Influence of Supervisor Leadership Style and Conflict Handling on Subordinates: A Case Study of Taoyuan Police Department

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Abstract

This study explores the influence of supervisor police officers' leadership styles and conflict handling on their work and their relationship with subordinates. A two-stage data analysis method is adopted. In the first stage, in-depth interviews are conducted to analyse local police chiefs' views on leadership styles and conflict handling. In the second stage, questionnaires describing leadership and conflicts are distributed to subordinate police officers for statistical analysis. Conflicts emerge in the operation of government agencies because members within the organisations have different views on their respective positions, responsibilities and goals, mostly for reasons related to the leadership style of their direct supervisors. The study results reveal that transformational and transactional leadership styles positively influence subordinate police officers and negatively influence several sub-dimensions of leadership styles, consistent with cross-comparison findings. Furthermore, the results indicate that conflict handling has an insignificant influence, which significantly differs from the leaders' perceptions of handling as found in their interviews. Accordingly, the findings of cross-analysis are reasonable. The study results can be used as a reference for future supervisors to handle and manage practical conflicts.

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1. Introduction

Taoyuan City is one of the six municipalities directly under the central government of Taiwan; it is a core city in the northwestern part of the island (covering an area of 1,220 square kilometres) and part of the 'capital living circle'. With the largest international airport in Taiwan and the metropolitan area to develop an aviation city, it has attracted a large number of people from foreign counties and cities, including the largest number of foreign workers from Southeast Asia (about 120,000) and is the city with the most rapid population growth and development. In view of its important location, Taoyuan City is also a place where politics, economy, society, transportation and culture converge, creating a diverse and complex landscape. Among these aspects, public security and transportation are the most concerned topics for the public, as they are closely related to people's livelihood and are important responsibilities of the police department. The Taoyuan Police Department won the second place in the country in the public security evaluation of the '2020 Overall Competitiveness of Counties and Cities' (The Liberty Times, 2020). The researchers of this study once served as judicial police officers. The current police commissioner leading the Taoyuan Police Department to win the honour is their former deputy commissioner, and he has a good reputation in the police circle owing to his unique leadership style and management. Therefore, this study aims to understand the leadership style and motivation that can improve the work performance of subordinates of government agencies.

Police organisations have the characteristics of public administrative agencies, but their tasks differ from those of a general public administrative agency. As a law enforcement agency, the police force has the highest contact frequency with the public among public servants, especially the front-line police officers, whose work is full of danger and uncertainty. The management of police organisations is directed and applied in a hierarchical manner in local regions from the top-level police departments, the middle-level branch offices, to the bottom-level police stations. Gundhus, Talberg, and Wathne [1] believed that hierarchical management ultimately reduces police discretion. Therefore, to pursue organisational performance and motivate police morale, leaders of police organisations need to break away from the old leadership mindset and adopt various leadership styles to conform to the trend of the times to achieve better performance. This study believes that the leadership style of police stations tends to be authoritative, but this style is less able to conform to the trend of the times and is prone to conflicts arising from conflicting roles, different expectations, opposing goals and poor communication, as suggested by Koehler et al. [2]. This is the motivation of this study.

In recent years, transformational leadership (TFL) and transactional leadership (TSL) have been the most studied leadership styles in leadership theories, especially with regard to the relationship between supervisors and subordinates [3]. However, few studies have been conducted on the leadership style and conflict handling of local police chiefs in Taiwan. Therefore, this study analyses the differences between the leadership style and conflict handling in the empirical literature and in practice

based on leadership theories and the analysis of first-hand practical interviews. 'Conflicts' are inevitable in the operation of an organisation because members of the organisation have different views on their respective positions, responsibilities and goals. A conflict can become a serious problem because it may create chaos and make an organisation unworkable. However, for the police leadership style, in addition to motivating police officers to achieve their potential, there may also be conflicting factors that hinder their efforts [4]. According to Lin [5], with the development trend of today's pluralistic society and information globalisation, the traditional police leadership style can no longer fully meet the challenges of the new era. The scope of responsibilities and competencies of modern police leaders in the new century also differs from the traditional ones and has been greatly expanded. Power can be delegated and shared, but the responsibility for success or failure rests with leaders of the police bureau. Therefore, in the era full of competition and conflicts, it is the leaders' unshirkable mission to win people by virtue, to gather the consensus of the subordinates, to be trusted at all times and to effectively respond to the subordinates' needs.

This study primarily investigates the influence of different leadership styles adopted by supervisors on 'goal achievement' and 'subordinate satisfaction' of leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, the study finds out through interviews with leaders and cross-analysis of the research questionnaires from their subordinates whether differences in the perceptions of leadership style and conflict handling influence 'leader reputation'.

2. Literature discussion and research hypotheses

2.1   Leadership style

Nowadays, leadership style is one of the most critical factors in the performance of any organisation and its employees. Leadership style and its decisions influence the direction of the whole organisation. Different types of leadership styles can differently influence employees' performance. In recent years, leadership-style-related studies have indicated that compared with TSL, TFL has a stronger positive influence on subordinates and leadership effectiveness [6]. The role of leaders is crucial in the contemporary business environment because highly skilled leaders can improve the overall organisational performance by increasing employees' motivation and morale [7]. The dimensions chosen for this study are TSL and TFL styles as proposed by Bass [8].

2.1.1   Transformational leadership

Transformational leaders can regard each organisational member as having different attributes, abilities and personalities and give individualised consideration. Li-Chaoping [9] identified four characteristics of TFL by combining it with the Chinese context. The first one is moral modelling, which suggests that transformational leaders can lead by example and demonstrate a spirit of dedication. In addition, they can be recognised by their employees for their ethics and behaviour

[10]. The second one is articulate vision, implying that leaders depict the company's objectives and vision to their subordinates so that they can better understand the company's future and the direction for development. The third one is individualised consideration, meaning that leaders care about their employees' personal situations. The last one is charisma, meaning that leaders have the ability to help and guide their subordinates. Leaders as such have complete work ethics and strong dedication, which are effective in leading employees forward. Yukl [11] believed that transformational leaders make their subordinates feel trust in their supervisors, respect them and show higher work efficiency than expected. In this study, according to Avolio, Waldman, and Yammarino [12], transformational leaders exhibit different characteristics that they call the four Is, namely, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, idealised influence and individualised consideration. Previous studies related to the police supervisor leadership style have indicated that compared with TSL, TFL has a relatively more indirect and positive influence on subordinates' influencing behaviour and abilities to achieve job satisfaction [13,14]. In this study, the variable of 'conflict management' is added to demonstrate the influencing situation as well as analyse and discuss these dimensions.

2.1.2   Transactional leadership

A transactional leader has a reciprocal relationship with subordinates that is based on exchange and bargaining behaviours. Subordinates' obedience and loyalty to leader are also based on quid pro quo, as proposed by Burns [15]. In short, the leader gives subordinates something they want in exchange for something the leader wants. There is a co-dependent interest relationship between them [16]. Leaders concern whether work results meet expectations; therefore, an efficient transactional leader will meet subordinates' expectations to contribute to the growth of organisational effectiveness. Allix [17] believed that the relationship between leader and subordinates is temporal. A recent study on the influence of leadership style on employee performance in the public sector enterprises in developing countries found that transactional leadership style has the most significant influence on employee performance in public sector enterprises [18]. Bass, and Stogdill [19] suggested that transactional leadership covers two important connotations—one is contingent reward and the other is management by exception, which is divided into two dimensions, that is, management by exception-active (MBE-A) and management by exception-passive (MBE-P). This framework has been used by many subsequent studies.

Moreover, the questionnaire survey conducted by Singer, and Singer [20] on the leadership styles of the police force and enterprises revealed that organisations such as the police force do not necessarily foster transactional leadership. He believed that employees in enterprises prefer transactional leaders. Hence, leadership style varies from organisation to organisation.

2.2   Conflict handling

A conflict is a common process of interaction. It may arise whenever two or more individuals in the society disagree over their goals, motivations or desires and are not willing to give in. 'Conflicts' are inevitable in the operation of an organisation. [21]. According to a recent research, police officers face three categories of conflicts. The first is controversy, including those that relate to ideas and controversial issues such as morality. This also relates to opinions on issues that may malign or hurt the feelings of others. The second is conceptual, including those that are not compatible with one's position. They pose conflicts when they believe otherwise and express their disagreement on a particular issue. The third is conflict of interest, including those that relate to name calling, insults or aggressive behaviour of fellow officers. They interfere or block others in the pursuit of individual goals [22]. Thomas [23], an American behavioural scientist, proposed a theory that describes a person's behaviour along two basic dimensions in conflict situations, that is, assertiveness and cooperativeness. These two dimensions of behaviour give rise to five coping strategies, namely, dominating, integrating, obliging, avoiding and compromising. These five conflict handling strategies depend on the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy his or her own concerns or the other person's concerns.

2.3   Leadership effectiveness

Leadership effectiveness, as far as leaders are concerned, refers to a leader's ability to influence employees and the operation of other organisational stakeholders through his or her leadership style within his or her scope of responsibility as well as to achieve the values that he or she subjectively determines. Leadership effectiveness varies with different situations, leadership styles and personality traits of the leader and the subordinates. Considering the particularity of police agencies, the measurement dimensions adopted in this study are the following: the leadership effectiveness explained by Hoy and Miskel [24], that is, leader's reputation, member satisfaction and organisational goal attainment, and the definition given by Su [25], that is, the extent to which a leader influences employees and all organisational processes to achieve goals through his or her leadership within his or her scope of responsibility. Among these, 'goal achievement' is the dimension for employee influence, and these dimensions are organised as 'leader's reputation', 'goal achievement', and 'subordinate satisfaction'.

3. Research hypotheses

Based on the above definitions in the literature, this study constructs the framework of the model as illustrated in Figure 1 and proposes the hypotheses to be tested to explore and analyse the relationships between the variables, which are described as follows.

Bass [8] identified a positive relationship between TFL and job satisfaction. In a study conducted on police station chiefs, Liao [26] found that the caring-oriented TFL style adopted by the chiefs could make the staff happy to work and improve

their morale, cohesion and satisfaction. When the staff feel that there is fairness, justice and harmonious group atmosphere, it can promote harmony and unity among them, reduce friction and conflict and thus enhance their satisfaction with leader's reputation. Deluga, and Souza [13] studied the influences of TFL and TSL styles on subordinates with 53 police officers and found that TFL style has a stronger influence on subordinates. Based on the reasons stated above, when a supervisor exhibits TFL behaviour, he or she communicates directly or indirectly the importance he or she places on his or her employees. Hence, hypotheses H1 and H2 are proposed.

H1: Transformational leadership positively influences subordinate police officers

H1-1a: Transformational leadership's 'inspirational motivation' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'

H1-1b: Transformational leadership's 'idealised influence' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'

H1-1c: Transformational leadership's 'intellectual stimulation' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'

H1-1d: Transformational leadership's 'individualised consideration' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'

H1-2a: Transformational leadership's 'inspirational motivation' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'subordinate satisfaction'

H1-2b: Transformational leadership's 'idealised influence' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'subordinate satisfaction'

H1-2c: Transformational leadership's 'intellectual stimulation' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'subordinate satisfaction'

H1-2d: Transformational leadership's 'individualised consideration' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'subordinate satisfaction'

H2: Transformational leadership positively influences 'leader's reputation'

H2a: Transformational leadership's 'inspirational motivation' positively influences 'leader's reputation'

H2b: Transformational leadership's 'idealised influence' positively influences 'leader's reputation'

H2c: Transformational leadership's 'intellectual stimulation' positively influences 'leader's reputation'

H2d: Transformational leadership's 'individualised consideration' positively influences 'leader's reputation'

To effectively accomplish organisational goals, transactional leaders use strategies that include positive rewards, negative feedback, negotiation and reciprocity to satisfy subordinates' motivation and needs and make them work hard. The reciprocity of this kind of transaction is not only the exchange of money or benefits but also a psychological communication such as emotion, care and spiritual support. According to Li [27], under the needs of public security of police stations,

transactional leaders can adopt the most direct quid pro quo relationship that allows the crime investigation staff to receive substantial rewards such as bonuses, rewards and even promotions to drive them to strive for better performance. Hence, hypotheses H3 and H4 are proposed.

H3: Transactional leadership positively influences subordinate police officers
H3-1a: Transactional leadership's 'contingent reward' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'
H3-1b: Transactional leadership's 'management by exception-active' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'
H3-1c: Transactional leadership's 'management by exception-passive' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'
H3-2a: Transactional leadership's 'contingent reward' positively influences subordinate police officer' 'subordinate satisfaction'
H3-2b: Transactional leadership's 'management by exception-active' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'subordinate satisfaction'
H3-2c: Transactional leadership's 'management by exception-passive' positively influences subordinate police officers' 'subordinate satisfaction'

H4: Transactional leadership positively influences 'leader's reputation'
H4a: Transactional leadership's 'contingent reward' positively influences 'leader's reputation'
H4b: Transactional leadership's 'management by exception-active' positively influences 'leader's reputation'
H4c: Transactional leadership's 'management by exception-passive' positively influences 'leader's reputation'
Wang et.al. [28] believed that the relational degree of conflict handling behaviours can influence the salience of conflict and furthermore influence trust between contracting parties, with this relationship mediated by the behavioural outcomes; however, all these relationships are contingent on the stage where relational conflict handling behaviours are adopted and the specific type of outcomes the behaviours result in. Because of their specificity, police officers' position is stipulated in the contracting relationship as law enforcement officers, with necessary duties and obligations. Hence, hypotheses H5 and H6 are proposed.

H5: Conflict handling positively influences subordinate police officers
H5-1a: 'Dominating' in conflict handling positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'
H5-1b: 'Integrating' in conflict handling positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'
H5-1c: 'Obliging' in conflict handling positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'
H5-1d: 'Avoiding' in conflict handling positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'

H5-1e: 'Compromising' in conflict handling positively influences subordinate police officers' 'goal achievement'
H5-2a: 'Dominating' in conflict handling positively influences subordinate police officers' 'subordinate satisfaction'
H5-2b: 'Integrating' in conflict handling positively influences subordinate police officers' 'subordinate satisfaction'
H5-2c: 'Obliging' in conflict handling positively influences subordinate police officers' 'subordinate satisfaction'
H5-2d: 'Avoiding' in conflict handling positively influences subordinate police officers' 'subordinate satisfaction'
H5-2e: 'Compromising' in conflict handling positively influences subordinate police officers' 'subordinate satisfaction'

H6: Conflict handling positively influences 'leader's reputation'
H6a: 'Dominating' in conflict handling positively influences 'leader's reputation'
H6b: 'Integrating' in conflict handling positively influences 'leader's reputation'
H6c: 'Obliging' in conflict handling positively influences 'leader's reputation'
H6d: 'Avoiding' in conflict handling positively influences 'leader's reputation'
H6e: 'Compromising' in conflict handling positively influences 'leader's reputation'

4. Research design

To gain insight into police officers' supervisor leadership style and conflict handling in leading their subordinates, we conducted in-depth interviews with one police commissioner and one police precinct director. In addition, a questionnaire survey was conducted with subordinate police officers to verify the relationships between the influential variables related to their supervisors.

4.1   Research framework

This study mainly explores the influences of supervisors' leadership style and conflict handling on subordinate police officers. The research framework is illustrated in Figure 1.
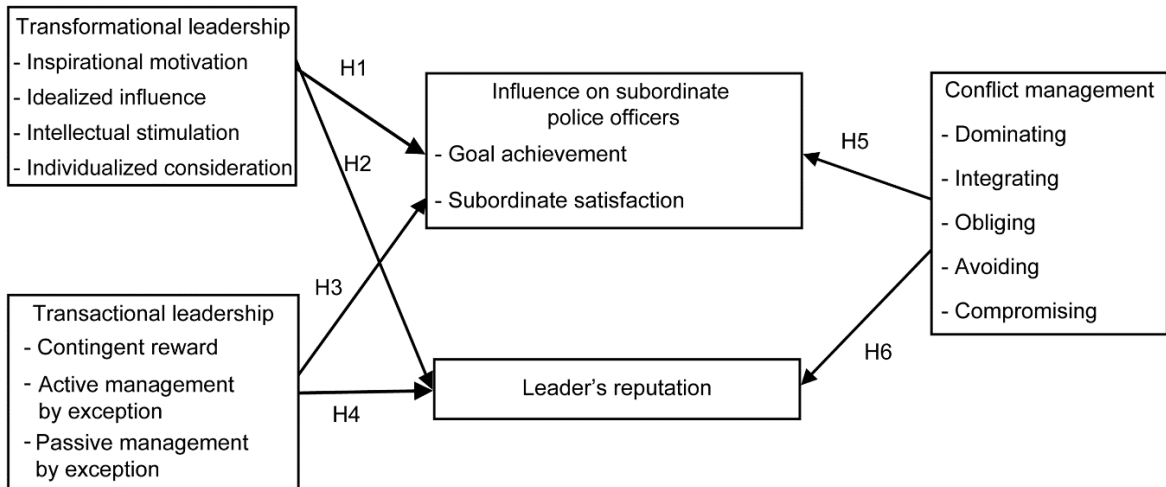
Figure 1: Research framework

4.2　Operational definition and measurement questions of research variables

The questionnaire was designed based on the above research objectives and literature discussion as well as the research relationship in this study. The questionnaire was divided into five parts, namely, 'transformational leadership' (questions 1–12); 'transactional leadership' (questions 13–21); 'conflict handling', including dominating (3 questions), integrating (3 questions), obliging (3 questions), avoiding (3 questions) and compromising (3 questions); 'influence on subordinate police officers', including goal achievement (3 questions) and subordinate satisfaction (3 questions) and 'leader's reputation' (4 questions). There were 46 questions in total.

The five-point Likert scale was employed, and respondents were anonymously assigned scores of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 in the order of 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'average', 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. The questionnaire was supplemented with questions on basic personal information to facilitate an understanding of the characteristics of the samples.

Table 1: Operational definition and measurement questions of research dimensions

	Research variables	Operational definition	Measurement questions
Transformational leadership	Inspirational motivation	Motivate subordinates to aspire to a specific goal and believe that it can be achieved [8]	a. Subordinates are willing to complete any task assigned by supervisor b. Supervisor will keep subordinates loyal to their organisation c. Supervisor encourages subordinates to express their opinions
	Idealised influence	It focuses on leader's charismatic behaviour; subordinates are influenced by it and want to follow and work together with the leader [29]	a. It is a pleasure to work with supervisor b. Supervisor has the ability to overcome the difficulties faced at work c. Supervisor is a person to be emulated
	Intellectual stimulation	The way a leader stimulates the creative thinking, discovery, and problem-solving skills of his or her subordinates [8]	a. Supervisor will encourage subordinates to pursue further studies to enrich their knowledge b. Supervisor will explore the potential of subordinates and provide training c. Supervisor helps subordinates to plan their careers efficiently
	Individualised consideration	The leader listens effectively to subordinates and develops their abilities by empowering them [30]	a. Supervisor will identify subordinates' needs at work and give them timely help b. Supervisor will keep abreast of subordinates' work status c. Supervisor will comfort subordinates in time when they encounter frustration at work
Transactional leadership	Contingent reward	The leader offers appropriate rewards as incentives; subordinates receive substantial or promised rewards when they accomplish the goals expected by supervisor [19]	a. Supervisor will clearly tell subordinates what they should do to be rewarded b. Supervisor will give appropriate rewards according to subordinates' performance c. When subordinates meet expectations, supervisor will let them know that he or she is satisfied
	Management by exception-active	The leader supervises subordinates' work at all times, and corrects and punishes any mistakes found [19]	a. Supervisor punishes subordinates for their mistakes rather than the people b. Supervisor is fully committed to dealing with subordinates' mistakes and failures c. Supervisor is committed to guiding subordinates from error to compliance
	Management by exception-passive	The leader does not control subordinates at all times, and only takes remedial measures when they deviate from the goals [19]	a. Supervisor intervenes or supervises only when the performance objective is not achieved b. Supervisor strongly believes in waiting for problems to occur before taking the initiative to address them c. Supervisor will take action on a problem only when it has been going on for a long time
Conflict handling	Dominating	The leader only cares about losing and winning regardless of the impact of conflict on others [31]	a. Supervisor will use his or her power to win b. Supervisor will assert his or her own opinion of an issue c. Supervisor will convince subordinates to accept his or her opinion
	Integrating	The pursuit of an inclusive and acceptable solution to both parties [31]	a. Supervisor will communicate and seek mutually beneficial solutions to avoid unpleasant interactions b. Supervisor will try to reconcile the differences in perceptions with subordinates to find a middle ground c. Supervisor will review the differences with subordinates and seek a mutually acceptable solution

	Obliging	It refers to submissively satisfying the concern of others [31]	a. Supervisor will consider the position of others and make some concessions b. Concessions are made in exchange for compromise by subordinates in other areas c. Supervisor will give up his or her own opinion to accommodate subordinates' ideas
	Avoiding	It refers to the ignoring attitude of 'out of sight, out of mind' (Rahim [31])	a. Supervisor tries to avoid expressing any opinion to subordinates b. Supervisor will keep his or her disagreement with subordinates to him- or her-self c. Supervisor often refuses to express him- or her-self openly
	Compromising	The adoption of a mutually satisfactory or acceptable compromise [31]	a. Supervisor will offer compromise to achieve a goal b. Supervisor and subordinates work together to integrate each other's opinions to reach a consensus decision c. Supervisor and subordinates will discuss the crux of a problem in order to find a mutually acceptable outcome
Influence on subordinate police officers	Goal achievement	1. Subordinates are willing to work hard to exceed the set performance 2. Subordinates will not be scolded for not meeting the deadline 3. Subordinates work according to standard operating procedures (SOPs) [25,32]	a. Subordinates will complete the tasks assigned by supervisor on time and with quality b. Supervisor does not blame but encourages when things do not go well c. Subordinates can complete tasks on time according to SOPs
	Subordinate satisfaction	1. Clear goal setting 2. Assistance with work difficulties 3. Discussion, respect for opinions, and good communication [25,32]	a. Subordinates are able to follow through on the goals requested by supervisor b. Supervisor will take the initiative to assist subordinates in dealing with difficulties at work c. Supervisor will discuss work with subordinates, listen to their opinions, and communicate well
Leader's reputation		1. Subordinates' evaluation of supervisor's leadership style 2. Non-powerful influence on work 3. Acceptable decisions 4. Dispensing reward and punishment impartially [25,32]	a. Supervisor has good leadership skills and enjoys a reputation of outstanding leadership among colleagues b. Supervisor does not need to rely on his or her official position and authority to motivate others to achieve work goals c. Supervisor's philosophy and goals are explicit and can be well accepted and clearly understood by subordinates d. Supervisor dispenses reward and punishment impartially

4.3   Question design for in-depth interviews

1. For what business or matter have you ever had a conflict with your subordinates? (Scheduling duties, performance requirements, performance appraisals, disputes over borrowing equipment, pressure from people's representatives, manpower allocation, tasks not related to work, increased workload, etc.)
2. What are the reasons for your conflicts with your subordinates? (Difference in role perception, unclear division of rights and responsibilities, poor communication, different perception of profession, etc.)
3. What are your coping strategies for conflicts with subordinates? (Dominating, integrating, obliging, avoiding, compromising, etc.)
4. Is the performance of the agency determined by the chief's leadership or by the subordinates' initiative?
5. What is your leadership style? Why do you adopt such style? (Encouragement and motivation, taking the lead, rewards and incentives and passive management)
6. What qualities do effective leaders need?
7. What do your subordinates think of you?
8. Anything else you would like to add? (Something special related to the conflict with the subordinates, psychological feelings after dealing with the conflict, whose support is most needed after the conflict with the subordinates, etc.)

Table 2: Analysis of respondents of in-depth interview

Respondent	Position	Education	Interview time	Interview method
A	Police commissioner	Master's	2021.12.28	Semi-structured interview
B	Police precinct director	Master's	2021.12.10	Semi-structured interview

5. Research results

5.1   Basic data of respondents

Among the 480 valid questionnaires in this study, the descriptive statistics of the basic data were that the majority of the respondents were male, constituting 81.7%; the number of people in each age group was basically the same, with '40–49 years old' being the majority, constituting 25.6% (123 people); in terms of education level, college was the most common, constituting 54% (259 people); in terms of years of service, '1–9 years' was the most common, constituting 34.6% and in terms of the nature of work, most of the respondents worked in police stations, constituting 47.1% (226 people).

Table 3: Analysis of basic information

Sample characteristics	Questions	Number of times (persons)	Percentage
Gender	**Male**	**392**	**81.7%**
	Female	**88**	**18.3%**
Age	20–29 years old	104	21.7%
	30–39 years old	112	23.3%
	40–49 years old	123	25.6%
	50–59 years old	106	22.1%
	60 years old and above	35	7.3%
Education level	College	259	54%
	University	161	33.5%
	Master's (inclusive) or above	60	12.5%
Years of service	1–9	166	34.6%
	10–19	113	23.5%
	20–29	87	18.1%
	More than 30 years	114	23.8%
Nature of work	Police station	226	47.1%
	Internal affairs of police precinct (headquarters)	78	16.3%
	Direct branch (precinct)	98	20.4%
	Squad leader	78	16.3%

5.2   Reliability and validity analysis of the questionnaire

In the reliability analysis, Cronbach's alpha is used as the criterion to measure reliability based on Nunnally's [33] viewpoint. Cronbach's alpha values of 0.7 or higher indicate high reliability of the data; Cronbach's alpha values between 0.35 and 0.7 indicate medium reliability of the data and Cronbach's alpha values of 0.35 or lower indicate low reliability of the data.

In Table 4, the reliability of the dimensions of 'transformational leadership', 'transactional leadership', 'conflict handling', 'influence on subordinate police officers' and 'leader's reputation' are all above 0.7, indicating high reliability. Fornell, and Larcker [34] suggested that composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) should be above the minimum thresholds of convergent validity of 0.70 and 0.50, respectively.

Table 4: Reliability and average variance extracted

Dimensions	Sub-dimensions	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Cronbach's alpha
Transformational leadership (TFL)	Inspirational motivation	0.920	0.793	0.869
	Idealised influence	0.958	0.885	0.935
	Intellectual stimulation	0.918	0.788	0.866
	Individualised consideration	0.952	0.870	0.925
Transactional leadership (TSL)	Contingent reward	0.918	0.789	0.866
	Management by exception-active	0.931	0.818	0.888
	Management by exception-passive	0.811	0.590	0.710
Conflict handling	Dominating	0.872	0.696	0.800
	Integrating	0.958	0.884	0.934
	Obliging	0.919	0.792	0.871
	Avoiding	0.928	0.812	0.895
	Compromising	0.948	0.859	0.918
Influence on subordinate police officers	Goal achievement	0.913	0.777	0.856
	Subordinate satisfaction	0.933	0.824	0.892
Leader's reputation		0.955	0.840	0.936

Discriminant validity is mainly used to test the degree of discrimination between the different dimensions of measurement variables. Table 5 presents that the AVE values (square root) of the diagonal dimensions in this study are all greater than the AVE values in the vertical columns, indicating good discriminant validity.

Table 5: Discriminant validity analysis

`	MEA	CR	Compromising	Obliging	Dominating	Integrating	IS	II	Goal achievement	IM	MEP	Avoiding	Subordinate satisfaction	IC	Leader's reputation
MEA	**0.904***														
CR	0.737	**0.888***													
Compromising	0.707	0.529	**0.927***												
Obliging	0.668	0.544	0.777	**0.89***											
Dominating	0.301	0.362	0.089	0.172	**0.834***										
Integrating	0.733	0.579	0.842	0.801	0.133	**0.94***									
IS	0.78	0.755	0.666	0.723	0.241	0.719	**0.888***								
II	0.775	0.773	0.616	0.631	0.173	0.687	0.773	**0.941***							
Goal achievement	0.695	0.591	0.642	0.514	0.348	0.593	0.592	0.563	**0.882***						
IM	0.787	0.759	0.714	0.613	0.269	0.675	0.752	0.799	0.739	**0.89***					
MEP	0.503	0.533	0.472	0.535	0.419	0.49	0.524	0.4	0.478	0.537	**0.768***				
Avoiding	0.026	−0.001	0.165	0.332	0.251	0.061	0.112	−0.011	−0.001	0.003	0.256	**0.901***			
Subordinate satisfaction	0.734	0.62	0.666	0.66	0.285	0.715	0.682	0.701	0.809	0.727	0.488	0.107	**0.908***		
IC	0.812	0.753	0.679	0.684	0.221	0.718	0.841	0.822	0.621	0.795	0.416	0.023	0.705	**0.933***	
Leader's reputation	0.767	0.676	0.739	0.656	0.191	0.718	0.699	0.754	0.707	0.768	0.491	0.077	0.828	0.747	**0.917***
Remarks	IM: inspirational motivation			II. idealised influence			IS: intellectual stimulation			IC: individualised consideration			CR: contingent reward		
	MEA: Management by exception-active			MEP: Management by exception-passive			Dominating			Integrating			Obliging		
	Avoiding			Compromising											

* The square root of AVE for the dimension

In the cross-loading matrix, the loadings on several questions of each dimension need to be higher than the other questions, as presented in Table 6, proving that the questions in the questionnaire have discriminant validity.

Table 6: Cross-loading matrix of factors for each dimension

Inspirational motivation	Idealised influence	Intellectual stimulation	Individualised consideration	Contingent reward	Management by exception-active	Management by exception-passive	Dominating	Integrating	Obliging	Avoiding	Compromising	Goal achievement	Subordinate satisfaction	Leader's reputation
0.859	0.54	0.528	0.572	0.572	0.597	0.422	0.325	0.47	0.411	−0.046	0.556	0.715	0.603	0.618
0.923	0.723	0.66	0.73	0.689	0.726	0.512	0.229	0.562	0.548	0.027	0.643	0.65	0.609	0.667
0.888	0.857	0.808	0.811	0.76	0.771	0.498	0.171	0.757	0.668	0.026	0.702	0.61	0.723	0.759
0.82	**0.932**	0.738	0.802	0.77	0.738	0.416	0.214	0.605	0.612	0.023	0.585	0.601	0.701	0.719
0.719	**0.953**	0.722	0.744	0.684	0.719	0.36	0.156	0.694	0.605	−0.012	0.598	0.499	0.654	0.699
0.708	**0.937**	0.718	0.772	0.722	0.727	0.348	0.113	0.642	0.56	−0.045	0.553	0.481	0.617	0.71
0.72	0.678	**0.887**	0.749	0.679	0.69	0.502	0.259	0.621	0.635	0.051	0.594	0.6	0.65	0.665
0.605	0.706	**0.878**	0.741	0.651	0.68	0.375	0.152	0.655	0.657	0.076	0.552	0.429	0.543	0.565
0.666	0.677	**0.898**	0.75	0.678	0.707	0.505	0.219	0.641	0.638	0.171	0.622	0.529	0.612	0.621
0.791	0.801	0.786	**0.942**	0.714	0.771	0.441	0.206	0.679	0.664	0.024	0.661	0.619	0.683	0.74
0.714	0.739	0.746	**0.931**	0.661	0.75	0.337	0.224	0.63	0.565	−0.002	0.587	0.586	0.662	0.679
0.715	0.76	0.824	**0.924**	0.734	0.75	0.383	0.188	0.703	0.685	0.044	0.652	0.53	0.627	0.669
0.54	0.502	0.586	0.545	**0.815**	0.532	0.472	0.343	0.394	0.433	0.081	0.427	0.467	0.451	0.496
0.698	0.778	0.663	0.683	**0.907**	0.684	0.441	0.304	0.532	0.441	−0.059	0.439	0.545	0.597	0.637
0.765	0.75	0.754	0.761	**0.939**	0.729	0.512	0.325	0.597	0.572	−0.006	0.541	0.557	0.589	0.654
0.696	0.755	0.727	0.768	0.692	**0.901**	0.41	0.276	0.684	0.607	−0.013	0.591	0.63	0.668	0.674
0.654	0.665	0.692	0.696	0.604	**0.904**	0.367	0.212	0.608	0.571	0.053	0.641	0.601	0.665	0.709
0.783	0.682	0.698	0.738	0.702	**0.908**	0.585	0.328	0.697	0.632	0.03	0.685	0.654	0.658	0.697
0.632	0.478	0.506	0.502	0.602	0.565	**0.867**	0.391	0.459	0.475	0.108	0.471	0.539	0.503	0.528
0.207	0.126	0.328	0.137	0.207	0.208	**0.742**	0.306	0.286	0.399	0.347	0.234	0.166	0.247	0.203
0.173	0.134	0.3	0.126	0.224	0.206	**0.686**	0.231	0.328	0.339	0.285	0.289	0.22	0.258	0.252
0.371	0.272	0.319	0.285	0.458	0.372	0.451	**0.899**	0.194	0.202	0.194	0.174	0.375	0.288	0.287

0.106	−0.041	−0.008	0.035	0.11	0.071	0.236	**0.786**	−0.056	0.033	0.246	−0.024	0.223	0.148	−0.015
0.077	0.073	0.167	0.136	0.196	0.195	0.282	**0.813**	0.102	0.133	0.223	−0.018	0.212	0.233	0.082
0.588	0.549	0.572	0.595	0.446	0.579	0.403	0.076	**0.899**	0.66	0.024	0.783	0.482	0.544	0.605
0.663	0.696	0.727	0.72	0.601	0.747	0.509	0.194	**0.966**	0.792	0.085	0.799	0.606	0.743	0.716
0.648	0.679	0.712	0.7	0.569	0.726	0.461	0.094	**0.954**	0.794	0.055	0.796	0.573	0.71	0.696
0.617	0.631	0.704	0.697	0.537	0.659	0.433	0.129	0.809	**0.924**	0.176	0.757	0.557	0.673	0.668
0.618	0.616	0.694	0.653	0.546	0.648	0.521	0.185	0.752	**0.95**	0.294	0.768	0.492	0.628	0.638
0.332	0.38	0.495	0.414	0.317	0.425	0.509	0.152	0.518	**0.787**	0.534	0.492	0.25	0.405	0.376
−0.012	−0.042	0.08	−0.013	−0.035	−0.011	0.161	0.223	−0.004	0.232	**0.883**	0.095	−0.018	0.073	0.06
0.025	0.024	0.128	0.065	0.043	0.053	0.283	0.246	0.105	0.365	**0.953**	0.194	0.021	0.131	0.09
−0.041	−0.061	0.059	−0.056	−0.078	−0.005	0.219	0.193	0.011	0.247	**0.865**	0.12	−0.042	0.037	0.029
0.61	0.499	0.57	0.539	0.445	0.614	0.506	0.091	0.709	0.666	0.213	**0.902**	0.563	0.561	0.616
0.667	0.65	0.64	0.675	0.541	0.675	0.379	0.05	0.827	0.737	0.111	**0.941**	0.619	0.653	0.738
0.705	0.554	0.637	0.665	0.48	0.674	0.438	0.11	0.798	0.754	0.142	**0.937**	0.601	0.633	0.693
0.665	0.439	0.444	0.484	0.459	0.555	0.414	0.352	0.471	0.404	−0.06	0.537	**0.916**	0.664	0.583
0.706	0.675	0.71	0.725	0.653	0.76	0.489	0.207	0.697	0.632	0.048	0.697	**0.842**	0.804	0.735
0.567	0.347	0.382	0.407	0.432	0.501	0.348	0.372	0.371	0.294	0.008	0.441	**0.885**	0.658	0.533
0.665	0.558	0.517	0.525	0.519	0.588	0.4	0.371	0.483	0.443	0.092	0.483	0.805	**0.847**	0.67
0.691	0.686	0.68	0.699	0.623	0.714	0.448	0.229	0.69	0.634	0.07	0.65	0.72	**0.943**	0.797
0.63	0.656	0.648	0.683	0.542	0.688	0.477	0.195	0.753	0.7	0.129	0.665	0.695	**0.929**	0.779
0.724	0.69	0.666	0.689	0.648	0.739	0.5	0.224	0.634	0.571	0.061	0.65	0.677	0.809	**0.919**
0.632	0.697	0.607	0.658	0.578	0.665	0.416	0.116	0.714	0.662	0.135	0.702	0.578	0.745	**0.931**
0.726	0.709	0.641	0.689	0.619	0.721	0.466	0.137	0.703	0.659	0.122	0.744	0.673	0.787	**0.944**
0.734	0.669	0.65	0.705	0.632	0.687	0.413	0.228	0.579	0.507	−0.041	0.608	0.663	0.691	**0.871**

5.3   Validation of research hypotheses

After the reliability and validity analysis, it is confirmed that the dimensions of the questionnaire in this study have reached the acceptable range. Figure 2 presents the use of SmartPLS in this study to test the research hypotheses in the structural model. The data analysed in this study include the path coefficient, the percentage of explained variation (R^2) and the t-value. The path coefficient represents the strength and direction of the relationship between the examined variables, and R^2 represents the percentage of the variance for an endogenous variable explained by an exogenous variable, representing the predictive power of the research model.
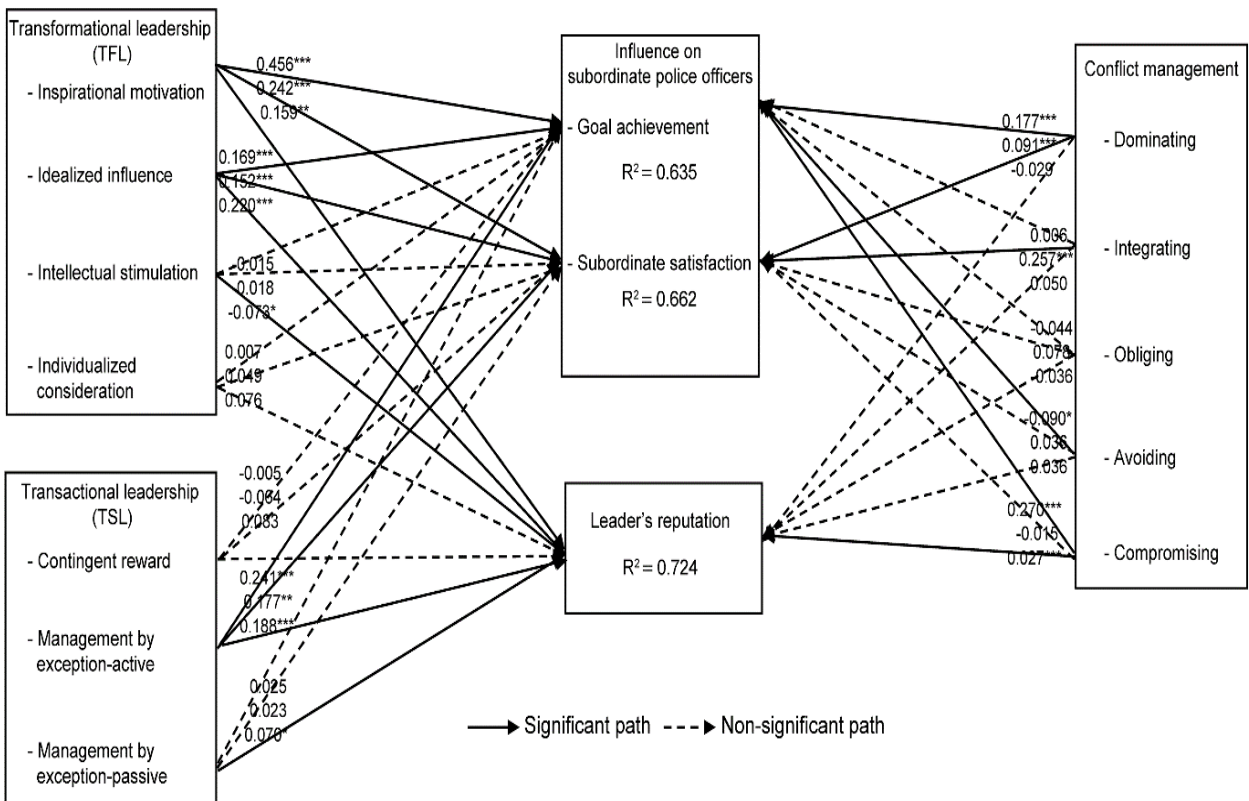
Figure 2: Results of the explained variation of the research model

According to Figure 2, in terms of 'goal achievement', inspirational motivation (path coefficient = 0.456), idealised influence (path coefficient = 0.169) and management by exception - active (path coefficient = 0.241) as well as dominating (path coefficient = 0.177), avoiding (path coefficient = –0.090) and compromising (path coefficients = 0.270) in conflict handling all have positive and direct influences on goal achievement. Hence, the hypotheses H1-1a, H1-1b, H3-1b, H5-1a, H5-1d and H5-1e of this study are supported.

In terms of 'subordinate satisfaction', inspirational motivation (path coefficient = 0.242), idealised influence (path coefficient = 0.152), management by exception-active (path coefficient = 0.177) as well as dominating (path coefficient = 0.091) and integrating (path coefficient = 0.257) in conflict handling all have positive and direct influences on 'subordinate satisfaction'. Hence, the hypotheses H1-2a, H1-2b, H3-2b, H5-2a and H5-2b of this study are supported.

In terms of 'leader's reputation', inspirational motivation (path coefficient = 0.159), idealised influence (path coefficient = 0.220), intellectual stimulation (path coefficient = –0.073), management by exception-active (path coefficient = 0.188) and management by exception-passive (path coefficient = 0.070) as well as compromising (path coefficient = 0.271) in conflict handling all have positive and direct influences on 'leader's reputation'. Hence, the hypotheses H2a, H2b, H2c, H4b, H4c and H6e of this study are supported. In light of the above test of the structural model, the results are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Results of the hypotheses validation of the structural model

Hypotheses and corresponding paths	Path coefficients	T-values	Results
Inspirational motivation → 'goal achievement'	0.456	5.556***	Supported
Inspirational motivation → 'subordinate satisfaction'	0.242	3.295***	Supported
Inspirational motivation → 'leader's reputation'	0.159	2.09**	Supported
Idealised influence → 'goal achievement'	0.169	2.694***	Supported
Idealised influence → 'subordinate satisfaction'	0.152	2.919***	Supported
Idealised influence → 'leader's reputation'	0.220	3.639***	Supported
Intellectual stimulation → 'goal achievement'	−0.015	0.202	Unsupported
Intellectual stimulation → 'subordinate satisfaction'	−0.018	0.25	Unsupported
Intellectual stimulation → 'leader's reputation'	−0.073	1.651*	Supported
Individualised consideration → 'goal achievement'	0.007	0.095	Unsupported
Individualised consideration → 'subordinate satisfaction'	0.049	0.726	Unsupported
Individualised consideration → 'leader's reputation'	0.076	1.642	Unsupported
Contingent reward → 'goal achievement'	0.005	0.076	Unsupported
Contingent reward → 'subordinate satisfaction'	−0.064	1.108	Unsupported
Contingent reward → 'leader's reputation'	0.083	1.102	Unsupported
Management by exception-active → 'goal achievement'	0.241	3.494***	Supported
Management by exception-active → 'subordinate satisfaction'	0.177	2.561**	Supported
Active management by exception → 'leader's reputation'	0.188	3.154***	Supported
Management by exception-passive → 'goal achievement'	0.025	0.419	Unsupported
Management by exception-passive → 'subordinate satisfaction'	0.023	0.492	Unsupported
Management by exception-passive → 'leader's reputation'	0.070	1.862*	Supported
Dominating → 'goal achievement'	0.177	4.471***	Supported
Dominating → 'subordinate satisfaction'	0.091	2.288***	Supported
Dominating → 'leader's reputation'	−0.029	0.808	Unsupported
Integrating → 'goal achievement'	0.006	0.059	Unsupported
Integrating → 'subordinate satisfaction'	0.257	3.763***	Supported
Integrating → 'leader's reputation'	0.050	0.756	Unsupported
Obliging → 'goal achievement'	−0.044	0.618	Unsupported
Obliging → 'subordinate satisfaction'	0.078	1.242	Unsupported
Obliging → 'leader's reputation'	−0.036	0.727	Unsupported
Avoiding → 'goal achievement'	−0.090	1.747*	Supported
Avoiding → 'subordinate satisfaction'	0.036	0.837	Unsupported
Avoiding → 'leader's reputation'	0.036	0.986	Unsupported
Compromising → 'goal achievement'	0.270	3.152***	Supported
Compromising → 'subordinate satisfaction'	−0.015	0.184	Unsupported
Compromising → 'leader's reputation'	0.271	3.331***	Supported

*T > 1.645 **T > 1.96 ***T > 2.575

6. Discussions and recommendations

6.1   Research conclusions

The cross-analysis of the interviews and the above questionnaire data are described as follows:

Influence of 'transformational leadership' on 'goal achievement', 'subordinate satisfaction' and 'leader's reputation'

The results revealed that TFL significantly positively influences police officers' 'goal achievement' and 'subordinate satisfaction' but negatively influences 'intellectual stimulation' and 'individualised consideration'. In addition, 'individualised consideration' negatively influences 'leader's reputation'. Respondent B believed that the change in organisational culture is particularly evident in the performance of the police force. In the early days, police officers were recruited from the Taiwan Provincial Police Training Facilities and the Central Police University, and their obedience to their job duties was obvious. At present, there are internal channels (recruitment from the Taiwan Provincial Police Training Facilities and the Central Police University) and external channels (recruitment from general universities) to recruit policemen. Those recruited through external channels are less obedient in terms of their thinking and personality traits than the conventional policemen. They have diverse ideas and thus a lot of opinions on the orders given to them. Under the traditional bureaucratic system, the output is less effective. Therefore, leaders are less likely to excessively focus on the 'intellectual stimulation' for the subordinate policemen (recruited from external channels). In practice, most policemen will spontaneously arrange their own career plans for promotion and ranking examinations. In terms of 'individualised consideration', the policemen (recruited from external channels) are less used to having their supervisors interfere with their duties. Most of them will come when they have a request, for example, to ask for leave when they are scheduled for duty or to request grade A for performance appraisal at the end of the year.

Influence of 'transactional leadership' on 'goal achievement', 'subordinate satisfaction' and 'leader's reputation'

TSL style negatively influences 'contingent reward'. Respondent B believed that police work has its particularity. In reality, police officers are paid whether they perform or not, which we call 'ineffective police force'. Except for those with a sense of justice who will find things to do on and off duty, most of them prefer not to do anything. In terms of performance responsibility, they let their supervisors plan their duties and take responsibility for the overall success or failure of their work. Therefore, the diversity of police duties and the reward for merit can only stimulate a few subordinates' spontaneity. Because their purpose is to seek promotion and training, for those who do not want to be promoted, there is little effect even though there are appropriate rewards and incentives.

The hypotheses of 'management by exception-passive' in 'goal achievement' and

'subordinate satisfaction' do not hold true. According to respondent A, police chiefs should be able to outline the key points to implement the requirements from their superiors, 'I think it is very important to set an example and convince others by virtue, and we should start from ourselves. Then, there is the proposed multi-participant leadership style, which enables all participants to give their opinions and the chiefs decide, to realise hierarchical responsibility and delegation in order to achieve all-round effectiveness. Every leader has different qualities and conditions. I think they should first have familiarity with their own work so that when subordinates encounter problems, they can take the initiative and give guidance. Affinity is also very important, as it can make subordinates feel that they are on the same side as the leader'.

Differences in conflict handling situations
'Dominating' conflict handling has an insignificant influence on 'leader's reputation'. According to Respondent B, the authoritative leadership style in the past, which was a military style of command, created fear and reluctance among subordinates to do their jobs. 'Integrating' has an insignificant influence on 'goal achievement' and 'leader's reputation'. According to Respondent A, there will be issues of fairness and partiality, and all problems occur not from scarcity but inequality; it is a matter of uneven distribution of resources. Once we are selfish, we will create the situation of 'unequal pay for equal work', which is a taboo for leaders. From the current perspective, this method that integrates the benefits of both parties has far more disadvantages, as it will be more difficult for subordinates to accept supervisor's arrangements and views. The hypotheses of 'obliging' on 'goal achievement', 'subordinate satisfaction' and 'leader's reputation' do not hold true. Respondent A stated, 'Many leaders, I mean the police precinct directors under me, thought that in the end, things would mend or that they could handle awkward situations of disagreement and then handled things from their own standpoint without facing the problem squarely. Emotional manoeuvrings eventually caused internal struggles to go out of control and bring down themselves (that is, losing their position as the police precinct director)'. The hypotheses of 'avoiding' on 'subordinate satisfaction' and 'leader's reputation' do not hold true. Both respondents A and B indicated that they are 'soft' with their colleagues, and thereby, there are few conflicts, forming a hierarchical relationship. Moreover, they stated that they will not overlook their subordinates' conflicts and handle them with general terms. 'Compromising' has an insignificant influence on 'subordinate satisfaction'. According to Respondent A, in the performance appraisal, there is a special situation in the public sector. The central government has stipulated that when everyone performs mediocrely, the proportion of grade A can only be 75% and that the other 25% must be grade B. 'Since I became a supervisor, in the case of the mediocre performance of colleagues, I ranked them according to their seniority, with the senior ones taking grade A first in the first year and the junior ones taking grade B, and then I let them take turns. Each time a conflict arose because some colleagues needed to be upgraded. To be promoted, they must have

grade A for two consecutive years or one grade A in three years. At this time, a supervisor would hesitate because colleagues come to me and ask for help, and I had to explain to them. Generally, I would still expect my subordinates to 'compromise'. The performance appraisal was done once a year and they could not about their own interests. I would resort to 'reasons' and 'emotions' in the hope that they would 'compromise' and understand the difficulties. Second, there would be remaining grade A quotas among the public units to be allocated according to work performance. Thus, I would require the work performance of all units to obtain one or two more places every year, which would also be the honour of our team. Obtaining one more grade A place could reduce the 'compromise' of one colleague. This is my opinion. Personally, when I was a subordinate, I was also willing to give way to grade A as a custom of our team. I was promoted by performance. However, there are inevitably other factors in the unit (e.g. supervisor's opinion of the subordinates, interpersonal relationships, etc.) that I personally hope to eliminate. When everyone is performing similarly, it is still about seniority and seniors are given priority'.

6.2   Recommendations

Through interviews with the researcher's former officers, it is found that his leadership style is to 'encourage' rather than 'punish'. He only punishes to warn against mistakes and encourages building on the inherent strengths of his subordinates. He takes the lead only once, not a second time. He hopes that his subordinates can learn from each other so that he can discover their abilities and set their positions at the right place in the future. Ability is comparable. Inspirational motivation is the central idea of his leadership style. He has never managed passively. Instead, he observes and believes that putting the right people in the right positions is important for the performance of the unit.

In terms of whether the work performance of a unit is determined by the chief's leadership or the subordinates' spontaneity, Respondent A's view is that they are both important, each constituting 50%. Times have changed and leadership is relative to subordinates' spontaneity. Except for the 'military, law enforcement, and military police', which have special rights and obligations, because they have to obey orders, the chiefs' leadership may constitute 90%. As now they are all pan-public units. Respondent A's view is that each should account for 50%. Strong leadership will result in weak spontaneity; if the effectiveness is not good, the leadership is weak and the spontaneity is strong, things will also not work out.

The chief's leadership is important. The chief is a directional person who sets the standard of performance and leads the subordinates forward. We cannot sublimate subordinates' inducibility to spontaneity; otherwise, work performance will stop at a blind spot. Subordinates' spontaneity is important. Each time work performance reaches a point, it is raised from a 'plain', eventually up to a very difficult period, which we call the 'plateau period' in academics. In fact, work performance increases from 'plain', 'plain', 'plain' and then to the 'plateau'; the realisation of

each layer depends on subordinates' spontaneity; otherwise, the status quo may remain unchanged, with lacklustre work performance as subordinates have no spontaneity. If we focus only on leaders, there is no way to break through in performance and we will stay on the plains and not reach higher positions.
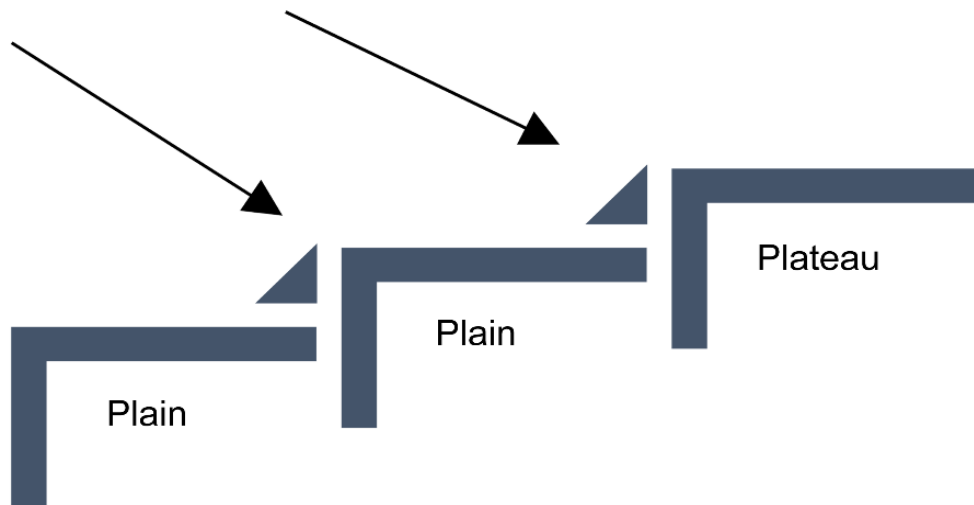

Figure 3: Plains to plateau diagram as described by respondents

Finally, in terms of conflict handling, Respondent A thinks that some extra-theoretical matters also need to be addressed. For example, having dinners with some subordinates and sending holiday gifts to subordinates. Leaders need to relate to their subordinates and gain their goodwill and recognition so that they can be emotionally attached to them when they encounter conflicts in the future. Although it may be impossible to solve the problem completely, it is often possible to minimise the consequences. Conflict is like 'a scab on the body', and it leaves a scar. We want the scar to be smaller, and touching people's emotions can achieve such effect. Future research could be conducted by emphasising on different countries. For example, by comparing police leaders in western and eastern countries to determine if there are differences in the influences of leadership style and conflict handling on leadership effectiveness owing to cultural differences.

Acknowledgements

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