college life adaptation and satisfaction (Sergiovanni, 1990; Chun, Moos, & Cronkite, 2006). This relationship is expected to have significant implications for international students' academic achievement and personal development (Kim, 2011; Park, 2023).

H1: Vietnamese international students' transformational leadership will have a positive (+) effect on their college life adaptation.

H1-1: The charisma of Vietnamese international students' transformational leadership will have a positive (+) effect on

college life adaptation.

H1-2: The inspirational motivation of Vietnamese international students' transformational leadership will have a positive (+) effect on college life adaptation.

H1-3: The intellectual stimulation of Vietnamese international students' transformational leadership will have a positive (+) effect on college life adaptation.

H1-4: The individualized consideration of Vietnamese international students' transformational leadership will have a positive (+) effect on college life adaptation.

2.1.2. Relationship Between Vietnamese International Students' Transformational Leadership and College Life Satisfaction

Cultural adaptation stress has been identified as a primary factor diminishing college life satisfaction among international students (Choi, 2018; Lewthwaite, 1996). Specifically, for Vietnamese international students, sociocultural adaptation difficulties directly negatively impact their college life satisfaction (Nguyen, 2022). In this context, research indicates that transformational leadership components—charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—function as positive factors enhancing member satisfaction (Ko et al., 2022; Batzaya, 2019). Consequently, it is anticipated that as Vietnamese international students better adapt to college life through transformational leadership, this will ultimately contribute to increased college life satisfaction.

Based on this theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: Vietnamese international students' transformational leadership will have a positive (+) effect on their college life satisfaction.

H2-1: The charisma of Vietnamese international students' transformational leadership will have a positive (+) effect on college life satisfaction.

H2-2: The inspirational motivation of Vietnamese international students' transformational leadership will have a positive (+) effect on college life satisfaction.

H2-3: The intellectual stimulation of Vietnamese international students' transformational leadership will have a positive (+) effect on college life satisfaction.

H2-4: The individualized consideration of Vietnamese international students' transformational leadership will have a positive (+) effect on college life satisfaction.

2.1.3. Relationship Between Vietnamese International Students' College Life Adaptation and College Life Satisfaction

College life adaptation represents a critical gateway to successful academic achievement for Vietnamese international students. Research indicates that international students' college life adaptation comprises academic, social, and emotional factors, which directly influence college life satisfaction (Kim & Kim, 2019; Lee, 2009). Therefore, as Vietnamese international students better adapt to college life through transformational leadership, this is expected to contribute to enhanced college life satisfaction.

Based on this theoretical framework, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Vietnamese international students' college life adaptation will have a positive (+) effect on their college life satisfaction.

2.2. Research Model

This study conducted a structural analysis to examine how the transformational leadership of Vietnamese international students influences their adaptation to university life and satisfaction with university life. The research model derived from the research hypotheses is presented in Figure 1 below.

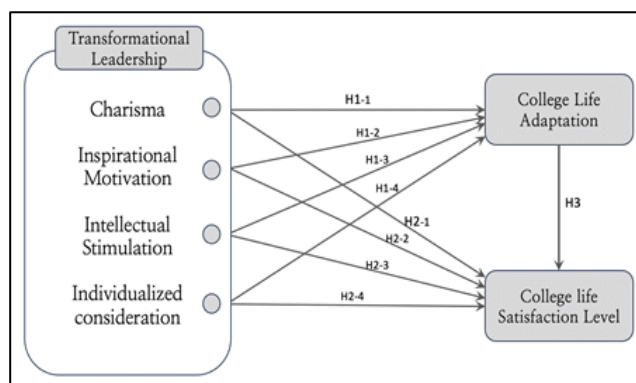


Figure 1: Research Model

3. Research Method

3.1. Research Participants

This study employed a purposive sampling method to recruit Vietnamese international students (N = 297) from seven universities in Seoul, South Korea. The decision to select participants from Seoul was both deliberate and strategic, aligning with the study's objectives. As a major hub for Vietnamese international students, Seoul hosts a substantial proportion of this population due to its

concentration of educational and cultural resources (Bae & Park, 2020; Ministry of Education, 2021). Including multiple universities within the region ensured diversity in educational environments and student experiences, thereby enhancing the internal representativeness of the sample and mitigating the risks of bias inherent in single-institution sampling (Kim et al., 2018).

Although the geographical focus on Seoul may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions, the study aimed to explore transformational leadership and its relationship to college life adaptation and satisfaction within a specific, highly relevant context. Furthermore, the results are consistent with existing literature on international student adaptation, reinforcing the validity and reliability of the findings (Park & Kim, 2016; Lee, 2022).

Eligibility criteria required participants to hold a D-2 student visa, be enrolled in universities located in Seoul, and have resided in South Korea for at least one year. Prior research suggests that a minimum period of cultural immersion is necessary to obtain meaningful insights into adaptation and satisfaction (Kim, 2014; Lim & Kim, 2011). The sample exhibited demographic diversity, including variations in gender, age, academic status, and linguistic proficiency. Notably, the majority of participants demonstrated intermediate to advanced Korean language skills (TOPIK Levels 4–6), strong academic performance (GPA \geq 3.0), and financial support through scholarships.

To address potential limitations, future studies are encouraged to expand the sampling frame to include Vietnamese students from other regions, such as metropolitan and rural universities, to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, incorporating qualitative methods, such as focus group interviews, could provide deeper insights into the lived experiences of students in diverse educational contexts (Choi & Lim, 2018). These suggestions would strengthen the robustness and applicability of the research while building on the foundational insights provided by this study.

3.2. Measurement Instruments

3.2.1. Transformational Leadership

The assessment of transformational leadership employed a modified version of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; Bass & Avolio, 1994). The MLQ conceptualizes transformational leadership through four dimensions: charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The original 12-item instrument underwent a psychometric evaluation, leading to the retention of 9 items based on factor loading criteria ($\lambda > .500$) and procedures aimed at optimizing internal consistency. The finalized instrument consisted of charisma (2 items), inspirational motivation (3 items),

intellectual stimulation (2 items), and individualized consideration (2 items). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), with higher scores reflecting stronger transformational leadership characteristics.

Internal consistency reliability analyses produced the following results: overall scale ($\alpha = .72$), charisma ($\alpha = .713$, inter-item $r = .554$), inspirational motivation ($\alpha = .783$), intellectual stimulation ($\alpha = .754$, inter-item $r = .530$), and individualized consideration ($\alpha = .533$, inter-item $r = .364$). While three dimensions demonstrated satisfactory reliability ($\alpha > .60$), the individualized consideration subscale exhibited lower internal consistency. Nevertheless, as Gulliksen (1945b) contends, for scales with a limited number of items, inter-item correlation serves as a more appropriate indicator of reliability than Cronbach's alpha.

3.2.2. College Life Adaptation

The assessment of college life adaptation employed a modified version of the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ; Baker & Siryk, 1989). The instrument underwent cross-cultural adaptation through Hyun's (1992) initial translation and Lee's (1999) subsequent modifications. From the original 25-item scale, four items were strategically selected based on construct relevance and research objectives. The abbreviated scale evaluates four dimensions of collegiate adjustment: educational demands, academic motivation, academic effort, and overall adaptation. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), with higher scores indicating enhanced adaptation to collegiate environment. The instrument demonstrated adequate internal consistency reliability ($\alpha = .78$).

3.2.3. College Life Satisfaction

College life satisfaction was assessed using an adapted version of Kim's (2018) scale, which was theoretically grounded in Baker and Siryk's (1984) conceptualization of collegiate satisfaction. The modified instrument consisted of eight items designed to measure various dimensions of satisfaction with the collegiate experience. Responses were captured on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with higher scores indicating higher levels of satisfaction with college life. The scale exhibited excellent internal consistency reliability ($\alpha = .901$).

3.3. Validity Testing of Measurement Instruments

To verify the validity of the measurement instruments, this study conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

based on the measurement model.

3.3.1. Construct Validity

Construct validity was assessed through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using Construct validity was evaluated through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using standardized factor loadings (β), average variance extracted (AVE), and construct reliability (CR). The majority of factor loadings satisfied or closely approached the recommended threshold of 0.40–0.50 (Brown, 2015). Retention decisions were also informed by internal consistency (Cronbach's α) and critical ratios. Although some loadings fell below the threshold, prior research (Hair et al., 2010) supports the acceptability of minor deviations in exploratory studies, particularly when the number of items is limited (Gulliksen, 1945b). Furthermore, cultural and linguistic factors specific to Vietnamese international students may have contributed to variations in certain loadings (Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998).

Despite these limitations, the model demonstrated satisfactory construct validity, as evidenced by AVE values exceeding 0.50 and CR values exceeding 0.70. These results are summarized in Table 1, which illustrates that the constructs meet the established thresholds for validity.

Table 1: Results of Construct Validity Analysis for Measurement Instruments

Observed Variables		Estimate	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	AVE	CR
		(β)	(B)				
Transformational Leadership1	F1	0.732	1			0.554	0.713
Transformational Leadership2	F1	0.757	0.963	0.139	6.934***		
Transformational Leadership3	F2	0.636	1			0.549	0.783
Transformational Leadership4	F2	0.825	1.151	0.113	10.207***		
Transformational Leadership5	F2	0.75	1.146	0.117	9.819***	0.53	0.754
Transformational Leadership7	F3	0.813	1				
Transformational Leadership8	F3	0.632	0.774	0.097	7.937***	0.364	0.533
Transformational Leadership9	F4	0.636	1				
Transformational Leadership10	F4	0.572	0.908	0.251	3.615***	0.386	0.778
College Life Adaptation1	F10	0.344	1				
College Life Adaptation2	F10	0.522	1.502	0.292	5.145***	0.534	0.901
College Life Adaptation4	F10	0.471	1.314	0.266	4.946***		
College Life Adaptation5	F10	0.966	2.505	0.502	4.987***	0.534	0.901
College Life Satisfaction1	F11	0.746	1				
College Life Satisfaction2	F11	0.771	0.941	0.072	13.118***	0.534	0.901
College Life Satisfaction3	F11	0.826	1.094	0.077	14.135***		
College Life Satisfaction4	F11	0.799	1.061	0.078	13.644***	0.534	0.901
College Life Satisfaction5	F11	0.728	1.02	0.083	12.318***		
College Life Satisfaction6	F11	0.68	0.878	0.077	11.454***	0.534	0.901
College Life Satisfaction7	F11	0.664	0.925	0.083	11.152***		
College Life Satisfaction8	F11	0.605	0.866	0.086	10.103***		

3.3.2. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using the confidence interval criterion for correlation coefficients (Φ) between latent constructs ($\Phi \pm 2 \times SE$), which requires that the interval exclude unity to confirm discriminant validity (Woo, 2014). The highest interfactor correlation was identified between the motivational dimension and university life satisfaction ($r = .492$, $\Phi^2 = .242$). Additionally, the average variance extracted (AVE) values for motivation (.549) and university life satisfaction (.534) exceeded the squared correlation coefficient (.242), further supporting the discriminant validity of the constructs.

3.4. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 27.0 and AMOS 28.0 statistical software. Preliminary analyses included descriptive statistics to summarize sample characteristics. Scale reliability was evaluated through internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's α). Measurement model validation was performed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and Pearson product-moment correlations to assess the relationships among variables. Structural relationships between constructs were

analyzed through path analysis employing maximum likelihood estimation, which is widely recognized for its robustness in structural equation modeling.

4. Research Results

4.1. Effects of Transformational Leadership on University Life Adaptation

The analysis of data utilized SPSS 27.0 and AMOS 28.0 statistical software packages. Descriptive statistics were

initially conducted to describe the sample’s demographic and academic characteristics. Reliability of the scales was assessed through internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach’s α), ensuring the reliability of the constructs. Measurement model validation employed confirmatory factor analysis to verify the structure of the constructs, while Pearson product-moment correlations provided insights into the strength and direction of relationships among variables. Finally, path analysis, using maximum likelihood estimation, was applied to examine the structural relationships between transformational leadership and university life adaptation.

Table 2: Path Analysis Results between Transformational Leadership and University Life Adaptation

Path	Estimate (β)	Estimate (B)	S.E.	C.R. (t-value)	P
Charisma → University Life Adaptation	0.067	0.066	0.05	1.306	0.192
Motivation → University Life Adaptation	0.351	0.385	0.057	6.809***	$P < .001$
Intellectual Stimulation → University Life Adaptation	0.122	0.146	0.07	2.093*	$P < .05$
Individualized Consideration → University Life Adaptation	-0.077	-0.102	0.076	-1.341	0.18

* $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $P < .001$

4.2. Effects of Transformational Leadership on University Life Satisfaction

The results of the path analysis (Table 3) revealed selective effects of the transformational leadership dimensions on university life satisfaction. Specifically, inspirational motivation ($\beta = .279$, CR = 5.931, $p < .001$) and individualized consideration ($\beta = .177$, CR = 3.589, $p < .001$)

exhibited significant positive effects on university life satisfaction. These findings underscore the importance of motivational and personalized leadership behaviors in fostering greater satisfaction among university students. In contrast, the dimensions of charisma and intellectual stimulation did not produce statistically significant effects on satisfaction outcomes, suggesting potential variability in the impact of different transformational leadership components on collegiate satisfaction.

Table 3: Path Analysis Results between Transformational Leadership and University Life Satisfaction

Path	Estimate (β)	Estimate (B)	S.E.	C.R. (t-value)	P
Charisma → University Life Satisfaction	0.032	0.03	0.04	0.736	0.462
Motivation → University Life Satisfaction	0.279	0.289	0.049	5.931***	***
Intellectual Stimulation → University Life Satisfaction	0.036	0.04	0.057	0.705	0.481
Individualized Consideration → University Life Satisfaction	0.177	0.222	0.062	3.589***	***

* $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $P < .001$

4.3. Relationship Between University Life Adaptation and Satisfaction

Path analysis results (Table 4) revealed a significant

positive association between university life adaptation and satisfaction ($\beta = .358$, CR = 8.221, $p < .001$).

Table 4: Path Analysis Results between University Life Adaptation and University Life Satisfaction

<i>Path</i>	<i>Estimate (β)</i>	<i>Estimate (B)</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>C.R. (t-value)</i>	<i>P</i>
University Life Adaptation → University Life Satisfaction	0.358	0.337	0.041	8.221***	***

P < .05, **P < .01, ***P < .001

5. Conclusions

5.1. Research Findings

This study sought to explore the role of transformational leadership in fostering the holistic well-being of Vietnamese international students, with a particular focus on their university life adaptation and satisfaction within Korean universities. Specifically, the research examined the structural relationships among components of transformational leadership, university life adaptation, and satisfaction for Vietnamese international students attending universities in Seoul. The findings revealed that motivation and intellectual stimulation exerted a positive influence on university life adaptation, whereas motivation and individualized consideration significantly enhanced university life satisfaction. Importantly, while charisma did not exhibit a significant effect on either adaptation or satisfaction, university life adaptation was positively associated with satisfaction levels.

These results suggest that promoting motivation and intellectual stimulation can aid Vietnamese international students in adapting to university life, which in turn contributes to higher satisfaction. Furthermore, emphasizing motivation and individualized consideration directly enhances satisfaction with university life. Although the study focused on Vietnamese students, it is plausible that these findings extend to other international students facing similar challenges, such as cultural adjustment and academic pressures. Consequently, the broader applicability of these results underscores their relevance in multicultural higher education contexts.

5.2. Interpretation of Charisma's Limited Effect

One of the study's notable findings was the limited effect of charisma, a central component of transformational leadership, on university life adaptation and satisfaction among Vietnamese international students. This outcome contrasts with previous research that highlights the widespread benefits of charismatic leadership on individual and organizational outcomes (Bass, 1990).

Cultural Context Explanation: A potential explanation for this finding lies in the cultural and contextual

characteristics of Vietnamese international students. In collectivist cultures like Vietnam, group-oriented values often outweigh individualistic traits such as charisma (Hofstede, 1984). This cultural preference for relational and practical support over symbolic traits might explain why charisma was less impactful. Similarly, other collectivist cultures may exhibit comparable patterns, prioritizing tangible and emotional support over inspirational leadership traits.

Situational Factors: The academic and social environments in Korean universities may also have contributed to this result. Vietnamese students often face language barriers, cultural adjustment, and academic challenges, which may lead them to value practical and emotional support over abstract inspirational traits. This aligns with localized leadership studies suggesting that situational needs can influence the effectiveness of leadership components (Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998). Future research should investigate whether these patterns are observed among other international student groups in similar contexts to validate this interpretation.

5.3. The Role of Motivation and Intellectual Stimulation

The findings revealed that motivation and intellectual stimulation positively influenced the study findings highlighted the pivotal roles of motivation and intellectual stimulation in promoting university life adaptation. These leadership components were shown to positively influence students' ability to navigate the challenges of academic and social adaptation in a foreign context. Motivation enhances students' intrinsic drive to succeed, while intellectual stimulation fosters critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential for overcoming academic obstacles.

These results are consistent with prior research (Bass, 1990; Brown, 2015) and suggest that motivation and intellectual stimulation may serve as universal strategies for supporting international students from various cultural backgrounds who face similar adaptation challenges. Consequently, fostering a supportive and intellectually engaging environment is essential for improving the academic and social adaptation of international students.

5.4. Individualized Consideration and University Life Satisfaction

The study also found that motivation and individualized consideration significantly contributed to university life satisfaction. This underscores the critical role of personalized support in addressing the unique needs of international students. Leaders who practice individualized consideration create a sense of belonging by demonstrating empathy and making students feel valued and understood.

This finding is particularly relevant for Vietnamese students, whose collectivist cultural values emphasize relational harmony and interpersonal care (Hofstede, 1984). However, the benefits of individualized consideration are not limited to collectivist cultures. Students from individualistic cultures may also experience heightened satisfaction when their unique preferences and personal goals are acknowledged. Thus, individualized consideration represents a versatile leadership approach capable of enhancing satisfaction across diverse cultural contexts.

5.5. Practical Implications and Future Research

The findings of this research offer actionable insights for improving the well-being and academic success of Vietnamese international students in Korean universities. Institutions should prioritize leadership training programs that emphasize motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration to better support international students. Additionally, faculty development workshops and culturally sensitive support services, such as peer mentoring, language assistance, and personalized advising, can address common challenges like language barriers and cultural adjustment.

Given the potential generalizability of these findings, higher education institutions should consider adapting these strategies to support a multicultural student body. Future research should focus on cross-cultural comparisons to examine whether the effects of transformational leadership components vary across different cultural groups. Furthermore, longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into the sustained impact of these leadership strategies on students' well-being and academic performance. By implementing these strategies and conducting further research, universities can foster inclusive environments that promote the holistic well-being and academic success of their diverse student populations.

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