Feng Wu

Xi'an Jiaotong University, Shaanxi, China
e-mail: wufeng8@xjtu.edu.cn

ACADEMIC CENTERED OR NON-ACADEMIC CENTERED? TWO EXPLANATORY FRAMEWORKS FOR THE SELECTION OF ADMINISTRATORS AND DEANS IN JOURNALISM OR COMMUNICATION SCHOOLS AT LEADING UNIVERSITIES IN MAINLAND CHINA

School administrators play crucial roles in the contemporary transformation of journalism and communication education. How to select the most appropriate school administrators and deans has received strong public scrutiny. To explain the selection behavior of school leaders, the present study proposes two frameworks: the academic-centered and the non-academic-centered framework.

The purpose of the research article is to examine the extent to which academic and non-academic as well as other personal attributes of candidates predict or explain selection outcomes for journalism faculty leadership positions.

The sample for this empirical research on the selection of journalism and communication school leaders consists of 204 job candidates in Mainland China. The results indicate that we should attach importance not only to the academic-centered framework but also to the non-academic-centered framework and should integrate them to better explain school leadership selection. In the selection of journalism and communication school leaders in Mainland China, academic attributes are prerequisites, while non-academic attributes, especially government service experience, are important factors, and demographic attributes (innate characteristics) are necessary factors. The author also notes that gender and racial bias can create structural imbalances, which require further study.

Keywords: journalism and communication education, leadership, deans, academic leader selection.

Фэнг Ву

Сиань Цзяотонг университеті, Шэньси, Қытай
e-mail: wufeng8@xjtu.edu.cn

Академиялық, әлде академиялық емес орталық па? Қытайдың материктік жетекші университеттеріндегі журналистика және коммуникация кафедраларының әкімшілік қызметкерлері мен декандарын таңдаудың басты екі тұжырымдамасы

Білім беру үдерістерін басқару және журналистика менеджменті мен коммуникациялық білімнің заманауи трансформациясында шешуші рөл атқарады. Сондықтан, ең қолайлы менеджерлер мен декандарды қалай таңдау керек деген мәселе қоғам назарын аударып отыр. Медиа мектеп менеджерлерінің кәсіби құзыреттілік дискурсын зерттеу форматында екі тұжырымдама ұсынылады: академиялық және академиялық емес. Бұл зерттеу жұмысының мақсаты – кандидаттардың академиялық, академиялық емес және басқа да жеке ерекшеліктеріне сәйкес журналистика факультеттеріндегі басшылық лауазымдарға іріктеу нәтижелерін болжау немесе түсіндіру дәрежесін зерттеу.

Бұл эмпирикалық зерттеу үлгісіне материктік Қытайдағы 204 жұмысқа үміткер алынды. Нәтижелер академиялық тұжырымдамаға ғана емес, сонымен қатар академиялық емес тұжырымдамаға да мән беруіміз керек екенін көрсетті, көшбасшы таңдауын жақсырақ түсіндіру үшін оларды біріктіру керектігі айқындалды. Материктік Қытайдағы журналистика және коммуникация мектептерінің басшыларын таңдауда академиялық жетістіктер міндетті шарт болды, ал академиялық емес, әсіресе мемлекеттік қызмет тәжірибесі маңызды фактор ретінде алынса, демографиялық сипаттамалар (ерекше туа біткен) қажетті фактор ретінде айқындалады. Сондай-ақ, автор гендерлік және нәсілдік көзқарастар құрылымдық теңгерімсіздікті тудыруы мүмкін екенін және оны әрі қарай зерттеуді қажет ететін атап өтеді.

Түйін сөздер: журналистика және коммуникациялық білім, көшбасшылық, декан, академиялық жетекшілерді таңдау.

Фэнг Ву

Сианьский университет Цзяотун, Шэньси, Китай
e-mail: wufeng8@xjtu.edu.cn

Академический центр или неакадемический центр?
Две основные концепции отбора администраторов и
деканов факультетов журналистики и коммуникаций
в ведущих университетах материкового Китая

Менеджмент и администрирование образовательных процессов играют решающую роль в современной трансформации журналистики и коммуникативного образования. Проблема выбора наиболее подходящих менеджеров и деканов вызывает пристальное внимание общественности. В формате исследования дискурса профессиональных компетенций руководителей медиашкол предлагаются две концепции: академическая и неакадемическая. Цель научной статьи – изучить, в какой степени академические и неакадемические способности, а также личные качества кандидатов предсказывают или объясняют результаты отбора на руководящие должности факультетов журналистики.

Выборка для данного эмпирического исследования состоит из анализа данных 204 кандидатов на работу в материковом Китае. Результаты показывают, что мы должны придавать значение не только академической концепции, но и неакадемической, более того, должны интегрировать их, чтобы лучше объяснить выбор руководителя. При отборе руководителей школ журналистики и коммуникаций в материковом Китае академические способности являются обязательными условиями, в то время как неакадемические способности, особенно опыт государственной службы, считаются важными факторами, демографические характеристики (врожденные особенности) признаются необходимыми факторами. Автор также отмечает, что гендерные и расовые предрассудки могут создавать структурный дисбаланс, что требует дополнительного изучения.

Ключевые слова: журналистское и коммуникационное образование, лидерство, деканы, отбор академических руководителей.

Introduction

Modern universities' core mission of teaching, research, and service rests primarily on the shoulders of academic leaders (House, Fowler, Thornton & Francis, 2007). Academic administrators are the gatekeepers of the university (Henkin & Persson, 1992, p. 52), guarding its highest values and maintaining high standards for academic programs against a background of dramatic social change (Vaira, 2004). In the university management system, school administrators (in this study, deans, associate deans, and directors) are merely mid-level leaders, and their contributions to academic organizations are rarely recognized, but they still play crucial roles in the sustainable development of the university (Rosser, 2004; Knight, 1985). The competitiveness of a school, the quality of its research, and the reputation of its teaching are all closely associated with school administrators (Fee, Hadlock, & Pierce, 2005). School administrators, especially deans, are not only the decision-makers in schools' day-to-day affairs but are also the leaders of strategic transformation and the designers of schools' vision; consequently, they play an important role in the development of the school (McGinnis, 1933).

Since the 1960s, the school organizational structure has begun to scale up as universities have expanded (Ramirez & Christensen, 2013), resulting in rising of numbers of academic leaders and higher demands on their selection (Merzon et al., 2015). Certainly, rigorous standards are applied to school administrators' functions, responsibilities, and skills, especially for deanships which have stringent selection criteria (Robillard, 2000). How then can the most appropriate school administrators and deans be selected? How are the selection criteria for school administrators and deans determined? What factors influence the selection of school administrators and deans? How can the selection results be explained or predicted? These questions are serious and remain unanswered.

The earliest literature on mid-level administrators and deans begins with American scholar F. A. McGinnis's (1933) essay "The Dean and His Duties." Over the past 80 years, scholars have explored the topic of school administrators and deans from multiple perspectives and made positive progress in this field (Tucker & Bryan, 1991), but there remain many deficiencies that should not be ignored. First, past research focused on the role of the academic deanship (De Boer & Goedegebuure, 2009; Wolverton, Wolverton, & Gmelch, 1999), the leadership

behavior (Stogdill, 1963) and the career experience of deans (Foster, 2006; Gmelch, 2000), and the promotion of academic leaders (Howell & Wall, 1983). However, few studies have been conducted on the selection of academic leaders and deans. Second, a rich literature analyzes the characteristics of the academic deanship in developed countries, particularly the United States, European Union nations and Australia. However, little has been reported on this topic in developing countries, such as China (Nguyen, 2013). Third, existing research has examined academic administrators in dentistry, medicine, pharmacy, nursing, business, social work, and other professional fields, but little work has been conducted on this subject in the field of journalism and communication (Wilkes, Cross, Jackson, & Daly, 2015; Fee et al. 2005). The theoretical contribution of this article is to fill this gap in the field of journalism and communication.

China was selected as the research case for at least two reasons. First, China has an entrenched cultural tradition of being 'official oriented', which means to 'be based on the officer, be proud of the officer and be respectful of the officer' (Zhu, 2005, p. 112). In the higher education system in Mainland China, received wisdom holds that 'good scholars follow an official career' (Ren & Yang, 2003, p.38). Consequently, even amid fierce competition, academic leadership positions remain highly attractive. However, in the absence of an appropriate, comprehensive mode of operation, a transparent selection process, or rigorous, scientific evaluation criteria, selection results often spark controversy or questioning (Feng & Zhi, 2007). Thus, there is an urgent need to reform the selection mechanism for academic leaders and deans in journalism and communication schools. Second, with the rapid expansion of the scale of journalism and communication education in developing countries since the 1980s, Asian countries, particularly China, have become new growth points. China is one of the largest countries in global journalism and communication education and faces serious challenges in the selection of academic leaders and deans. In early 2016, China had 681 universities providing journalism or communication education, with 225,691 undergraduate students and 6,912 teachers; 18 universities offering doctoral program in journalism or communication; and 88 providing master's programs (Hu & Leng, 2016). Despite the rapid expansion of scale in Mainland China, a series of persistent problems include lagging education reform, outdated curricula, declining student employment, and poor academic

quality. These problems are related to weak leadership (Zhang, 2012, p. 45–62). To deal with education reform in the new media era, we need excellent academic leaders; therefore, the selection of academic leaders has become increasingly important.

The aims of this article are: 1) to propose two theoretical frameworks (the academic-centered and the non-academic-centered frameworks) to explain the selection of academic leaders; 2) to examine the explanatory power of these two theoretical frameworks based on a sample of 204 leadership candidates at journalism and communication schools in Mainland China; and 3) to identify the main factors affecting the selection of academic leaders.

Two theoretical frameworks to explain the selection of academic leaders

In the higher education system, the selection of academic leaders refers to the process of evaluating candidates' qualifications and capabilities by a university board or selection committee charged with choosing the most suitable school leaders in accordance with established standards and standardized procedures (McGinnis, 1933). Although there are many factors to consider in the selection of academic leaders, they all ultimately fall into two categories: academic and non-academic factors (Sarros, Gmelch, & Tanewski, 1998). Accordingly, the proposed explanatory frameworks for the selection of academic leaders have two different orientations: the academic-centered framework and the non-academic-centered framework. The former emphasizes academic factors that play important roles in school leadership candidate selection, whereas the latter emphasizes the important roles of non-academic factors.

Academic-centered framework

According to the academic-centered framework, candidates' academic background, performance, reputation, and status are the main factors determining the selection results (Bryman, 2007). In the centuries-long history of the development of Chinese and western universities, it has almost been a convention to select outstanding scholars to act as leaders (Vilkinas & Ladyshewsky, 2012). Thus, school leaders are and must be leading scholars despite their double roles as both scholars and administrators (Küskü, 2003). Although a few school administrators might be promoted to higher leadership positions, most return to being scholars after leaving school leadership (Mitchell, Regina, & Eddy, 2015). The deans of leading schools are often leading scholars who make extraordinary academic contributions and have outstanding achievements

in their professional field (Rosefigura, 2015). Only through leading academic achievements can they be convincing to the public and advance their academic careers. From the perspective of the working functions of scholar leaders, schools are academic institutions whose management affairs are primarily academic matters. Thus, academic attributes are decisive factors (Schleicher, 2012). Outstanding scholars are highly familiar with academic rules and can apply their professional expertise in daily management. In other words, school leadership can be seen as a natural extension of academic ability, so school administrators must be academic leaders. In the academic-centered explanation, the selection of academic leaders is focused on academic standards, and other factors are given secondary consideration. The American Dental Education Association reported that academic preparation and performance are the two key necessary background factors and skills for academic leaders (Valachovic, Weaver, Haden, & Robertson, 2000).

Academic preparation, which refers to candidates' educational background before serving as academic leaders, includes two factors: degree level and discipline. Research has indicated that almost all school leaders have the highest degree (PhD) in their fields (Valachovic at al., 2000). Degrees and positions of school leadership are positively correlated: the higher the degree is, the higher the position is (English, 1997). In the matter of disciplines, what administrators learned during their doctoral studies may be related to school leadership. Therefore, a doctorate in journalism or communication could lead to more opportunities in the selection process (Wilkes et al., 2015).

Academic performance is an important indicator that reflects school administrators' academic reputation and competitiveness and includes academic titles, productivity, number of projects and quantity and quality of academic publications (Stogdill, 1963). University administrators usually are academic leaders, and some excellent academic leaders have prominent publications in their academic output (Foster, 2006). The higher administrators' titles are, the more projects they have, the more numerous and better quality their publication output is, and the more chances of being selected they have (Bland, Center, Finstad, Risbey, & Staples, 2005).

Non-academic-centered framework

The non-academic-centered framework attaches great importance to the social resources, personal connections (guanxi), management capacities, and professional skills that candidates establish in non-academic fields. This framework holds that non-academic factors are the main determinants of the selection results. Studies have found that the occupational characteristics (e.g., qualifications, certifications, administrative experience before the present position) and the personal and professional characteristics and experiences of school leaders are important factors affecting their work performance (House et al., 2007). School leaders are not necessarily good at academic research but can play the role of the professional administrator (Middlehurst & Elton, 1992). A typical example is Walter Williams, who was not a prominent scholar but president of the Missouri Press Association, a newspaper editor, and an expert in news practices before he founded and served as dean of the Missouri School of Journalism (Folkerts, 2014). Williams introduced the vocational skills used in newspaper offices into the university classroom. He stressed that 'the best way to learn about journalism and advertising is to practice them' and created the unique 'Missouri Method' (Williams, 1929, p. 2-8). Williams became a world-renowned journalism educator and later the president of the University of Missouri (Yong & Lee, 2009).

Although a professional job, school leadership also demands dealing with the academic affairs of faculty and students and helping faculty achieve high-class academic standards (Birnbaum, 1992). School leadership requires diluting one's academic identity to a certain extent and decreasing the time and strength of academic research, so that a leader can put more effort into managing the school and finding external support for school development, such as sponsors, funding, social resources, and industrial contacts (De Boer & Goedegebuure, 2009). In this framework, it is necessary to consider academic qualifications, but school leaders are primarily managers rather than scholars, and their academic attributes are put in a secondary position (Küskü, 2003). Considering the context of Mainland China, we need to consider three non-academic factors:

Social background refers to deans' professional qualifications and duties outside the school, including three variables: government service experience, media work experience, and administrative experience in academic associations. Journalism and communication are highly applied disciplines, so those with rich, practical media experience will have more selection opportunities and advantages in school management (Knight, Tait, & Yorke, 2006). In a growing number of cases, it appears that officials with government service experience have been

hired as school leaders, primarily as they have accumulated a wealth of social resources and administrative experience (Bolden et al., 2012). In addition, some employees of academic associations are hired as school administrators as they have built wide academic networks in the organization and can help enhance the school's academic reputation (Jones, Lefoe, Harvey, & Ryland, 2012).

International background refers to the overseas experiences and open consciousness of school administrators and includes two indicators: overseas experience and English-language publications. A catch-up country, such as China, should focus on absorbing the existing theories and technological achievements from Western countries (Mu & Lee, 2005). Modern theories of journalism and communication were developed in Western countries, and the relevant disciplines were founded early and have developed a relatively complete theoretical system, which provides a valuable resource for journalism and communication education in China. Since the implementation of the opening-up policy by the Chinese government in 1978, some universities have emphasized overseas learning experiences for faculty to introduce theoretical frameworks and research methods from Western countries and integrate the universities into the international academic community, thereby transforming traditional Chinese education (Pan, 2013). As well, school leaders must publish numerous articles in English to participate in international academic dialogues and demonstrate their global vision and open consciousness (Flowerdew & Li, 2009). Generally, those with overseas learning or work experience have broader perspectives and more opportunities for advancement (Gill, 2010).

Familiarity refers to the relationship between the candidates and the university and includes two indicators: candidates' alma-mater education experience at the present university and the source of selection. Western institutions of higher education usually maintain a policy of open recruitment for school leadership, in which internal and external candidates are treated equally (Bolden et al., 2012). However, China's higher education system attaches great importance to the tradition of familiarity, and those selecting academic leaders tend to surround themselves with insiders and to exclude outsiders. Candidates with alma-mater experience possess an insider's experience and are familiar with the university's management culture, which can help them accumulate a wealth of social acquaintances and resources and be more easily embedded in networks

of school relationships, possibly resulting in more selection opportunities (Wang, 2013).

Research questions

Based on the literature review, two frameworks to explain candidate selection behavior are proposed. Their explanatory power for leadership selection at Chinese journalism and communication schools needs to be tested. In other words, whether academic and non-academic factors can explain or predict the selection results for administrators or deans need to be tested. Therefore, the first two research questions (RQ) are as follows:

RQ1: To what extent do candidates' academic attributes predict or explain the selection results for school leaders?

RQ2: To what extent do candidates' non-academic attributes predict or explain the selection results for school leaders?

Then, from the overall perspective, we integrate the seven factors of the academic-centered framework and the seven factors of the non-academic-centered framework and also take into account candidates' demographics (e.g. gender, ethnicity, age) and other variables to identify the main factors influencing the selection results for journalism and communication schools in Mainland China. Therefore, the third research question is:

RQ3: Of the 17 related variables, what are the main factors influencing the selection results for school leaders?

Methodology

Data collection

The sample scope of this study was based on the rankings in the journalism and communication discipline released by the Chinese Ministry of Education (2022). We selected the top 50 schools and their deans of journalism and communications, associate deans, and chairs as the research sample. The total sample was 209 administrators, but relevant information was missing for five managers, so the final number of samples obtained was 204. For each administrator, data before their appointment as school administrators were collected (e.g., data on their publication output after appointment). Data were obtained from two sources: 1) curriculum vitae published on schools' official websites, including deans' administrative titles, demographic characteristics, social background, and educational preparation;

and 2) open online information found using the CNKI and Google Scholar search engines (keywords: dean's name + affiliated institution's name). CNKI is the largest Chinese academic literature retrieval platform, while Google Scholar is the most complete English-language literature and paper aggregation platform. Both platforms can provide accurate measurements of Chinese and English academic publications productivity.

Independent variables, dependent variables, and coding scheme

In this study, there is one dependent variable, fourteen independent variables, and three covariates. The measurements and coding scheme are as follows.

Dependent variable

The dependent variable of this study is the selection results for school administrators divided into three groups by position level: chairmen (assistant deans, directors) (n=28, 13.7%), associate deans (n=119, 58.3%), and deans (executive deans) (n=57, 27.9%). These were coded as 1, 2, and 3, respectively.

Independent variables

The academic-centered explanation framework has seven variables in two dimensions.

Academic preparation. Candidates' degrees are divided into three types: bachelor's (n=3, 1.5%), master's (n=26, 27.5%), and PhD (n=145, 71.1%), coded as 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Discipline background refers to the professional field in which the candidates studied for their PhD divided into three types: journalism or communication (n=49, 24.0%), fields related to journalism or communication (including literature, sociology, philosophy and law) (n=148, 72.5%), and other disciplines (n=7, 3.4%), coded as 3, 2, and 1, respectively.

Academic performance. Job titles are divided into two categories: associate professor (n=41, 20.1%) and professor (n=163, 79.9%), coded as 1 and 2, respectively. Academic publication output is measured by candidates' number of Chinese monographs and articles before appointment as school leaders (M=4.48, SD=6.50; M= 54.78, SD=61.83). Academic quality is measured by the number of awards received before appointment as school leaders (M=.51, SD=1.25). The number of academic projects refers to the projects the candidates led (principal investigator) before appointment as school leaders (M=4.65, SD=6.71).

The non-academic-centered explanation method also includes seven variables in three dimensions.

Social background. Government service experience is divided into three categories: no government service experience (n=170, 83.3%), government service experience at a middle or lower level (e.g. departmental, division level) (n=30, 14.7%), and high-level government service experience (e.g. provincial, ministerial) (n=4, 2.0%), coded as 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Similarly, media work experience is divided into three categories: no media work experience (n=135, 66.2%), media work experience at the middle or lower level (department head or division level and below) (n=55, 27.0%), and media work experience at high levels (e.g., editor, chairman, party secretary) (n=14, 6.9%), coded as 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Administrative experience in academic associations is divided into three categories: no administrative experience in academic associations (n=78, 38.2%), administrative experience in academic associations at the middle or lower level (e.g. members, directors) (n=92, 45.1%), and administrative experience at academic associations at the high level (e.g., president, vice president) (n=34, 16.7%), coded as 1, 2, and 3, respectively.

International background. Overseas experience is divided into four categories: no overseas experience (n=135, 66.2%), only overseas visiting scholar experience (n=44, 21.6%), master's or doctoral experience at overseas universities (n=15, 7.4%), and overseas work experience (n=10, 4.9%), coded as 1, 2, 3, and 4, respectively. The number of English-language publications refers to publications before appointment as school leaders (M=.27, SD=1.07).

Familiarity. The internal learning experience is divided into two categories: alma-mater learning experience (n=72, 35.3%) and no alma-mater learning experience (n=132, 64.7%), coded as 1 and 2, respectively. The origins of candidates before appointment as school leaders are divided into two categories: insider candidates (n=162, 79.4%) and outsider candidates (n=42, 20.6%), coded as 1 and 2, respectively.

Covariates

Studies have indicated that demographic characteristics are important factors affecting the selection of academic leadership. Whether academic leaders are made or born remains controversial, but the important influence of three basic f congenital factors–gender, race and age (English, 1997)–cannot be ignored (Rowley, 1997). Studies have indicated that gender is an important factor affecting school leadership positions as male candidates usually have more selection opportunities than female

candidates (Nguyen, 2013). Turning to race, in the United States, White people have more opportunities for advancement than Black people and other ethnic minorities (House et al., 2007). Similarly, in Mainland China, Han faculty have more selection opportunities than minority managers (Wu, 2008). Regarding age, most studies suggest that candidates with senior academic or professional experience usually have more selection opportunities (Haden, Ditmyer, Rodriguez, Mobley, Beck, & Valachovic, 2015). However, the most recent research indicates that young people are more receptive to new things, can perform outstanding administrative tasks, and have more selection opportunities (Van der Weijden, Belder, Van Arensbergen, & Van Den Besselaar, 2015). In this study, gender is divided into two types: female (n=60, 29.4%) and male (n=144, 70.6%), coded as 1 and 2, respectively. Ethnicity is divided into two categories: Han (n=196, 96.1%) and minorities (n=8, 3.9%), coded as 2 and 1, respectively. Candidates' ages when they were appointed as school leaders were recorded (M=50.86, SD=7.04).

Data analysis

In this study, SPSS v22.0 was used in three-step data analysis. First, descriptive analysis was applied to the variables, while their VIF values were calculated to determine whether there was multicollinearity among the independent variables. It was found that all values were less than 3. Second, the dependent variable in this study was the ordinal categorical variable, so we first performed an ordinal regression to answer RQ1 (seven academic attributes as independent variables and candidates' selection results as the dependent variable). We then used a similar ordinal regression to answer RQ2 (seven non-academic attributes as independent variables and candidate-selection results as the dependent variable). Finally, another ordinal regression analysis was applied to answer RQ3 (seven academic attribute variables, seven non-academic attribute variables, and three covariates). Moreover, these regression analyses included three demographic attributes as covariates. Before the regression analysis, all the categorical variables were treated as virtual variables.

Findings

RQ1: To what extent do candidates' academic attributes predict or explain the selection results for school leaders?

Table 1 indicates that there are significant differences in the selection results to the attributes of candidates' academic preparation. Namely, candidates with different degrees exhibit significant differences in the selection results, and highly educated (Ph.D.) candidates are more likely to be selected for high-level positions than those with lower degrees (master's or bachelor's) (Wald=3.52, $p < 0.1$). Similarly, there are significant differences in the selection results by academic discipline background (Wald=6.68, $p < 0.05$). In other words, academic characteristics have a significant influence on the candidate-selection results. Meanwhile, candidates' varying academic performance has some influence on the selection results. The differences in candidates' titles and number of monographs and projects also significantly influence the selection results. The higher the professional title and the number of monographs and projects candidates have, the more opportunities they have for better positions (Wald=6.90, $p < 0.01$; Wald=5.33, $p < 0.05$; Wald=6.28, $p < 0.05$; respectively). However, there is no significant difference in the selection results for candidates' award amounts and the number of papers published in Chinese ($p > 0.1$ for all). In summary, in the academic-centered framework, five of the seven independent variables significantly influence the interpretation of the dependent variables. Candidates' academic preparation (qualifications, academic background) and academic performance (candidates' titles, number of monographs and projects) can explain or predict the selection results. Therefore, the academic-centered framework largely explains the selection results for candidates in Mainland China's journalism and communication schools [Table 1 about here].

RQ2: To what extent can candidates' non-academic attributes predict or explain the results of school leaders' selection?

Table 1 – The prediction and explanation for the results of candidates' selection by academic attributes (Ordinal Regression analysis)

Factors	Estimate	Wald	95%CI	P- value	
Degree	. 80 ⸸	3.52	-.32, 1.64	.061	
Academic background	3.32*	6.68	.80, 5.84	.010	
Job titles	1.18**	6.90	.30,2.06	.009	x^2=327.06, df=394, Pseudo R^2= .46
Monographs	.17*	5.33	.03,.32	.021	
Publications in Chinese	.01	.46	-.01,.01	.499	
Awards	-.12	.21	-.64,.40	.647	
Projects	.12*	6.28	.03,.22	.012	

⸸ p <0.1, * p <0.05, **p <0.01, ***p < 0.001

Table 2 indicates that the selection has significant differences arising from the candidates' varied social backgrounds. The difference in candidates' government service experience, media work experience, and administrative experience at academic associations can have significant influences on the selection results. The higher the levels at which candidates have served in government agencies, media agencies, and national associations, the more access to higher-level positions they have (Wald=8.63, p < 0.01; Wald=2.84, p < 0.1; Wald=10.75, p < 0.01; respectively). In other words, the selection of journalism and communication leaders in Mainland China schools offers more opportunities to those who have government service experience (especially senior government officials), media work experience (especially media executives), and administrative experience at academic associations (especially association senior leaders) [Table 2 about here].

Table 2 – The prediction and explanation for the results of candidates' selection by non-academic attributes (Ordinal Regression analysis)

Factors	Estimate	Wald	95%CI	P- value	
Governmental service experience	1.65**	8.63	.55,2.76	.003	
Media's working experience	.57*	2.84	.09,1.23	.092	
administrative experience at academic associations	.92**	10.75	. 37,1.46	.001	x^2=310.90, df=358, Pseudo R^2= .43
Overseas experience	-.084	.17	-.48, .32	.682	
Publications in English	.00	.00	-.31, .31	.983	
The inner education experience	-.20	.43	-.78,.40	.328	
Source of selection	.46	1.15	.39,1.23	.284	

⸸ p <0.1, * p <0.05, **p <0.01, ***p < 0.001

However, there are no significant differences in the selection results based on candidates' number of publications in English or overseas studying and work experience (Wald=.17, p > 0. 1; Wald=.00, p > 0. 1). In other words, whether leadership candidates have an international background has no significant effect on selection. Thus, international background shows no significant explanatory power in the selection of school leaders. Similarly, the results indicate that candidates' alma-mater education experience at the school and the source of different candidates make no significant difference in the selection results (Wald=.43, p > 0. 1; Wald=1.15, p > 0. 1). In sum, candidates' international context and background of familiarity make no significant difference in the selection results.

Based on these results, only three of the seven independent variables in the non-academic-centered framework have significant influences on the interpretation of the dependent variable. Candidates' social background (government, media outlet, and academic association work experience) had signifi-

cant influences on the selection results (p < 0.1 for all), while the international context and background familiarity of candidates made no significant differences in the selection results (p > 0.1 for all). Therefore, the non-academic-centered framework can explain the selection of journalism and communication leaders in Mainland China schools but only to a relatively weak extent.

RQ3: Of the 17 variables, what are the main factors influencing the selection results for school leaders?

Table 3 indicates that, among the 14 independent variables and three covariates, nine had significant effects on the dependent variable: candidates' gender, age, education, job titles, number of monographs, number of projects, government service experience, media-related work experience, and administrative experience at academic associations (p < 0.1 for all). According to the value of Wald, we sorted and divided the main factors into three levels:

Two factors with the most significant effects on the results of the candidate selection: academic title and number of projects (Wald=7.39, p < 0.01; Wald=7.11, p < 0.01; respectively). The higher the number of projects and the professional titles are, the more opportunities candidates have to obtain high-level positions.

Five factors with significant effects on the selection results: gender, age, education, academic title, government service experience, and media work experience (p < 0.05 for all)

Two factors with slightly significant effects on the selection results: number of monographs and administrative experience at academic associations (p < 0.1 for each)

In sum, of the 17 factors, four academic factors (education, number of projects, number of monographs, job titles) have the most significant effects on the selection results, three non-academic factors (government service experience, media work experience, administrative experience at academic associations) have significant effects on the selection results, and two demographic characteristics (gender, age) have significant effects on the selection results. Four factors have no significant effects on the selection results: international background (overseas experience, number of publications in English) and familiarity (alma-mater education experience, source of selection) (p > 0.1 for all). Thus, it can be seen that the most important factors in the selection of journalism and communication leaders at Mainland China schools are academic attributes, followed by non-academic attributes (the main factor is the work experience outside schools) and finally demographic attributes (congenital attributes) [Table 3 about here].

Table 3 – The main factors affecting the results of school leaders' seletions (Ordinal Regression analysis)

	Factors	Estimate	Wald	95%CI	P- value	
Factors of academic-centered	Academic background	.97	4.39*	.06,1.89	.036	
	Discipline background	-.21	.27	-.99,.57	.602	
	Job titles	1.2	7.11**	.32,2.12	.008	
	Monographs	.152	3.83 *	.00,.30	.043	
	Awards	-.25	.51	-.94,.44	.474	
	Publications in Chinese	.00	.04	-.01,.11	.848	
	Projects	.148	7.39**	.04,.25	.007	
Factors of non-academic-centered	Government service experience	2.05	11.42*	.86,3.24	.001	x^2=285.76, df=389, Pseudo R^2= .53
	Experience at academic associations	.51	2.72 †	-.10,1.11	.099	
	Media's working experience	.74	3.93*	.01,1.46	.047	
	Overseas experience	-.13	.35	-.57,.31	.556	
	Publications in English	.07	.15	-.30,.43	.696	
	The inner education experience	-.52	1.99	-1.24,.20	.159	
	Source of selection	4.06	.67	-.57,1.38	.413	
Covariates	Gender	.88	4.34*	.05,1.71	.037	
	Ethnic	1.10	1.38	-.73,2.94	.239	
	Age	.07	5.65*	.01,.13	.017	

† p <0.1, * p <0.05, **p <0.01, ***p < 0.001

Conclusion and discussion

In the 21st century, global journalism and communication education have faced tremendous transformative pressures. For a long time, conventional journalism and communication education focused on the markets of traditional media (primarily newspapers and broadcast television), while education on new media was relatively neglected. However, the structure of the media market is undergoing changes. First, the decline in traditional media industries seems irreversible, and the demand for human resources in this field is shrinking. Since 2014, Chinese newspaper ads have undergone abrupt decline (Zhao, 2015), and broadcast television ads have been stagnant. Consequently, the traditional media industries' demand for talent has shrunk dramatically.

Second, mobile Internet media, particularly social media, are rising rapidly. Chinese social media, represented by BAT (Baidu, Alibaba and Tencent), have grown rapidly to become mainstream media. However, such companies are not interested in graduates from traditional journalism and communication schools (Hu, Leng, 2016). The rise of social media poses a stiff challenge to journalism and communication education, and global journalism education faces a disruptive revolution. There is no doubt that school administrators will play a key role in this transformation of journalism education. Clearly, the selection of the most appropriate school administrators is important to promote the reform of journalism and communication education. To explain and evaluate the selection behavior for school managers, the present study proposed two explanatory frameworks: the academic-centered framework and the non-academic-centered framework. A sample of 204 jobs candidates in mainland China was used in empirical research on the selection of journalism and communication school managers and deans. The main findings are as follows.

First, the academic-centered framework provides the most effective explanation for the selection for journalism and communication school managers and deans, but we cannot ignore the non-academic-centered framework. The best explanation combines these two. Two orientations operate in the selection of school and university leaders. To select the most appropriate school leaders, one orientation focuses on academic factors, particularly candidates' academic background and performance, while the second focuses on non-academic factors, such as administrative qualifications and professional experience.

This study tested seven factors in the academic-centered framework and found that five had significant effects on the candidate selection results. The results suggest that candidates' academic qualifications are the key factor in selection. Therefore, the academic-centered framework has very significant explanatory power. As well, seven factors in the non-academic-centered framework were tested, and three were found to have significant effects on the candidate selection results. The results suggest that candidates' non-academic qualifications (administrative experience, industry experience, association experience) are key factors determining selection. Therefore, the non-academic-centered framework has a degree of explanatory power. Based on these results, we can conclude that we should attach importance not only to the academic-centered framework but also to the non-academic-centered framework and should integrate them to better explain school-leadership selection behavior.

Second, this study identified a combined composite result of multiple factors in the selection of journalism and communication school managers and deans. The main factors in the selection of school leaders were tested, and the results indicate that, in the selection of journalism and communication school leaders in mainland China universities, candidates' academic attributes are the primary factors, non-academic attributes (especially government service experience) are important factors, and demographic attributes (innate characteristics) are necessary factors. The preference for these selection criteria to some extent reflects the structure of journalism and communication schools in Mainland China. At the majority of journalism and communication schools, the academic administrator is at the core of the schools, and academic power is dominant. School leaders typically have doctorates in journalism or communication or relevant professional education and strong academic performance (particularly prominent, published academic monographs, and hosted academic projects). They act as both academic leaders and decision-makers in major affairs. At the same time, journalism and communication schools in Mainland China have demonstrated open-mindedness in the selection of administrative leaders and practical leaders. This openness of journalism and communication education makes it possible to absorb some government officials and media executives as school leaders.

Third, a major step forward has been taken in significantly decreasing the role of familiarity in the selection of the leaders of journalism and commu-

nication schools in Mainland China. China has an official-based cultural tradition, and some schools and university faculty are active in politics, forming a so-called academic bureaucracy. Simultaneously, China is a relationship-based society, with complex networks of family relationships, teacher–student relationships, and student–student relationships. Favoring relatives and acquaintances and other unfair means of competition in leadership selection disrupts the normal order of selection and results in frequent corruption cases in the selection of university and school leaders (Welch & Jie, 2013). Insiders and those with alma-mater education experience have stronger internal networks in the selection of university and school leaders, and it is probably due to their greater familiarity rather than any better academic performance or professional qualifications that they receive more opportunities in university and school leadership. These non-scholarly school leaders are likely to become a cancer opposing the reform of journalism education (Yang, 2015). However, the empirical results of this study indicate (Table 3) that familiarity has no significant effect on candidate selection, nor does alma-mater education experience (p > 0. 1) or candidates' origin (p > 0. 1). These results imply that the importance of familial relationships in the selection of journalism school leaders in Mainland China has significantly decreased, probably due to recent open recruitment and employment system reforms implemented in the selection of school leaders. Thus, in an environment of open recruitment and fair competition, even unrelated outsiders may have opportunities to secure school management positions.

Undoubtedly, there exist some problems in the leadership selection for journalism and communication schools in Mainland China that cannot be ignored. Structural imbalance is a prominent problem. Previous studies have indicated that men have more opportunities to obtain school administrator positions in higher education than women in the United States (Nguyen, 2013). The present study indicates that men also have greater access to high-level positions in journalism and communication schools in Mainland China. Our statistics indicate that there are only eight minority leaders (3.9%) in the 204 sampled school leadership candidates. According to China's sixth national census of population, the Han nationality accounted for 91.51% of China's population, and minorities 8.49% (Cai & Lu, 2013). Consequently, Han Chinese have more opportunities for school leadership positions (Wu, 2008). Similarly, White people in the United States have

more advancement opportunities than Black people and other minorities (House et al, 2007). Clearly, in both the East and the West, men have more opportunities to obtain administrative positions than women (Nguyen, 2013). Both gender bias and racial prejudice are objective phenomena that should not be overlooked in the selection of leaders for journalism and communication schools in Mainland China. How to avoid gender bias and racial prejudice is an important issue that requires further study.

The role of overseas experience did not have significant effects on the selection of the leaders of journalism and communication schools in Mainland China. Candidates with overseas experience have certain advantages in school leadership selection in the disciplines of economics, management, and business. Such candidates are believed to have broad academic vision to contribute to expanding international exchanges and integrating schools into the international academic community. However, this study found (Table 3) that candidates' overseas experience and number of publications in English have no obvious effects on school leadership selection. In other words, candidates' overseas experience are not considered in the selection of the leaders of journalism and communication schools in Mainland China. This different preference might arise from the special status of journalism and communication education in China. Since 2008, the Chinese central government has increased control of journalism and communication education, assigned it to the category of ideological management, and highlighted the guiding position of Marxism journalism and communication theory. Against this background, candidates with overseas backgrounds are marginalized because they tend to be more accepting of Western journalism and communication theory. Cleary, this selection criterion of ideological orientation will affect China's communication and cooperation with the west and possibly hinder the reform of journalism and communication education in China.

The age of school deans and managers is also controversial. Most studies suggest that the older people with rich backgrounds, senior academic or professional experiences, and broad networks of resources and social capital can best succeed in school leadership (Haden et al., 2015). However, existing research indicates that young scholars are more receptive to new things, can better adapt to social changes in the new media era, and thus lead journalism and communication education reform (Brungardt, 1997). Therefore, more administrative position opportunities should be given to younger

candidates (Van der Weijden et al., 2015). Our statistics indicate that journalism and communication schools leaders are generally older (youngest: 36, oldest: 77, mean: 50.86, SD: 7.70), and tend to range in age from 40 to 60 years, with only two leaders born in the 1980s. The traditional view is that older people tend to be more conservative and have steady management styles, while younger people tend to be bolder and have more aggressive management styles. Consequently, middle-aged and senior adults dominate the school leadership structure, which might impede the reform of journalism and communication education. Certainly, the best age orientation for school leadership selection remains to be assessed in future systematic, empirical research.

Finally, as exploratory quantitative research, this paper also has some drawbacks. Only seven indicators were selected to describe the academic and non-academic attributes of candidates, which might not be comprehensive and might have missed other relevant indicators. For example, candidates' political affiliation (Communist Party membership) in the administrative bureaucracy of Mainland China is usually an important reference, but its impact was not considered here. In addition, candidate selection is a dynamic process, but this study did not examine the historical trend of school leadership selection from the vertical dimension due to data collection difficulties. The limitations of this study should be remedied in further research.

References

Birnbaum, R. (1992). How Academic Leadership Works: Understanding Success and Failure in the College Presidency. San Francisco-Jossey-Bass Inc.

Bland, C. J., Center, B. A., Finstad, D. A., Risbey, K. R., & Staples, J. G. (2005). A theoretical, practical, predictive model of faculty and department research productivity. Academic Medicine, 80(3), 225-237.

Bolden, R., Gosling, J., O'Brien, A., Peters, K., Ryan, M. K., Haslam, S. A., ... & Winklemann, K. (2012). Academic leadership: changing conceptions, identities and experiences in UK higher education.

Brungardt, C. (1997). The making of leaders: A review of the research in leadership development and education. Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 3(3), 81-95.

Bryman, A. (2007). Effective leadership in higher education: A literature review. Studies in Higher Education, 32(6), 693-710.

Cai, F., & Lu, Y. (2013). Population change and resulting slowdown in potential GDP growth in China. China & World Economy, 21(2), 1-14.

De Boer, H., & Goedegebuure, L. (2009). The changing nature of the academic deanship. Leadership, 5(3), 347-364.

English, R. A. (1997). The Deanship as a Cross-Cultural Experience. New Directions for Higher Education, 1997(98), 21-29.

Fee, C. E., Hadlock, C. J. and Pierce, J. R. (2005), Business School Rankings and Business School Deans: A Study of Nonprofit Governance. Financial Management, 34: 143–166. doi: 10.1111/j.1755-053X.2005.tb00095.x

Feng, A. L., & Zhi, J. F. (2007). Discussion on problems about improving the selection mechanisms of the university leaders. *Contemporary Education Forum (Macro Educational Research)*, 2007,03: 63-64. (In Chinese).

Flowerdew, J., & Li, Y. (2009). English or Chinese? The trade-off between local and international publication among Chinese academics in the humanities and social sciences. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 18(1), 1-16.

Folkerts, J. (2014). History of journalism education. *Journalism & Communication Monographs*, 16(4), 227-299.

Foster, B. L. (2006). From faculty to administrator: Like going to a new planet. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2006(134), 49-57.

Gill, S. (2010). The homecoming: an investigation into the effect that studying overseas had on Chinese postgraduates' life and work on their return to China. *Compare*, 40(3), 359-376.

Gmelch, W. H. (2000). *The New Dean: Taking Charge and Learning the Job*. 2000 AACTE Conference.

Guo, S. M. (2015). 'Good scholars following an official career'—Discussion on traditional Chinese intellectuals' political dependent. *Innovation*,2015,21(02),82-86. (In Chinese).

Haden, N. K., Ditmyer, M. M., Rodriguez, T., Mobley, C., Beck, L., & Valachovic, R. W. (2015). A Profile of Dental School Deans, 2014. *Journal of Dental Education*, 79(10), 1243-1250.

Henkin, A. B., & Persson, D. (1992). Faculty as gatekeepers: Non-academic staff participation in university governance. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 30(2).52-64

House, L. E., Fowler, D. N., Thornton, P. L., & Francis, E. A. (2007). A survey of African American deans and directors of US schools of social work. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 43(1), 67-82.

Howell, J. P., & Wall, L. C. (1983). Executive leadership in an organized anarchy: the case of HSOs. *Health Care Management Review*, 8(2), 17-26.

Hu, Z. R., & Leng, S. (2016). Journalism and communication students employment situation and difficulties. *News Front*, 2016, 25(11), 27-30. (In Chinese).

Jones, S., Lefoe, G., Harvey, M., & Ryland, K. (2012). Distributed leadership: A collaborative framework for academics, executives and professionals in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 34(1), 67-78.

Knight, W. H., & Holen, M. C. (1985). Leadership and the perceived effectiveness of department chairpersons. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 677-690.

Knight, P., Tait, J., & Yorke, M. (2006). The professional learning of teachers in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(03), 319-339.

Küskü, F. (2003). Employee satisfaction in higher education: the case of academic and administrative staff in Turkey. *Career Development International*, 8(7), 347-356.

McGinnis, F. A. (1933). The dean and his duties. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 4(4), 191-196.

Merzon, E. E., Fayzullina, A. R., Ibatullin, R. R., Krylov, D. A., Schepkina, N. K., Pavlushkina, T. V., & Khairullina, E. R. (2015). Organizational and pedagogical conditions of academic mobility development of students at school of higher professional education. *Review of European Studies*, 7(1), 46.

Mitchell, G., Regina, L., & Eddy, P. L. (2015). Moving up or moving on: A gendered perspective of mid-level university leaders. *Journal of Higher Education Management*, 30(1), 65-81

Mu, Q., & Lee, K. (2005). Knowledge diffusion, market segmentation and technological catch-up: The case of the telecommunication industry in China. *Research Policy*, 34(6), 759-783.

Nguyen, T. L. H. (2013). Barriers to and facilitators of female Deans' career advancement in higher education: an exploratory study in Vietnam. *Higher Education*, 66(1), 123-138.

Pan, S. Y. (2013). China's approach to the international market for higher education students: strategies and implications. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 35(3), 249-263.

Ramirez, F. O., & Christensen, T. (2013). The formalization of the university: Rules, roots, and routes. *Higher Education*, 65(6), 695-708.

Ren., C. M., & Yang., R. Y. (2003). Anatomy of the phenomenon of university teachers 'good scholars following an official career'. *Higher Education in Coal Industry*, 2003, 17(01),38-39. (In Chinese).

Robillard Jr, D. (2000). Toward a definition of deaning. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2000(109), 3-8.

Rosser, V. J. (2004). A national study on midlevel leaders in higher education: The unsung professionals in the academy. *Higher Education*, 48(3), 317-337.

Rowley, J. (1997). Academic leaders: made or born?. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 29(3), 78-84.

Sarros, J. C., Gmelch, W. H., & Tanewski, G. A. (1998). The academic dean: A position in need of a compass and clock. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 17(1), 65-88.

Schleicher, A. (2012). *Preparing teachers and developing school leaders for the 21st century: Lessons from around the world*. OECD Publishing. 2, rue Andre Pascal, F-75775 Paris Cedex 16, France.

Stogdill, R. M. (1963). *Manual for the leader behavior description questionnaire-Form XII: An experimental revision*. Bureau of Business Research, College of Commerce and Administration, Ohio State University.

Tucker, A., & Bryan, R. A. (1991). *The academic dean: Dove, dragon, and diplomat*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Valachovic, R. W., Weaver, R. G., Haden, N. K., & Robertson, P. B. (2000). A profile of dental school deans. *Journal of Dental Education*, 64(9), 433-9.

Van der Weijden, I., Belder, R., Van Arensbergen, P., & Van Den Besselaar, P. (2015). How do young tenured professors benefit from a mentor? Effects on management, motivation and performance. *Higher Education*, 69(2), 275-287.

Vara, iM. (2004). Globalization and higher education organizational change: A framework for analysis. *Higher Education*, 48(4), 483-510.

Vilkinas, T., & Ladyshewsky, R. K. (2012). Leadership behaviour and effectiveness of academic program directors in Australian universities. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 40(1), 109-126.

Wang., D. F. (2013). Discussion on the logic of social acquaintances of communication. *Journal of Yunnan Normal University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 2013, 29 (03),79-85. (In Chinese).

Welch, A., & Jie, H. A. O. (2013). Returnees and diaspora as source of innovation in Chinese higher education. *Frontiers of Education in China*, 8(2), 214-238.

Wilkes, L., Cross, W., Jackson, D., & Daly, J. (2015). A repertoire of leadership attributes: an international study of deans of nursing. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 23(3), 279-286.

Williams, S. L. L. (1929). *Twenty years of education for journalism: A history of the School of Journalism of the University of Missouri*, Columbia, Missouri, USA. EW Stephens Publishing Company.

Wolverton, M., Wolverton, M. L., & Gmelch, W. H. (1999). The impact of role conflict and ambiguity on academic deans. *Journal of Higher Education*, 70(1), 80-106.

Wu., F. (2008). Statistical study on the situation about journalism and communication doctoral supervisors in Chinese Mainland. *Modern Communication*, 2008, 31(01), 115-118. (In Chinese).

Yang, R. (2015). Corruption in China's higher education: a malignant tumor. *International Higher Education*, (39)1, 18-19

Yong, Z. V., & Lee, C. C. (2009). American pragmatism and Chinese modernization: importing the Missouri model of journalism education to modern china. *Media Culture & Society*, 31(5), 711-730. doi: 10.1177/0163443709339455.

Yu., Z. R., & Ge., Z. R. (2005). Some obstacles and countermeasures of college personnel flow. *Hangzhou university of electronic science and technology (social science edition)*, 2005, 33(02), 50-53. (In Chinese).

Zhao., Y. M., & Guo., Z. Z. (1999). 80 years for Chinese journalism education and research (1). *Modern Communication*, 1999, 22(02), 94-100. (In Chinese).

Zhao., Z. (2015). Discussion on causes about the decline in Chinese newapaper advertising. *The News Reporter*, 2015,29(04),86-90. (In Chinese).

Zhu., L. (2005). The Cultural Root of Chinese Traditional Officialdom Standard Thought. *The Journal of Theory*, 2005, 21(11), 115-118. (In Chinese).

Information about author:
Wu Feng – Full professor of School of Journalism and New Media at Xi'an Jiaotong University in Xi'an, Shaanxi, P.R. China.

Автор туралы мәлімет:
Ву Фэнг – Журналистика және жаңа медиа мектебінің профессоры, Сиань Цзяотонг университеті, Шэньси, Қытай.