

# Research on the Optimization of Incentive Mechanisms in Educational Management of Private Colleges

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**Abstract:** As a pivotal component of China's higher education system, private universities play a critical role in advancing educational quality through institutional reforms. Optimizing incentive mechanisms to stabilize faculty teams has become fundamental for enhancing academic standards. This study focuses on private higher education institutions to explore incentive mechanisms and optimization strategies in educational management, integrating two-factor theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs framework. Addressing core challenges such as limited career advancement pathways, insufficient research funding, and imbalanced compensation structures, the research proposes: (1) Establishing a tiered evaluation system and interdisciplinary development platforms based on motivational factors, incorporating teaching innovation achievements into professional title assessment criteria; (2) Implementing green salary reforms with a three-tier compensation model combining base pay, flexible performance bonuses, and special awards. This differentiated mechanism that balances material support with psychological incentives effectively promotes faculty career development and institutional innovation, providing theoretical references and practical models for higher education management reform.

**Keywords:** Private higher education institutions; Incentive mechanism; Two-factor theory; Educational management

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## 1. Introduction

In recent years, the Chinese government has implemented a series of policy measures to adjust salary structures in higher education institutions. On July 11, 2023, the Central Committee for Comprehensively Deepening Reform approved the *Guidelines on Pilot Programs for Compensation System Reform in Higher Education Institutions and Research Institutes*, which explicitly require active implementation of salary reform initiatives. The document emphasizes strengthening oversight of compensation management in academic institutions, mandating that salary distribution systems prioritize frontline educators and researchers with outstanding contributions to teaching and research. It also advocates for establishing dual compensation

mechanisms that balance financial security with motivational incentives. These policy adjustments not only reflect the nation's commitment to refining incentive mechanisms in higher education but also highlight the urgent need for systemic improvements in current incentive frameworks across China's academic institutions<sup>[1]</sup>.

Since the 1990s, under the influence of national initiatives to enhance teaching quality and reform educational systems, private universities in China have gradually recognized the importance of incentive mechanisms in educational management. With a focus on sustainable development, they have implemented comprehensive incentive strategies—including applied incentive theories, innovative models, and integrated measures—to strengthen educational governance<sup>[2]</sup>. These efforts have laid a solid foundation for faculty development and teaching quality improvement. While private institutions increasingly acknowledge the significance of management practices, emerging challenges in the digital era and knowledge economy have surfaced: rigid incentive structures, lack of innovation, and insufficient consideration of faculty realities. These issues not only undermine teaching motivation but also hinder effective educational management and institutional long-term growth. Therefore, continuously optimizing incentive mechanisms remains crucial for modern private higher education innovation. Building on the hierarchy of needs theory and two-factor theory, this study analyzes current incentive systems in private universities and explores targeted optimization strategies to promote sustainable development through enhanced motivation frameworks<sup>[3]</sup>.

## **2. The value implications of incentive mechanisms in educational management of private higher education institutions**

The incentive mechanism in educational management of private higher education institutions serves as a core strategy to unlock the potential of faculty and students while enhancing educational quality. Its framework comprises three key components: (1) Goal-oriented systems that employ differentiated performance metrics (e.g., research commercialization rates and student employment outcomes) for targeted incentives; (2) Dynamic value distribution through a “base salary + flexible rewards” model incorporating non-traditional indicators such as teaching innovation and social services; (3) Development empowerment mechanisms featuring career advancement pathways supported by personalized training resources and academic incubation programs. This mechanism transcends conventional reward-punishment frameworks, establishing a value co-creation system tailored to the unique characteristics of private education.

### **2.1. Directional needs: Related to high-quality development of education**

According to data from the National Education Development Statistical Bulletin released by the Ministry of Education in 2024, China had 799 private higher education institutions by the end of 2024, accounting for 27.8% of the total number of regular higher education institutions nationwide. Among these, students enrolled in various types of private regular universities and vocational colleges represented 24.19% of the total student population in regular higher education institutions and vocational colleges. The development of private higher education institutions has always relied on the support of faculty teams. Only by cultivating a group of dedicated and hardworking educators can we truly achieve high-quality development in private universities and higher education. Enhancing faculty engagement consistently requires innovative and optimized incentive mechanisms, which also represent a fundamental directional need for the high-quality development of private higher education institutions.

## **2.2. Management needs: Influencing the enhancement of educational management competence**

Since the emergence of private universities in the 1980s and their current scaled development, China's private higher education sector has achieved remarkable growth. However, the pace of educational management improvement has consistently failed to keep pace with development speed, with management challenges becoming increasingly prominent during rapid expansion—particularly in faculty management. For instance, administrators overemphasize institutionalized management while neglecting humanistic approaches; impose stricter constraints on faculty while offering fewer incentives; lack systematic educational management frameworks, showing growing tendencies toward corporate-style management; allocate significantly lower research and training budgets compared to public universities, dampening teaching motivation; some institutions still adopt “corporate-style governance” models plagued by separated administrative-decision-making processes and restricted departmental autonomy; most use simplistic “class hour quotas + attendance rates” evaluations while overlooking qualitative indicators like teaching innovation and research commercialization. These deficiencies in educational management directly impact institutional sustainability. In the knowledge economy era, well-designed incentive mechanisms play a crucial role in enhancing educational management capabilities. On one hand, incentive systems serve as key drivers for improving management effectiveness; on the other hand, scientifically structured incentives encourage faculty innovation and proactive engagement, making them vital for advancing educational management standards in private universities.

## **2.3. Developmental needs: Directly influencing teachers' own development**

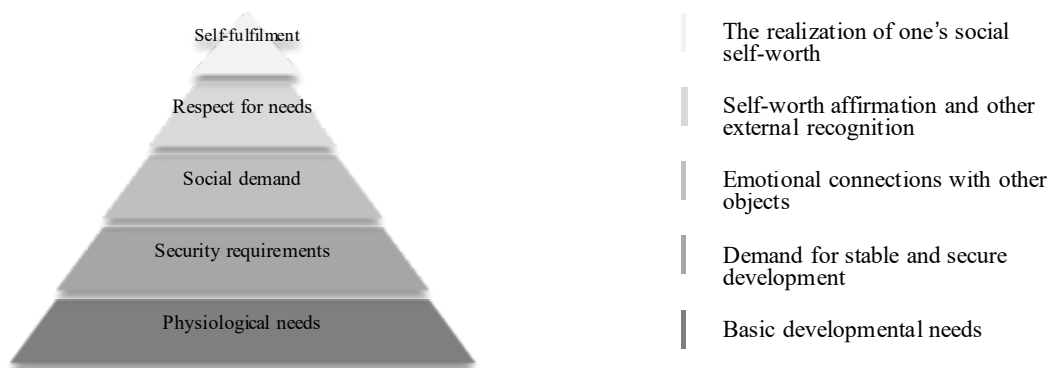
In contemporary society, faculty members at private universities—particularly young educators—are encountering growing challenges amid shifting external environments. These include the absence of scientific career development plans, perceptions of being “second-class” compared to public institution teachers, mounting financial pressures from pension costs, children's education expenses, and housing purchases, as well as significant income gaps that exacerbate financial strain. Optimizing incentive mechanisms in educational management requires fostering organizational identity, belongingness, happiness, and a sense of achievement to transform faculty mindsets. By addressing teachers' developmental needs, we can maximize their potential through effective incentive systems that enable strategic career planning and advancement. Key measures include establishing clear academic promotion pathways, implementing humanized salary structures, and refining professional title evaluation criteria. Such targeted initiatives can reinvigorate teachers' intrinsic motivation and align with their developmental aspirations. Therefore, scientifically designed incentive mechanisms are crucial for ensuring sustainable growth within private university teaching communities <sup>[4]</sup>.

## **3. The actual issues of incentive mechanisms in educational management of private higher education institutions**

From the current status of educational management in China's private higher education institutions, existing incentive mechanisms fail to stimulate teachers' intrinsic sense of responsibility, creativity, and educational passion. For instance, current reward systems and professional title evaluation methods in private universities cannot effectively motivate teachers' psychological well-being, with significant room for improvement in

salary structures, promotion mechanisms, and career development opportunities. The misalignment between incentive systems and teachers’ professional goals has also impacted the long-term development of private universities. To clearly identify practical challenges in incentive mechanisms, this section employs the two-factor theory and hierarchy of needs theory (**Figure 1**) to analyze issues from both motivational and hygiene perspectives. The integration of these theories in private university incentive research enables a precise analysis of teachers’ complex needs. The two-factor theory distinguishes between “hygiene factors” (e.g., compensation and job stability) and “motivational factors” (e.g., research support and career advancement), revealing root causes of high teacher turnover in private institutions. The hierarchy of needs theory stratifies teachers’ differentiated demands—from material security and job safety to professional recognition and self-actualization—avoiding one-size-fits-all incentive approaches. Combining these theories allows diagnosis of dual challenges: “poor hygiene conditions leading to attrition” and “inadequate motivation hindering development.” By designing tiered material support systems, career planning frameworks, and academic empowerment strategies based on need stratification, a multidimensional incentive system can be established. This approach transcends traditional management limitations focused on single dimensions, providing systematic solutions for teacher motivation in private higher education institutions <sup>[2]</sup>.

The two-factor theory categorizes workplace factors into two distinct groups: motivational factors and hygiene factors. Motivational factors, which are closely related to the work itself, include work achievements, growth and development opportunities, and status elevation, and these factors drive employee satisfaction and motivation by fulfilling higher-level needs. In contrast, hygiene factors, which are closely related to the work environment, consist of working conditions, interpersonal relations, and salaries and benefits; while these factors do not inherently motivate employees, their absence can cause significant dissatisfaction, making them essential for maintaining a baseline of contentment in the workplace.



**Figure 1.** Hierarchy of needs theory

From the structural perspective of the two-factor theory, the esteem and self-actualization needs in the hierarchy of needs theory fall under the category of motivational factors, while the other three needs belong to the category of hygiene factors <sup>[3]</sup>.

### 3.1. Incentive factors reality

From the perspective of incentive mechanisms in private higher education institutions, motivational factors are closely related to educational management practices, such as faculty professional achievements, career

advancement, and opportunities for growth and development.

### **3.1.1. Limited space for self-actualization: Insufficient opportunities for promotion**

The essence of optimizing incentive mechanisms in private universities lies in resolving the paradox of “strong incentive demand versus insufficient supply” through institutional empowerment, resource allocation optimization, and ecosystem restructuring. The theoretical framework centers on faculty career development, integrating organizational objectives with individual value realization into a synergistic system to establish a tripartite incentive ecosystem encompassing “institutional equity, resource accessibility, and career sustainability.” From the perspective of two-factor theory, key incentive drivers in private universities primarily focus on professional achievements, promotion opportunities, and research support. However, structural constraints such as institutional limitations and resource allocation disparities create significant differences between private and public universities. Notably, private institutions often offer limited job positions, restricted career advancement pathways, and inadequate promotion channels—particularly for young faculty members who frequently lack immediate career progression opportunities. These challenges manifest in several specific aspects:

First, there exists a mismatch between job positions and actual staffing needs. Most private universities generally operate on a smaller scale than public institutions, resulting in simpler internal hierarchies and consequently limited career advancement opportunities for faculty members. This creates a paradox where outstanding educators—despite their exceptional performance in teaching, research, and management—as well as the policy recommendations from the Central Committee for Comprehensively Deepening Reform (including preferential salary treatment for such professionals)—still face restricted career progression. For instance, approximately 70% of faculty positions at private universities in Anhui Province hold junior or intermediate academic titles, with associate senior titles and above accounting for less than 15%—a significant gap compared to the 40% ratio in public institutions. The flattened organizational structure and inadequate promotion mechanisms further exacerbate this issue. A private university in Anhui Province, for example, offers only five senior academic positions while employing over 300 full-time faculty members, leading to intense competition for promotions <sup>[5]</sup>.

Secondly, compared to public universities, private institutions have more stringent faculty promotion evaluation mechanisms, with most lacking autonomy in academic title assessments. To advance their professional ranks, private university teachers must prioritize the quantity and quality of research projects and academic achievements, while their teaching proficiency and innovative capabilities receive disproportionately less consideration. Data from a 2022 survey of private universities in Hefei, Anhui Province revealed that research projects and publications account for 60–70% of evaluation criteria, while teaching competence constitutes only 20–30%. This imbalance results in young faculty members with outstanding teaching performance being hindered by insufficient research achievements. For instance, a young teacher who won first prizes in university-level teaching competitions for three consecutive years still failed to qualify for associate professor promotion due to a lack of provincial-level research projects <sup>[6]</sup>.

Finally, many private universities struggle to provide adequate research and training support for faculty members due to limited educational management budgets. For instance, private universities in Guangdong Province allocate only one-fifth of the annual research funding compared to public institutions, with 80% of research budgets relying on self-raised funds. Moreover, merely 30% of faculty members regularly attend

academic conferences at provincial or higher levels, while this figure reaches 80% in public universities. Additionally, private university teachers receive less than 40 hours of annual training, far below the Ministry of Education's recommended standard of 120 hours. A survey of private universities in Ningbo revealed that approximately 65% of faculty members cannot conduct experimental research due to insufficient laboratory equipment. These issues directly hinder faculty professional development and skill enhancement, not only impeding career progression but also gradually eroding the teaching resources and overall competitiveness of private universities.

### **3.1.2. Insufficient fulfillment of respect needs: Lack of training opportunities and academic exchange platforms**

Amid the rapid advancement of the knowledge economy and digital era, China's educational reform has elevated comprehensive teacher competencies as a key focus for higher education development. Diverse training opportunities and academic exchange platforms serve as vital channels for enhancing faculty capabilities. However, constrained by limited educational management budgets in private universities, teachers often lack systematic training resources and learning opportunities for professional growth.

On one hand, the current training resources in private higher education institutions face two critical challenges: resource scarcity and limited training opportunities. Case studies from Guangdong's private universities reveal that 80% of teacher training programs still rely primarily on academic lectures and presentations, with practical courses accounting for less than 20%. This model fails to meet the demands of cultivating "dual-qualified" teachers (those requiring both theoretical teaching expertise and practical guidance skills). For instance, educators in fields like automotive manufacturing and artificial intelligence urgently need industry internship opportunities, yet only 15% of private universities have established stable training partnerships with enterprises. Furthermore, the absence of an effective training evaluation system has led 40% of teachers to perceive training outcomes as merely "formalistic."

On the other hand, private higher education institutions face significant disparities in teacher training opportunities. Limited educational funding and multiple factors, particularly uneven distribution among young faculty members, have created pronounced imbalances in professional development. Survey data from private universities in Anhui Province reveal that over 70% of these institutions allocate less funding for teacher training compared to public universities, resulting in less than 30% of faculty participating in off-campus training programs annually. For instance, statistics from a private college in 2023 showed that only 35% of young teachers received research project grants, while public institutions recorded a 65% rate—a striking disparity. Insufficient funding directly restricts training resources; one private vocational college conducted merely 305 training sessions per year, far below the 1,000-person capacity of comparable public institutions. Such inequities not only dampen young teachers' teaching motivation but also severely undermine educational management effectiveness in private universities<sup>[7]</sup>.

## **3.2. Health care factors reality**

Health-related factors are closely associated with teachers' working environment, such as salary and benefits, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, and labor protection.

### **3.2.1. Deficiency in physiological needs: Generally low salary and benefits levels**

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory posits that physiological needs constitute "the lowest-level yet most

dominant requirements.” When these needs remain unmet, other demands are temporarily suppressed. The primary function of compensation lies in fulfilling teachers’ material survival necessities, including food procurement, housing expenses, and basic living expenditures. If salaries fail to cover these fundamental requirements, educators will struggle to pursue higher-level aspirations. The salary levels of faculty at private universities ultimately correlate with enrollment numbers. Institutions with larger student populations typically allocate more educational management funds, which consequently leads to improved faculty compensation packages.

Examining the overall salary landscape, young faculty members at private universities face particularly pronounced challenges, with their base salaries consistently remaining below industry averages. In recent years, many private institutions have implemented substantial tuition hikes. For instance, Nanchang Institute of Technology, Nanchang Jiaotong University, and Nanchang Applied Technology Normal University raised tuition fees by 40%, 14%, and 51.52%, respectively, in 2023. This policy adjustment reflects the critical role tuition plays as the primary funding source for these universities. Private higher education institutions typically rely on limited financial resources, and such constrained funding mechanisms inevitably result in lower faculty compensation. When essential salary incentives addressing teachers’ physiological needs and safety concerns remain unmet, educators often perceive their efforts as undervalued. Over time, this perception inevitably erodes professional motivation and job satisfaction.

An analysis of faculty welfare packages reveals significant gaps in benefits and comprehensive protections at private universities, with young teachers being the most affected group. Social security contributions and housing provident funds demonstrate this disparity: private institution faculty face lower contribution rates than public sector counterparts, while essential benefits like housing allowances and medical insurance remain underdeveloped. For instance, Sanlian University in Anhui Province provides monthly salaries of 4,000 yuan for faculty members. When calculating the five social insurances and housing fund based on 60% of the local minimum wage (approximately 2,000 yuan), combined employer and employee contributions total only 602 yuan per month (301 yuan each). In contrast, public universities typically calculate these contributions using full salary amounts at a rate of 12%.

### **3.2.2. Inadequate protection of safety requirements: Lack of targeted and systematic incentive mechanisms**

Scientifically designed incentive mechanisms can provide teachers with secure and stable career development needs, aligning with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory regarding safety requirements. However, many private universities currently lack comprehensive incentive systems in educational management. For instance, their salary structures remain overly simplistic, predominantly relying on base salaries without diversified incentives like research allowances or housing subsidies—a stark contrast to public universities. Take private universities in Anhui Province as an example: teachers’ base salaries are set too low, while teaching hour fees and bonuses fail to adequately reflect performance metrics, leaving their economic security needs unmet. Additionally, inadequate social insurance coverage persists—some institutions reduce pension contributions to corporate minimum standards to cut costs, forcing teachers to self-pay outpatient medical expenses and heightening future uncertainty. In Hebei Province, private universities even exhibit irregularities in five social insurance and one housing fund contributions, with welfare programs (such as health check-ups and travel benefits) being virtually nonexistent, further eroding teachers’ sense of security.

From a targeted perspective, incentive mechanisms in private universities fail to adequately address individual differences among faculty members. Teachers across different age groups and social backgrounds naturally have varying expectations for such systems. As the core workforce in educational management, faculty members exhibit diverse practical needs and personal motivations regarding incentive frameworks. However, most private universities still adopt monolithic, rigid, and generic incentive models without comprehensive consideration of these disparities. The absence of tailored incentive policies for distinct faculty demographics leaves teachers' personalized needs unmet.

From a systemic perspective, the lack of comprehensive planning and long-term strategic layout represents a critical flaw in incentive mechanisms within private higher education management. Whether for enterprises or other social organizations, incentive mechanisms serve first as institutional frameworks and second as essential tools for motivating personnel. Therefore, if these systems and methods operate intermittently without coherence, they will inevitably fail to deliver tangible results.

## **4. The optimal paths for incentive mechanism optimization in educational management of private higher education institutions**

### **4.1. Optimal design of motivational factors**

#### **4.1.1. Diversified career development pathways activate teachers' intrinsic motivation for self-actualization**

First, private universities must urgently reform their existing professional title promotion mechanisms. They should clearly recognize the differences and gaps between private and public universities in areas such as career advancement, evaluation systems, and review processes. Building upon the current faculty promotion pathways in higher education institutions, they should establish categorized evaluation mechanisms while fully considering teachers' career security needs. For instance, by integrating teaching performance across different disciplines, institutions could offer diverse professional title options including practical skills, teaching methodologies, research achievements, innovation capabilities, and academic excellence. This approach would effectively address the career development needs of faculty members from various specialties, positions, and age groups, ensuring comprehensive support for their professional growth.

Secondly, it is crucial to emphasize the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration. Institutions should progressively establish and implement internal mechanisms for cross-disciplinary academic and teaching exchanges within colleges, actively encouraging educators from diverse disciplines, specialties, and age groups to engage in interdisciplinary teaching partnerships and scholarly interactions while maximizing the utilization of internal teaching resources. For instance, establishing university-level "Interdisciplinary Teaching Research Funds" requires each college to submit at least one interdisciplinary joint research project annually, supported by dedicated funding and incorporated into faculty performance evaluation metrics. A case in point is a private university in Wuhan that created the "Digital Humanities Laboratory," forming collaborative teams between faculty from the School of Liberal Arts and the School of Computer Science to develop smart teaching systems. The project outcomes were recognized as innovative bonus points in professional title evaluations. Building on this initiative, the university formulated the "Interdisciplinary Position Exchange Management Regulations," clearly defining specific requirements for teaching collaboration, research coordination, and administrative integration.

Third, we will actively establish a mentorship support mechanism for teachers. For newly hired

young faculty members, we will assign specialized mentors based on their professional fields and career development needs. First, we will categorize training phases according to tenure periods (0–1 year adaptation phase, 2–3 year growth phase, 4–5 year breakthrough phase) and match corresponding mentorship levels. Second, we will create a mentor database that quantifies qualifications through three dimensions: teaching competence, research achievements, and management experience, enabling mutual selection. Finally, dynamic evaluations will be implemented, requiring young teachers to conduct a “four-dimensional assessment” (professional guidance, career planning, resource support, and innovation inspiration) of mentors at semester-end. Mentors scoring below 80 points will be disqualified from mentoring roles.

#### **4.1.2. Targeted increase in research investment to enhance external challenges for teachers’ self-actualization**

Private universities should prioritize funding for teaching and research projects while ensuring normal operations, providing external incentives for faculty self-actualization. They may collaborate with enterprises to establish “Research Crowdfunding Zones” on campus websites, where faculty can submit project proposals with target amounts (e.g., 100,000 yuan, 200,000 yuan). Social capital can make targeted donations through smart contracts, with projects automatically initiated upon reaching 80% of the target amount to provide additional funding for faculty practice. Additionally, private universities must address their limited funding sources by maximizing government and institutional educational support, expanding research funding channels to ensure adequate financial backing for faculty innovation and practical endeavors.

### **4.2. Optimal optimization of health care factors**

#### **4.2.1. Abandon deeply entrenched traditional compensation systems and advocate for green compensation incentive reforms**

First, it is essential to address the current reality of rigid and monolithic salary systems in private higher education management by strengthening research on human capital valuation. Private universities should conduct scientific analyses of faculty profiles—including teaching competencies, professional experience, and academic achievements—during educational management processes. By adopting student-centered approaches through campus surveys and classroom interviews, institutions can gather comprehensive feedback on faculty teaching effectiveness. These evaluations should be supplemented with peer assessments to ensure holistic teacher evaluation systems.

Secondly, through a scoring-based evaluation system tailored to the practical aspects of educational management in private higher education institutions, we should scientifically establish performance assessment indicators. These indicators should encompass teaching effectiveness, research innovation outcomes, contributions to educational management, and faculty ethics and professional conduct, with continuous refinement based on real-world management practices. For instance, in evaluating teaching effectiveness, key metrics include instructional quality, student satisfaction, and innovative teaching approaches. Regarding research innovation, priorities should focus on academic publication volume and quality, patent application status, and specific research project details. For educational management contributions, emphasis should be placed on discipline development achievements and interdisciplinary teaching effectiveness. By adopting diversified assessment criteria, we can more accurately reflect faculty members’ genuine contributions to educational administration and teaching processes.

Thirdly, the most significant drawback of traditional compensation systems lies in their rigid evaluation

methods. It is imperative to promptly reform this status quo by adopting more flexible assessment approaches that accurately reflect teachers' instructional outcomes. For instance, comprehensive evaluations should incorporate multiple evaluation methods such as self-assessment by teachers, peer reviews, student feedback, and teaching case analyses to ensure objectivity. Particular emphasis should be placed on peer evaluations and student assessments, leveraging diverse evaluation subjects to demonstrate teachers' comprehensive competencies and teaching proficiency. This approach will enable incentive mechanisms to provide more diversified reference data. Of course, such objective evaluation systems must also account for variations in teaching methodologies and instructional capabilities among educators. Therefore, performance evaluations should flexibly consider individual differences, ensuring incentive mechanisms better align with practical needs and effectively motivate teachers.

Finally, it is essential to reform the compensation framework. A scientifically designed compensation system should be implemented to retain talent and support faculty development, while human resource safeguards will drive the sustainable growth of private universities. For instance, appropriate salary differentials should be established for teachers across various positions and ranks. Faculty positioning should be based on institutional staffing structures, with compensation standards formulated according to the aforementioned scoring system evaluation results—for example, a 1-point difference in scores may correspond to a 100-yuan salary adjustment. Teachers demonstrating outstanding research achievements and academic accomplishments should receive research bonuses, while those achieving high comprehensive scores in peer reviews and student evaluations should be granted corresponding salary incentives.

These green compensation incentive measures aim to demonstrate the transformation of higher education institutions in educational management to faculty members, while employing more comprehensive and targeted compensation mechanisms to enhance their work motivation and creativity.

#### **4.2.2. A scientific and efficient feedback mechanism to continuously optimize the intrinsic incentive system**

On the one hand, regarding internal incentive mechanisms, private universities should effectively delegate teaching autonomy to faculty members during educational management processes. It is essential to genuinely respect teachers' rights and dignity, preventing diminished work motivation and job satisfaction caused by inappropriate management approaches. To achieve this, private institutions must adopt scientifically sound management practices that respect teachers' inherent rights and dignity from the outset. They should prioritize addressing faculty members' practical needs and professional development requirements while acknowledging their proactive engagement. By ensuring teachers truly experience organizational spiritual incentives and emotional support, universities can foster a positive learning environment that values academic excellence.

On the other hand, it is essential to accelerate the establishment of effective feedback mechanisms. Private universities should regularly collect faculty opinions and suggestions regarding incentive systems through campus surveys, interviews, and comprehensive research on teaching staff. Key areas for improvement include addressing individualized needs and career development requirements, enabling timely adjustments to incentive frameworks that align with faculty expectations and professional growth. To achieve this, universities must build robust communication channels between academic organizations and individual faculty members, identifying common ground between institutional development goals and personal career objectives. Implementing practical feedback mechanisms—such as regular surveys via campus websites, WeChat teacher groups, and official account messages—allows institutions to proactively gather faculty

input. This approach not only provides educators with comprehensive insights into educational management innovations but also fosters a stronger consensus on incentive objectives. By engaging faculty participation in institutional development, universities can effectively harness their expertise to drive strategic goal achievement.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that optimizing incentive mechanisms in private higher education institutions is essential for stabilizing faculty teams and enhancing overall educational quality. Grounded in two-factor theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the research highlights that both motivational and hygiene factors must be systematically addressed to achieve sustainable institutional development. By establishing diversified career development pathways and strengthening targeted research investment, institutions can effectively stimulate teachers' intrinsic motivation and support their pursuit of self-actualization. At the same time, advancing green compensation reforms through a structured, multi-tiered salary system, alongside implementing scientific and responsive feedback mechanisms, helps ensure fairness, transparency, and continuous improvement in the incentive framework.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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