
EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE, ADMINISTRATIVE POSITION, AND PROFESSIONAL TITLE ON TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AMONG DUAL-QUALIFIED TEACHERS: A CASE STUDY OF HONGHE VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE, YUNNAN PROVINCE, CHINA

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Abstract

This study targeted the dual-qualified teachers of Honghe Vocational and Technical College in Yunnan Province. Using the localized Chinese version of the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ), the research adopted a combined self-evaluation and peer-evaluation approach, resulting in a total of 215 valid responses. Descriptive and hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the effects of teaching experience, administrative position, and professional title on transformational leadership. Results showed that teaching experience and professional title were significant negative predictors, while administrative position was not significant. After controlling for gender, age, and education, these background variables still explained significant variance in leadership. The study recommends that vocational colleges foster cross-disciplinary collaboration and project-based leadership development to promote informal leadership, and provide continuous retraining and psychological empowerment for mid- and late-career teachers to ensure balanced and sustainable leadership growth.

Keywords : Transformational Leadership, Dual-qualified Teachers, Teaching Experience, Administrative Position, Professional Title

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Introduction

Amid China's deepening vocational education reform, building a high-quality and innovative teaching workforce has become a central policy objective. The National Implementation Plan for Vocational Education Reform ("20 Guidelines") explicitly emphasizes accelerating the cultivation of a dual-qualified teaching force to meet the challenges of industrial restructuring, digital transformation, and the cultivation of application-oriented professionals. Dual-qualified teachers, who integrate pedagogical expertise with industry experience, serve as both the backbone of skilled talent development and the critical link connecting vocational education with the demands of industry (Guo, & Guo. 2025: 50).

From a theoretical perspective, transformational leadership offers a suitable framework for analyzing and evaluating the leadership potential of dual-qualified teachers. These teachers typically possess adaptability, practical creativity, and collaborative influence—qualities that correspond closely with the core dimensions of transformational leadership: moral exemplification, charismatic leadership, visionary motivation, and individualized care. Empirical studies have shown that transformational leadership can significantly enhance teacher motivation, teamwork, and organizational adaptability, thereby contributing to sustained innovation in vocational institutions (Wilson, et al. 2023: 2; Supovitz, & Comstock. 2023: 2; Tomova Shakur, et al. 2024: 1405).

However, differences in teaching experience, administrative position, and professional title may shape how dual-qualified teachers demonstrate leadership. Senior teachers, while rich in experience and institutional knowledge, may be less adaptable to emerging industry demands. Teachers holding administrative positions often face increased managerial responsibilities that may constrain their instructional leadership. Meanwhile, professional titles not only indicate academic achievement but also determine influence and authority within teaching teams (Ma, et al.2021: 121). Teacher development is further shaped by factors such as professional identity and career pathways (Wang, & Ding. 2025: 83). Although previous studies have examined these factors individually, the interaction mechanisms among them remain underexplored, particularly within the context of China's vocational education system.

This study focuses on Honghe Vocational and Technical College, located in Honghe Prefecture of Yunnan Province, a frontier region noted for its ethnic diversity and rapid industrial transformation. As an integrated institution comprising one higher vocational college and four secondary vocational schools, Honghe Vocational and Technical College exemplifies the transitional model of China's frontier vocational education system. The college is currently shifting from a secondary to a higher vocational orientation, facing unique challenges and opportunities in aligning its curriculum with evolving industrial needs. Its distinctive geographical, cultural, and institutional context provides an ideal setting for investigating how teaching experience, administrative position, and professional title influence the transformational leadership of dual-qualified teachers.

Research Objectives

This study aims to investigate how background variables influence the transformational leadership of dual-qualified teachers in vocational education. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Analyze differences in transformational leadership scores among teachers with varying levels of teaching experience, administrative position, and professional title.
2. Test the independent predictive effects of these three background variables on transformational leadership.
3. Evaluate the explanatory power of teaching experience, administrative position, and professional title after controlling for gender, age, and educational attainment.

Literature Review

1. Concept of Dual-Qualified Teachers

The idea of “dual-qualified” teachers originated from Germany’s dual vocational education and training (VET) system developed in the 1970s. Its core lies in the systematic integration of school-based learning and enterprise practice, requiring teachers to possess both pedagogical expertise and industry experience to ensure the effective linkage between education and production (Euler. 2013: 8 – 11; Deissinger. 2015: 578 – 581).

In the international policy context, VET teachers and enterprise trainers are regarded as key actors in high-quality VET systems. They must continuously update their competences to address digitalization, green transition, and inclusiveness (OECD, 2021:4; Cedefop, 2022:17). This conceptualization has led to the evolution of “dual-qualified” teachers from the traditional “teaching + practice” model toward cross-boundary collaboration, project-based instruction, and industry–education integration (Cedefop. 2022: 77; OECD. 2024: 14 – 16).

Comparative studies across different countries further indicate that dual-qualified teachers are expected to engage in curriculum design, learning outcome assessment, school–enterprise collaboration, and learner support, while developing sustainable competences through continuous professional development (CPD) . Within this framework, industry experience has been consistently shown to enhance curriculum relevance, teaching innovation, and graduate employability, while also positively correlating with teacher leadership and organizational learning (OECD. 2021: 4; Supovitz, & Comstock. 2023: 2 – 3).

From a distributed leadership perspective, VET teachers increasingly act as “bridges” across interdisciplinary and enterprise–education networks, with their effectiveness depending on clear role definitions and institutional coordination mechanisms (Harris. 2022: 215 – 221). Overall, the concept of dual-qualified teachers has expanded from a narrow notion of dual competence (pedagogical + industrial skills) to encompass dual domains (school + enterprise) and multi-dimensional responsibilities (teaching, assessment, collaboration, innovation, and learner support). It now represents a fundamental driver of quality improvement and modernization in vocational education (OECD. 2024: 14 – 16; Cedefop. 2022: 17, 76 – 78).

2. Theoretical Foundations of Transformational Leadership

The concept of transformational leadership was first introduced by Burns (1978: 19–20), who distinguished between transactional and transformational leadership, emphasizing that the latter inspires followers through shared values and collective vision. Building upon this foundation, Bass (1985: 23 – 26)

identified four core dimensions—Idealized Influence (II), Inspirational Motivation (IM), Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and Individualized Consideration (IC)—and, together with Avolio developed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which significantly advanced the empirical study of transformational leadership in education.

In educational leadership research, scholarly focus has gradually shifted from the top-down “principal–teacher” model toward a distributed perspective that highlights teachers as agents of change. Teachers are now viewed not merely as implementers of policy but as initiators of pedagogical innovation and organizational learning. Recent studies have shown that transformational leadership behaviors such as idealized influence and intellectual stimulation enhance instructional innovation and team cohesion (Grimm. 2024: 4 – 6; Zadok, et al. 2024: 8 – 10). Within vocational education, this perspective is especially relevant, as dual-qualified teachers operate at the intersection of pedagogy, industry collaboration, and practical training—their leadership directly influencing curriculum alignment and enterprise engagement (Zhou, et al. 2022: 97 – 100).

Recent empirical evidence further elucidates the mechanisms of teachers’ transformational leadership. Schmitz, et al. (2023: 113 – 115) found that transformational behaviors significantly improve teachers’ digital teaching competence and student engagement, while Sánchez-García, et al. (2024: 54 – 57) demonstrated that transformational leadership fosters supportive cultures and professional learning communities that promote innovation. Kaya (2024: 12 – 14) highlighted that resilience and job satisfaction mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher creativity. Similarly, Özdemir, et al. (2024: 76 – 79) revealed that in vocational contexts, transformational leadership influences reform participation and commitment through a multi-layered “professional learning–self-efficacy” pathway.

For dual-qualified teachers, however, the operation of transformational leadership exhibits distinctive characteristics. On one hand, leadership expression varies across career stages; senior teachers may experience diminished transformational behaviors due to role overload, innovation fatigue, or reduced industry engagement. On the other hand, administrative promotion or academic rank does not automatically enhance leadership capability; rather, leadership depends on teachers’ professional expertise, adaptability, and ongoing learning. This dynamic supports the “Seniority–Transformational Leadership Paradox” proposed in this study, suggesting that leadership development among dual-qualified teachers is shaped less by hierarchy and more by iterative learning within school–enterprise collaboration.

3. Research on teaching experience, Position, Professional Title, and Teacher Leadership

Long-term teaching experience contributes to the formation of stable professional identity and leadership style (DiLucchio, & Leaman. 2023: 31 – 33), teaching experience, administrative position, and professional title have long been recognized as crucial background variables influencing teacher leadership. Ng, & Feldman (2010: 1004 – 1016) found that as age and teaching experience increase, professionals such as teachers tend to exhibit a decline in leadership behaviors, including motivation and innovation support. Benson, & Brown (2011: 1843 – 1865) similarly observed that senior teachers or administrators often become more conservative when leading change, showing reduced engagement in innovative practices. Berhanu (2025: 2 – 3) found that age and teaching experience significantly predict teachers’ organizational leadership

performance. In China, Qu, et al. (2025: 96–97) revealed that senior teachers exhibit stronger leadership in curriculum reform, though overreliance on teaching experience may hinder younger teachers' innovation potential. At the positional level, Liu (2021: 2 – 3) reported that formal leadership roles are often shaped by institutional expectations, whereas informal teacher leadership relies more on professional autonomy and peer recognition. Deng, et al. (2023: 74 – 76) found that teachers in master studios in eastern China possessed higher levels of professional capital and autonomy compared to those in western regions. Supovitz, & Comstock (2023: 3) further demonstrated that teacher leadership programs can indirectly enhance student achievement through empowerment mechanisms. Regarding professional title, the Professional Development Standards for Teachers (Trial Version) issued by the Ministry of Education stated that title rank corresponds closely to professional responsibility. Studies indicate that higher-ranked teachers often take greater responsibility in curriculum reform and academic guidance (Xie, & Lei. 2024: 92 – 93). Fosco, et al. (2023: 10) emphasized that leadership practices are influenced by identity, role formality, and contextual scope. Tomova Shakur, et al. (2024: 1405) suggested that although senior teachers possess greater influence, their actual leadership behaviors may decline due to increased research and administrative burdens.

In summary, the interaction of teaching experience, position, and professional title forms a key mechanism explaining differentiated leadership among dual-qualified teachers, highlighting the need for further empirical exploration within vocational education .

Research Method

1. population and Sampling

A stratified cluster random sampling method was employed, using departments and administrative divisions as strata, with proportional sampling based on teaching experience, administrative position, and professional title. To ensure data quality and consistency, “dual-qualified ” teachers were required to meet the following inclusion criteria: They must (1) possess a valid teaching qualification certificate issued by the education administration authority; (2) be officially recognized as a “dual-qualified ” teacher by the college or higher-level educational management department; (3) have at least one year of continuous teaching experience in Honghe vocational and Technical College.

A total of 280 questionnaires were distributed, of which 239 were returned, yielding a response rate of 85.35%. During data cleaning, 24 extreme cases were identified and removed using boxplots and standardized Z-scores, resulting in 215 valid responses (n = 215) for subsequent analyses.

2. Data Collection

This study employed an integrated survey instrument comprising two components: a Background Information Section and a localized Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ) . The questionnaire was distributed via an online survey platform to ensure accessibility for teachers across departments and positions.

The TLQ was adapted from the Chinese localized version developed by Li and Shi (2005: 807–808), containing 26 items across four dimensions: Moral Exemplification, Charismatic Leadership, Visionary

Motivation, and Individualized Care. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Mean scores for each dimension were averaged to obtain an overall TLQ score, which served as the dependent variable in regression analysis.

To strengthen the robustness of the data, this study adopted a multi-source design, collecting both self-evaluation and peer-evaluation data using the same TLQ version. The self-ratings were completed by dual-qualified teachers, while the peer-ratings were provided by non-dual-qualified colleagues from the same teaching departments. As both versions shared identical structure and scale, the two sources were aggregated into a single dataset for analysis. Prior to integration, an independent samples test confirmed no significant difference between self- and peer-rated mean scores ($p > 0.05$), supporting the appropriateness of data aggregation and mitigating potential self-report bias.

The Background Information Section collected participants' demographic and professional data, including:

1. teaching experience, dummy-coded with “≤5 years” as the reference group, and “6–10 years,” “11–20 years,” and “>20 years” as categories;
2. Position, dummy-coded with “no administrative position” as the reference group, and “class advisor/department head,” “middle management,” and “senior administrator” as categories;
3. Professional title, dummy-coded with “assistant lecturer” as the reference group, and “lecturer,” “associate professor,” and “professor” as categories.
4. Control variables included gender (male = 1, female = 0), age (reference group: under 25; categories 26–40, 41–50, and over 50), and educational attainment (reference group: bachelor's degree; with “master's” and “doctoral” as categories).

3. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS 29.0 following rigorous statistical procedures. Questionnaires with over 10% missing responses were excluded, and outliers were identified using boxplots and standardized Z-scores. Reliability was assessed through Cronbach's α , and validity through the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity. Normality was examined using the Shapiro–Wilk test, supported by skewness and kurtosis ($|z| \leq 2.0$) and Q–Q plots. Descriptive statistics and correlation analyses were conducted to report means (M), standard deviations (SD), and Pearson or point-biserial coefficients. For inferential analysis, hierarchical multiple regression models were constructed: Block 1 included control variables (gender, age, and education), and Block 2 added teaching experience, position, and professional title (dummy-coded). Standardized coefficients (β), t values, p values, and 95% confidence intervals were reported, with model fit assessed via R^2 and ΔR^2 . Multicollinearity was checked using VIF (<5), while residual normality and homoscedasticity were tested through residual plots and the Breusch–Pagan test. A significance threshold of $p < 0.05$ was adopted.

Results

1. Normality Test and Reliability–Validity Testing

To verify whether the key variables met the assumptions of parametric tests, normality tests

were conducted for the four TLQ dimensions (idealized influence, charismatic leadership, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration). The Shapiro–Wilk test indicated significant deviations from normality ($W = 0.87\text{--}0.89$, $p < 0.001$), a result attributable to the test’s sensitivity under large sample conditions.

Complementary analyses were therefore performed. Skewness values ranged from -1.25 to -1.33 , with corresponding standardized z-scores of approximately -7.5 to -8.0 ($|z| > 2$), suggesting a slight negative skew. Kurtosis values ranged from 0.19 to 0.35 , with z-scores below 2 , indicating no abnormal kurtosis. Q–Q plots showed data points closely aligned with the reference line, with only minor deviations at the tails. Collectively, these results suggest that although the Shapiro–Wilk test was significant, the distributions of the four dimensions can be considered approximately normal, and the observed deviations are acceptable for social science research.

To ensure the scientific rigor and applicability of the instrument, reliability and validity tests were conducted on the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ). The overall Cronbach’s α was 0.973 , indicating excellent internal consistency. Reliability coefficients for each dimension were as follows: Moral Exemplification ($\alpha=0.915$), Charismatic Leadership ($\alpha=0.891$), Visionary Motivation ($\alpha=0.888$), and Individualized Care ($\alpha=0.901$)—all exceeding the 0.88 threshold, demonstrating satisfactory reliability.

Regarding construct validity, the KMO measure was 0.983 , and Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2=4145.051$, $df=325$, $p<0.001$), confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis. These findings indicate that the TLQ possesses strong internal reliability and structural validity, providing a solid foundation for subsequent analyses.

Table 1 Reliability and Validity Analysis

Dimension	Items	Cronbach’s α	KMO	Bartlett’s χ^2	p-value
Moral Exemplification	8	0.915	0.936	957.709	<.001
Charismatic Leadership	6	0.891	0.905	637.579	<.001
Visionary Motivation	6	0.888	0.896	628.988	<.001
Individualized Care	6	0.901	0.915	698.879	<.001
Total	26	0.973	0.983	4145.051	<.001

2. Descriptive and Group Difference Analysis

To examine differences in transformational leadership across teachers’ background variables, descriptive statistics were first conducted. The mean and standard deviation values were: teaching experience ($M=2.11$, $SD=0.94$), administrative position ($M=1.75$, $SD=0.70$), professional title ($M=2.00$, $SD=0.83$), and transformational leadership score ($M=3.73$, $SD=0.96$). Overall, dual-qualified teachers demonstrated a moderately high level of transformational leadership, with relatively concentrated distributions across background variables, reflecting representative diversity within the sample.

Preliminary comparisons revealed that leadership scores varied significantly among teachers of

different teaching experience and professional title levels. Teachers with higher teaching experience or academic rank tended to report slightly lower leadership scores than their younger or mid-level peers, suggesting that career stage and organizational role may influence leadership behavior patterns.

3. Correlation Analysis

The correlation results are presented in Table 2. teaching experience was positively correlated with administrative position ($r=0.462$, $p<0.01$) and professional title ($r=0.547$, $p<0.01$), and administrative position was also positively correlated with professional title ($r=0.381$, $p<0.01$). In contrast, all three background variables showed significant negative correlations with transformational leadership: teaching experience ($r=-0.601$, $p<0.01$), position ($r=-0.403$, $p<0.01$), and professional title ($r=-0.641$, $p<0.01$).

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Key Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	teaching experience	Position	Title	TL
TL	3.73	0.96	-.601**	-.403**	-.641**	1
teaching experience	2.11	0.94	1	.462**	.547**	-.601**
professional title	2	0.83	.547**	.381**	1	-.641**
administrative position	1.75	0.7	.462**	1	.381**	-.403**

Note: ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed).

These results suggest that background characteristics are interrelated and jointly associated with transformational leadership performance. Specifically, as teaching experience and professional title increase, transformational leadership tends to decline slightly.

4. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

To further test the predictive effects of background variables on transformational leadership, hierarchical multiple regression was conducted. Model 1 included control variables (gender, age, and education), while Model 2 added the main predictors—teaching experience, administrative position, and professional title (all dummy-coded). By comparing the two models, the study assessed whether background variables independently predicted teachers' transformational leadership beyond demographic controls, and examined the significance and explanatory power of each predictor across different professional characteristics.

Table 3 Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standard Error (SE)	Standardized Coefficient (Beta)	t -value	p -value	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)
Constant	5.643	0.212	–	26.656	0.000	–
Control Variables						
Gender	0.121	0.094	0.062	1.287	0.200	1.016

Age	-0.056	0.073	-0.057	-0.758	0.449	2.459
Education	-0.155	0.100	-0.086	-1.555	0.121	1.311
Main Variables						
Teaching Experience	-0.264	0.080	-0.258	-3.300	0.001**	2.637
Administrative Position	-0.110	0.076	-0.080	-1.452	0.148	1.319
Title	-0.494	0.069	-0.424	-7.167	0.000***	1.510
Model Statistics						
R ²	0.518					
Adjusted R ²	0.504					
F(6, 208)	37.305				0.000***	
Durbin-Watson	2.024					

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Model 1 (control variables only) explained 27.9% of the variance in transformational leadership scores ($R^2 = 0.279$, $F = 28.660$, $p < 0.001$). After adding the three main predictors—teaching experience, administrative position, and professional title—Model 2's explanatory power increased significantly to 50.4% ($R^2 = 0.518$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.225$, $F = 32.936$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that these background variables jointly improved model performance.

Among the predictors, teaching experience ($\beta = -0.258$, $p < 0.01$) and professional title ($\beta = -0.424$, $p < 0.001$) had significant negative effects on transformational leadership, while administrative position ($\beta = -0.080$, $p > 0.05$) was not significant. The Durbin-Watson statistic (2.024) indicated no autocorrelation in residuals, confirming good model fit.

Overall, teaching experience and professional title emerged as key negative predictors of transformational leadership among dual-qualified teachers. Even after controlling for gender, age, and educational attainment, their effects remained significant, addressing Research Objectives 2 and 3. The hierarchical regression results demonstrate how background characteristics shape transformational leadership: teaching experience and professional title showed persistent negative effects, whereas administrative position was not significant. This pattern suggests a potential “teaching experience–transformational leadership paradox,” where accumulated experience and academic promotion do not necessarily enhance transformational behaviors. The findings validate the study's hypotheses and provide an empirical foundation for subsequent discussions on professional development and leadership cultivation in vocational education.

Discussion

The results of this study demonstrated that, after controlling for gender, age, and educational attainment, both teaching experience and professional title were significantly and negatively associated

with the transformational leadership of dual-qualified teachers, while administrative position showed no significant effect. This finding supports earlier research suggesting that career advancement does not necessarily enhance transformational leadership and may even attenuate it as professional experience accumulates (Day, & Gu. 2010: 87 – 90; Hargreaves, & Fullan. 2015: 46 – 48; Ng, & Feldman. 2010: 1009 – 1012). The evidence indicates the existence of a “teaching experience–Transformational Leadership Paradox” within vocational education, where teachers with greater teaching experience or rank display lower levels of transformational leadership.

In relation to background differences, the analysis revealed that transformational leadership scores varied notably across groups with different levels of teaching experience and professional title. Senior and high-ranking teachers tended to report lower scores than their younger or mid-level peers. This pattern suggests that leadership in vocational contexts is not primarily driven by hierarchical authority but rather emerges from professional collaboration and contextual engagement. Such an interpretation aligns with distributed leadership theory, which conceptualizes leadership as a socially constructed process that arises from interactions within teaching and learning environments rather than from formal administrative roles (Spillane. 2005: 144 – 146). The absence of a significant effect of administrative position further supports the view that leadership among dual-qualified teachers is grounded in expertise and collegial influence rather than institutional status.

With regard to the regression analysis, the negative predictive effects of teaching experience and professional title may reflect fluctuations in leadership behavior over the course of a teaching career. As teachers gain experience and ascend professional ranks, their responsibilities often shift toward administrative and research obligations, which may constrain the time and cognitive resources available for pedagogical innovation and mentoring (Woelert, 2023:412–413). Senior teachers may also encounter challenges adapting to technological advances and industrial transformations, thereby reducing their confidence and effectiveness in leading collaborative or practice-based learning initiatives (Tomova Shakur, et al. 2024: 1406 – 1408). These findings reinforce the notion that leadership competence does not develop linearly with tenure, but is contingent upon continuous professional renewal and contextual adaptability.

Moreover, the hierarchical multiple regression results showed that, even after controlling for demographic factors, the model’s explanatory power increased substantially ($\Delta R^2 = 0.225$). This indicates that teaching experience and professional title function as structural determinants of transformational leadership, whereas demographic attributes such as gender, age, and education exert relatively limited influence. The results confirm the study’s second and third research objectives—testing the independent and explanatory effects of background variables—while extending empirical understanding of leadership differentiation among vocational educators.

Taken together, these results confirm that as professional teaching experience increases, transformational leadership tends to decline, reflecting a fundamental tension between accumulated expertise and innovative capacity. Experienced teachers may become more risk-averse and less inclined toward idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Benson, & Brown, 2011: 1843 – 1865). This phenomenon highlights the dynamic interplay between role burden, institutional

expectations, and motivational resources in shaping leadership expression among dual-qualified teachers.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the extension of transformational leadership theory within the context of vocational education by revealing the psychological and structural boundaries of leadership among dual-qualified teachers. The results suggest that leadership efficacy can be undermined by role overload and diminishing self-efficacy over time, particularly in environments requiring constant technological and industrial adaptation. Practically, the findings underscore the need for vocational institutions to design leadership development strategies that transcend administrative hierarchies. Initiatives such as continuous professional learning, industry re-practice programs, and intergenerational mentoring can help revitalize the leadership capacity of senior teachers, enabling them to re-engage with innovation, collaboration, and pedagogical transformation. Building such a sustainable leadership culture—balancing experience with creativity—can ultimately strengthen the adaptability and quality of China’s vocational education system.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated how teaching experience, administrative position, and professional title predict the transformational leadership of dual-qualified teachers in vocational colleges, while controlling for gender, age, and educational attainment. The results demonstrated that teaching experience and professional title were significant negative predictors of transformational leadership, whereas administrative position showed no independent effect. These findings challenge conventional assumptions that greater experience or rank necessarily strengthen leadership capacity.

The findings carry important implications for the management and professional development of dual-qualified teachers. Leadership development in vocational education should not rely solely on administrative position or teaching experience but instead prioritize cross-disciplinary collaboration, industry-college partnerships, and project-based initiatives that cultivate informal and practice-oriented leadership. Furthermore, institutions should implement continuous industry retraining, technological updating, and psychological empowerment programs, particularly for mid- and late-career teachers. Providing sufficient job resources and emotional support can alleviate role overload and innovation fatigue, sustaining teachers’ motivation and engagement in leadership practice.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite its theoretical and practical contributions, this study has several limitations that warrant further investigation. First, although self- and peer-evaluation data were integrated for analysis, potential rating biases cannot be fully excluded. Future studies may employ separate analyses or multilevel modeling to better account for interrater differences and contextual influences. Second, the cross-sectional design restricts the ability to infer causality between background variables and transformational leadership; longitudinal or mixed-method research is recommended to capture the developmental trajectory of leadership behaviors over time. Third, as the sample was drawn from a single institution—Honghe Vocational and Technical College—its regional and cultural specificity may limit generalizability. Expanding

to multi-site or cross-regional samples would strengthen external validity and provide comparative insights into leadership development across different vocational contexts.

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