

TEACHERS' QUALITIES MODEL FOR ART HIGHER EDUCATION IN YUNNAN PROVINCE*

Yi Xiong¹, Nuntiya Noichun² and Thada Siththada³

¹⁻³Department of Educational Administration, Graduate School,

Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand

Corresponding Author's Email: 7192646@qq.com

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Abstract

This research article aims to: 1) To study the levels of teachers' qualities for art higher education in Yunnan Province; 2) To study the exploratory factor analysis of teachers' qualities for art higher education in Yunnan Province; 3) To propose the teachers' qualities model for art higher education in Yunnan Province. The study conducted a mixed-methods empirical research study collecting quantitative data from 480 in-service art higher education teachers through stratified random sampling, supplemented by qualitative insights from 9 expert interviews; analyzed the data using advanced statistical techniques including descriptive statistics, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), with qualitative data processed through thematic analysis.

The research results found that: 1) faculty members exhibit high overall quality levels ($M = 3.99$, $SD = 0.870$), with teaching ability emerging as the strongest predictor among internal competencies—reflecting well-established

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pedagogical and professional foundations across Yunnan's art higher education institutions; 2) exploratory factor analysis (EFA) yielded a robust eight-factor solution accounting for 71.763% of total variance, structured along two coherent dimensions—internal competencies (teaching ability, research ability, reflective practice, and professional identity) and external enablers (policy support, institutional support, technological support, and societal support)—with teaching ability contributing the largest share of explained variance (43.550%); and 3) the empirically validated dual-dimensional model demonstrates excellent fit to the data ($\chi^2/df = 1.615$, CFI = 0.951, RMSEA = 0.036), confirming that sustainable faculty quality development depends on the dynamic interplay between individual capabilities and systemic support conditions—offering a contextually responsive framework for faculty development in multi-ethnic higher education settings. The study advances both theoretical understanding and practical application by informing the design of equitable, discipline-informed faculty evaluation systems and institutional policies that uphold both artistic integrity and academic rigor in art higher education.

Keywords: Teachers' Qualities, Model, Art Higher Education, Yunnan Province

Introduction

The digital transformation of higher education has intensified demands on teachers' qualities, extending beyond teaching ability to include research capacity, reflective practice, and professional identity (Postholm, 2012). In China, national education reforms have highlighted the development of a high-quality teaching workforce as a strategic priority (Xiaobing, 2012). Teachers' qualities are widely acknowledged as critical to educational innovation and student learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017). Nevertheless, existing studies have predominantly examined comprehensive universities, leaving art

higher education—particularly in culturally diverse border regions such as Yunnan Province—insufficiently explored (Yang, 2021). To address this gap, this study proposes a dual-dimensional, eight-factor teachers' qualities model for art higher education.

Personal qualities constitute the core of teachers' professional development. Teaching ability encompasses curriculum design, classroom management, and pedagogical innovation (He, 2024), while research ability reflects scholarly productivity and student supervision (Postholm, 2012). Reflective ability supports continuous pedagogical improvement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020), and professional identity influences teachers' motivation and long-term engagement in academic and artistic practice (Li & Khairani, 2025).

External support systems further shape teachers' professional growth. Policy support ensures institutional guarantees for career development (Ma, Shi, & Hou, 2022), school support fosters engagement through leadership and resources (Zhu, Devos, & Tondeur, 2013), technical support facilitates innovation via digital technologies (Fatma Köprülü et al., 2023), and social support strengthens professional identity and belonging (Chen, He, & Yang, 2023). Given the limited empirical research on art higher education teachers in multi-ethnic regions, particularly regarding their dual roles as educators and artists, this study constructs and validates a dual-dimensional, eight-factor model to provide theoretical and practical insights for sustainable faculty development in Yunnan Province.

Objectives

1. To study the levels of teachers' qualities for art higher education in Yunnan Province.
2. To study the exploratory factor analysis of teachers' qualities for art higher education in Yunnan Province.

3. To propose the teachers' qualities model for art higher education in Yunnan Province.

Literature Review

Teachers' qualities are widely conceptualized as a multidimensional construct integrating teaching ability, research capacity, reflective ability, and professional identity, which together support professional development and student learning outcomes (Postholm, 2012). Teaching competence remains fundamental in higher education, while research and reflective abilities distinguish academic professionalism and promote continuous improvement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Roman, 2021). Professional identity, shaped by both self-perception and external recognition, influences teachers' engagement and commitment (Li & Khairani, 2025). However, existing research primarily addresses general educational contexts, with limited attention to discipline-specific characteristics.

In art higher education, teachers assume a dual role as educators and practicing artists, requiring the integration of studio-based pedagogy, artistic creation, and digital technologies. Artistic outputs and creative practices, however, are often undervalued in traditional evaluation systems, potentially weakening professional identity and motivation (Ma et al., 2022; Alpaslan, 2023). Although prior studies emphasize holistic faculty development, empirical research focusing on art higher education teachers—especially in culturally diverse and border regions such as Yunnan—remains scarce.

Teachers' qualities development is also shaped by external support, including policy, institutional, technological, and social factors. While these supports have been shown to enhance professional motivation and innovation, existing studies rarely integrate personal qualities and environmental conditions

within a unified empirical framework. To address this gap, the present study adopted a mixed-methods design and proposed a dual-dimensional, eight-factor framework. Survey data from 480 art higher education teachers were analyzed using EFA, CFA, and SEM, complemented by expert interviews, to ensure the reliability and contextual validity of the findings.

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-methods design combining questionnaire surveys and semi-structured interviews to examine teachers' qualities in art higher education in Yunnan Province. Using stratified random sampling across institution type, discipline, and professional rank, 480 valid questionnaires were collected from in-service faculty in art institutions and art departments of comprehensive universities. The framework included eight influencing factors and teachers' qualities as the outcome variable. Survey data, collected via a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire, were analyzed using SPSS and AMOS through descriptive statistics, EFA, CFA, and SEM, supplemented by expert interviews and thematic analysis. Ethical standards, including informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality, were strictly observed.

Results

The questionnaire demonstrated excellent reliability and validity, with an overall Cronbach's α of 0.983 and corrected item-total correlations ranging from 0.603 to 0.765, exceeding the recommended threshold. The KMO value reached 0.977, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 36,997.510$, $df = 3003$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the data were suitable for factor analysis. Descriptive statistics further showed that the mean scores of all dimensions exceeded 3.78, with an overall teachers' qualities mean of 3.99 (SD = 0.870), suggesting a

generally high level of teachers' qualities in art higher education institutions in Yunnan Province.

Exploratory factor analysis extracted eight factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, accounting for 71.763% of the total variance. Factor loadings ranged from 0.603 to 0.859, and all communalities exceeded 0.60, indicating satisfactory structural validity. Teaching ability explained the largest proportion of variance (43.550%), followed by research ability, reflective ability, and professional identity, which together constituted the internal dimension of teachers' qualities. Policy support, school support, technological support, and social support formed the external support dimension.

Table1: Summary of Exploratory factor Analysis Results

Factor	items	Eigenvalue	Variance(%)	Cumulative(%)
Teaching ability	14	33.969	43.55	43.55
Research ability	13	5.4	6.923	50.473
Reflective ability	11	4.626	5.931	56.404
Professional identity	10	3.477	4.458	60.862
Policy support	9	2.664	3.415	64.277
School support	8	2.39	3.064	67.342
Technical Support	7	1.892	2.426	69.768
Social support	6	1.556	1.995	71.763

Confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated a good model fit ($\chi^2/df = 1.615$, CFI = 0.951, TLI = 0.949, RMSEA = 0.036, RMR = 0.029). Composite reliability

values ranged from 0.924 to 0.971, and AVE values ranged from 0.624 to 0.720, confirming satisfactory reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

Table 2: Confirmatory factor analysis model Fit metrics

Fit Index	Recommended threshold	Value
Squared/df	< 2.0	1.615
CFI	>0.90	0.951
TLI	>0.90	0.949
RMSEA	<0.05	0.036
RMR	<0.05	0.029

The integrated analysis validated a dual-dimensional teachers' qualities model comprising eight factors (Figure 1). Teaching ability emerged as the most influential factor, underscoring its central role in art higher education. Qualitative evidence from expert interviews further reinforced the model by highlighting the importance of integrating ethnic cultural resources, digital technologies, and regional policy support in teacher development. Together, the quantitative and qualitative findings offer a comprehensive framework for enhancing teachers' qualities in art higher education.

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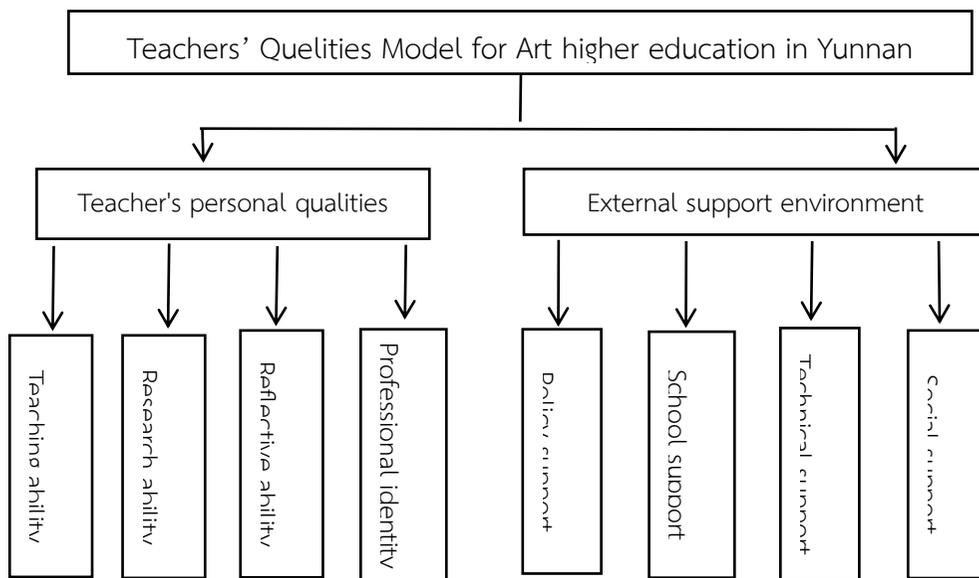


Figure 1 Teachers' qualities model for art higher education in Yunnan Province Source: Author's illustration (2025).

Discussion

This study validated a dual-dimensional teachers' qualities model for art higher education in Yunnan Province, confirming that both internal competencies and external supports significantly enhance teachers' qualities. Among personal qualities, teaching ability emerged as the strongest predictor, highlighting the central role of pedagogy in art higher education, where studio-based and practice-oriented instruction is fundamental to cultivating creativity. Reflective ability also showed a significant effect, supporting prior research that identifies reflection as a key mechanism for transforming teaching experience into sustained professional growth (Postholm, 2012).

Research ability demonstrated a positive but relatively weaker influence, reflecting structural constraints within existing academic evaluation systems that

often undervalue artistic outputs such as exhibitions and creative works. This finding echoes previous studies emphasizing the need for more inclusive assessment frameworks to support balanced development among art faculty (Ma et al., 2022). Professional identity further strengthened teachers' commitment to their dual roles as educators and artists, suggesting that recognition from institutions and society plays a critical role in sustaining motivation and long-term engagement.

With regard to external supports, policy support exerted the strongest influence, underscoring the importance of institutional frameworks, promotion mechanisms, and development policies in facilitating teacher growth. School support, technological resources, and social engagement also contributed positively by fostering pedagogical innovation and professional belonging. Overall, the findings indicate that teachers' qualities in art higher education are shaped by the synergistic interaction of eight internal and external factors, suggesting that sustainable professional development depends on the alignment between individual growth and supportive institutional and social environments.

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Recommendation

Based on the validated dual-dimensional, eight-factor model, this study highlights the importance of coordinating individual teacher development with institutional and policy support to enhance teachers' qualities in art higher education in Yunnan Province. Although art teachers demonstrate strong teaching and artistic practice, further improvement is needed in research productivity and reflective ability. Variations in policy implementation and

resource allocation across institutions suggest that teacher development strategies should be context-sensitive and aligned with local cultural and organizational conditions.

In practice, art higher education institutions should implement integrated professional development programs that promote teaching innovation, reflective practice, and professional identity formation, while incorporating regional cultural resources and strengthening collaboration with cultural industries. Teacher evaluation systems should be reformed to recognize both academic research and artistic achievements, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. Future research should adopt longitudinal and comparative approaches and further explore the role of digital technologies and policy mechanisms in supporting sustainable teacher development in multi-ethnic and border regions.

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