China’s Outward-Oriented Higher Education Internationalization: A Multidimensional Analysis and an Empirical Inquiry into the Views of International Students

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
Department of Leadership, Higher & Adult Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

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Abstract

This study investigates China’s present situation of shifting from a mainly inward-oriented higher education internationalization to a more balanced approach, and the existing gaps between China’s goals of using outward-oriented higher education internationalization to enhance its international influence and status in the world knowledge system, also the challenges it faces in the response to this approach. According to a new typology proposed by the author, “outward-oriented higher education internationalization” refers to the process of exporting/introducing domestic knowledge, culture, higher education models and norms, and educational philosophies to the world through higher education internationalization primarily for the sake of enhancing worldwide influence. This study examines the three major dimensions of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization: 1) Cultural diplomacy based on Sino-foreign higher education collaboration (i.e. the Confucius Institute program), 2) international development aid for higher education in developing countries, and 3) international student recruitment at the higher education level.
The theoretical framework of this study is developed based on several interrelated neo-Marxist theories and concepts including dependency theory, the center-periphery model, and world-system theory, as well as the notions of soft power, public diplomacy, and knowledge diplomacy. China’s outward-oriented higher education internationalization can be understood as a reciprocally beneficial instrument used by the Chinese government for enhancing its international status, as it attempts to move from the periphery to the center of the world knowledge system. Using the problem approach in comparative education developed by Brian Holmes, a post-positivist methodology is developed. One part of it constitutes an exploratory survey of international graduate students in English instruction programs in education-related majors in three Chinese universities to explore their attitudes towards China’s related strategies, as well as policy formulation and implementation. This unique population is selected due to their “triple identity” as 1) foreigners in China and thus outsider observers; 2) international students in Chinese universities and thus policy recipients; and 3) graduate students in education-related majors and thus insiders of this research field. Through both quantitative and qualitative data analysis, this study tests and modifies hypothetical policy solutions developed on the basis of a comprehensive review of relevant literature that makes possible an intellectualization of China’s present challenges and opportunities.
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPC</td>
<td>Communist Party of China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPC CC</td>
<td>Central Committee of the Communist Party of China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>Confucius Institutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPPCC</td>
<td>Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSC</td>
<td>China Scholarship Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>DI</td>
<td>Democracy Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEIs</td>
<td>Higher Education Institutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOC</td>
<td>Ministry of Commerce, China</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOF</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance, China</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPS</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Security, China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Purchasing Power Parity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUNY</td>
<td>State University of New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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</table>
UNDP  United Nations Development Program

UNESCO  United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UONCI  University of Nairobi Confucius Institute

US  United States of America

WTO  World Trade Organization
Chapter One: Introduction and Overview

I begin this introductory chapter by presenting the target situation and the focused problem frame in China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, together with a brief explanation of the historical context and reflection on the motivation for conducting this investigation. The chapter then explains the guiding research questions and sub-questions, and briefly overviews the three major dimensions of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization. Finally, it presents the significance of this study and provides an overview of each chapter.

1.1 Target Situation: China’s Outward-Oriented HE Internationalization

The major focus of my research is China’s present situation of shifting from mainly inward-oriented HE internationalization to a more balanced approach as a national strategy. Based on the spread of knowledge, culture, HE models, and educational philosophy, rather than the mobility of people, HE resources, and HE providers, the interactions between domestic HE systems and the outside world can be categorized as “inward-oriented” or “outward-oriented”. Inward-oriented HE internationalization implies the process and activities of learning from foreign experience and importing foreign knowledge, culture, HE models, and educational philosophies. It includes recruiting overseas talent, importing foreign HE programs and providers, and encouraging the outward mobility of students and scholarly exchange for learning from foreign innovations. By contrast, outward-oriented HE
internationalization implies the process and activities of exporting domestic knowledge, culture, HE models, and educational philosophies to the world, as well as increasing the worldwide reputation and influence of the domestic HE system, HEIs, and HE models. Outward-oriented HE internationalization approaches include supporting international student recruitment, HE-based cultural diplomacy programs such as the China’s Confucius Institute (CI) program, and international development aid in HE. At the present time, China’s central government is promoting a transformation in the emphasis of HE internationalization, from inward-oriented to outward-oriented, as a dominant direction.

As a non-Western civilization, for Chinese society, the “modern university” has been an imported concept (Kapur & Perry, 2014; Mahbubani & Chye, 2015; Yang, 2014). Ancient China developed its own unique HE system based on its own traditional philosophical system and spiritual roots (e.g. Confucianism and neo-Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism). Starting from the late 19th century, China started its HE modernization through what might be seen as processes of Westernization. During this historical period, the interrelation between China’s HE and the Western World was mainly inward-oriented. China established its earliest modern HEI (i.e. School of Combined Learning [tong wen guan]) in 1860 and started to establish its own modern education system in the early 1900s (Hayhoe, 1996). China attempted to establish its modern HEIs based on different Western HE models, including the Japanese model, which had already absorbed European influences, Continental European models, and the American model (Hayhoe, 1996). After the
communist revolution in 1949, China first imitated and then broke away from the Soviet model of HE (Yao, 1996). In the late 1950s, China ended the Soviet pattern of separating basic science and technology and attempted to establish its own model of HE (Hayhoe, 1996; Yao, 1996). Since 1985, along with its “Reform and Opening Up [Gaige Kaifang]”, a process of HE internationalization was once again promoted by the central government and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC CC). Western resources, knowledge, and HE models were once again drawn upon, this time more eclectically, in modernizing the HE system. Currently, as the world’s second-largest economy and after experiencing a long historical period of inward-oriented HE internationalization, China is trying to become an active contributor to the world community. Although a greater balance between inward and outward orientations has been achieved during the past decade, challenges still exist due to the domestic, international, and historical contexts.

1.2 Problem Frame: China’s Goals and Challenges

The focused problem of this study is the existing tension between China’s goal of using outward-oriented HE internationalization to enhance its international influence and status in the world system of knowledge production, and the challenges it faces in the response to this approach, which are evident in the relatively limited worldwide positive impacts. China’s strategy of promoting outward-oriented HE internationalization was derived from its deep historical roots. Through the lens of geopolitics, China’s international status changed dramatically after the two Opium
Wars. Ancient China’s international status before the First Opium War (1839 to 1842) is reflected in the “Imperial Chinese Tributary System [zhonghua chaogong tixi]” that began during the Han Dynasty (206 BC to 220 AD) and remained in place until the mid-19th century (Pan & Lo, 2017). Within this system, China was a major source country for exporting original knowledge, institutional models, and philosophies. For instance, Japanese missions were sent to China during the Tang Dynasty (618 to 908) in order to learn about China’s knowledge, culture, and political system. Ancient China not only exported its knowledge and culture to the Confucian heritage societies in Asia but also had significant influences on the enlightenment in Europe (Blue, 2001). After the mid-19th century, as mentioned, China became a receiving and periphery country in the world system of knowledge production and experienced a long historical period of inward-oriented HE internationalization. Due to such historical roots, it is easy to understand China’s ambition of enhancing its international status and moving back from the “periphery” to the “center” of the world, particularly in the field of HE. However, during the past three decades, China’s soft power has been enhanced only slowly compared to its rapid economic growth. For instance, a Pew Research Center survey shows that “only 38% [of people in the US] have a favorable opinion of China” (Stokes, 2015, para.11). In terms of China’s neighboring countries in the Asia-Pacific region, at least close to half of the people in many countries, including the Philippines, Australia, Vietnam, Japan, and India, “do not see China in a positive light” (Stokes, 2015, para.11).

1.3 Research Questions
In order to investigate this problem, this study seeks to develop a multidimensional research on the three major aspects of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization: 1) the CI program as a cultural diplomacy program based on Sino-foreign HE collaboration, 2) international development aid in HE, and 3) international student recruitment at the HE level initiated largely by the government. The third dimension, China’s international student recruitment as an expression outward-oriented HE internationalization, is the major focus. I developed the research methodology, a post-positivist approach, by using the problem approach in comparative education developed by Brian Holmes (1981). I proposed hypothetical policy solutions to the problems identified based on a comprehensive review of relevant literature, including academic articles, policy documents, and governmental reports related to the three dimensions of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization. I then implemented an empirical study on a unique population of international students in Chinese HEIs to test the hypothetical solutions for improving China’s present approach especially in the dimension of international student recruitment. I have two major research questions, and each of them contains two sub-questions:

I. What are the reasons for the tensions between China’s goals of promoting outward-oriented HE internationalization and the challenges it faces in the response to this approach?

   ▪ What are China’s rationales, goals, and dimensions in its approach to promoting outward-oriented HE internationalization?
What are China’s main challenges in promoting its outward-oriented HE internationalization in order to enhance its international status in the world knowledge system?

II. How can (a unique group of) international students’ reflections contribute to the understanding of China’s challenges and opportunities in optimizing outward-oriented HE internationalization?

- What are their attitudes, suggestions, and comments towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, especially its international student recruitment policies and strategy?
- How do the contextual features of students’ source countries (i.e. ideological roots, institutional models, development status, and mental states) influence their attitudes towards China’s international student recruitment policies and strategy?

1.4 Three Dimensions of China’s Outward-Oriented HE Internationalization

According to the information provided by the Office of Chinese Language Council International (Hanban), the CI is a non-profit educational organization established on the basis of Sino-foreign HE cooperation for providing education in Chinese language and culture overseas. Most of the CIs are established conjointly by “two academic institutions, one foreign and one Chinese”, and their start-up money is provided by the Hanban (Paradise, 2009, p.651). CIs are usually established within the foreign universities with the purpose of providing Chinese language education,
training Chinese language teachers, conducting Chinese language teacher qualification exams, providing consultation about Chinese language and culture, and organizing Sino-foreign cultural exchange activities. CIs are initiated and supported by the Hanban, a central-level functional unit of the Chinese government for dealing with issues related to Chinese culture and education in Chinese as a second language.

According to the second White Paper on China’s Foreign Aid issued by the State Council in 2014, China has offered several forms of international development aid towards developing countries. China’s HE-related development aid activities can roughly be categorized as 1) improving local education conditions, 2) sending Chinese teachers, 3) training local teachers and future education leaders (e.g. establishing degree programs in Chinese HEIs for students from developing countries; providing short-term training programs in Chinese HEIs), and 4) supporting student exchange and providing financial aid (e.g. increasing the quota of government scholarships for supporting international students from African, ASEAN, and Pacific island countries). African countries and ASEAN countries are the major recipients of China’s HE-related international development aid. China also supports partnerships between Chinese and African universities through central government-led projects, such as the 20+20 Cooperation Plan.

In recent history, China has traditionally been “more a sending country than a receiving country in international student mobility” (Jiang, 2014, p.183). However, during the past three decades, international student recruitment has been promoted by the Chinese government, and the number of international students in Chinese HEIs
has been rapidly increasing, especially since the turn of the century. In 2008, “those coming to China to study (223, 499) historically outnumbered those leaving China to study abroad (179,800)” (Su, 2009; cited in Yang, 2014, p.158). In 2015, according to the MOE data, the number reached 397,635, which makes China the third-largest destination country in the world for overseas studies after the US (886,052) (International Educational Exchange, 2015) and UK (435,495) (UK Council of International Student Affairs, 2015). According to the Plan for Study in China (MOE, 2010a) formulated by the MOE, China planned to recruit 500,000 international students in 2020. While the empirical inquiry in this thesis mainly seeks to get the reflections of international students, the other two aspects of China’s outward-oriented internationalization outlined above are also an important part of the study.

1.5 Significance of the Study

From a theoretical perspective, this is a piece of post-positivist exploratory research using mixed-methods and based on Brian Holmes’s problem approach in comparative education to analyze China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization. The theoretical framework is constructed mainly based on neo-Marxist theories in international relations (i.e. dependency theory, the center-periphery model, and world system theory), the notions of “soft power”, public diplomacy, and knowledge diplomacy, as well as related concepts in Confucian philosophy. Both the theoretical framework and methodology have been tested in order to explore if they are appropriate to be used in guiding the research on China’s HE internationalization
within its unique historical and current context. As one of the cornerstones of this research, the new typology of “inward- and outward-oriented HE internationalization” has been constructed, providing an alternative perspective which is complementary to existing theories and therefore offers new possibilities for future theoretical and practical exploration in the field of HE internationalization.

From a practical perspective, this study explores how far China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization process may enhance its international status and contribute positively to a more harmonious global environment. The research identifies the challenges associated with outward-oriented HE internationalization, especially in the dimension of international student recruitment, but also in cultural diplomacy and international development aid, and provides useful information for policymakers and researchers in this field. It is hoped that academic research in this field may ultimately enhance the harmony of the international community through the proposed suggestions for optimizing China’s strategy in its outward-oriented HE internationalization.

1.6 Overview of Chapters

This thesis is organized into nine chapters. Following this introductory section, the second chapter presents a brief review of relevant literature on the three dimensions of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization (i.e. cultural diplomacy through CIs, HE development aid, and international student recruitment), as a way of providing the main background to my research focus and questions. The
third chapter constructs the theoretical framework of the study. In the fourth chapter, using the problem approach in comparative education developed by Brian Holmes (1981), a post-positivist research methodology is developed. This chapter also explains the research design which includes a comprehensive review of relevant literature for the purpose of proposing hypothetical policy proposals and a mixed-methods exploratory empirical inquiry on the attitudes of a unique population of international students in order to test the hypothetical proposals regarding China’s approach. This population consists of international graduate students in English language instruction programs in education-related majors in Chinese HEIs. The fifth chapter reviews the history of China’s HE development in the context of internationalization. The sixth chapter reviews academic articles, policy documents, and reports published by relevant governmental functional units for further understanding the present challenges and proposing hypothetical policy solutions in order to improve China’s approach. The seventh and eighth chapters explain the major findings through analyzing quantitative and qualitative empirical data respectively. The ninth chapter presents the conclusion and attempts to modify the hypothetical solutions particularly in the dimension of international student recruitment. It summarizes what this study has contributed to our understanding of the problem and also discusses the limitations of the study and its implications for future exploration in this field.
Chapter Two: China’s Outward-Oriented HE Internationalization: A Review of Literature

As mentioned in Chapter One, China’s approach to outward-oriented HE internationalization for the purpose of enhancing its international status and worldwide influence contains three major dimensions: cultural diplomacy programs such as the CI program, HE-related international development aid towards developing countries, and HE-level international student recruitment strategy and activities. Each of these three dimensions has been researched in previous studies. Following previous perspectives and findings, this chapter provides the main background of my research focus and questions, while introducing different viewpoints from the relevant studies. It particularly includes the studies conducted by scholars in Mainland China, who are both the policy recipients and researchers of China’s HE internationalization. Through reviewing previous studies, the chapter attempts to explain the present situation of China’s cultural diplomacy, the tradition and development of China’s international aid, as well as the enormous changes China has brought about in international student recruitment. It also attempts to identify the gaps between what is happening currently and previous studies, also what my thesis seeks to contribute. A more detailed discussion of the challenges China faces will be presented in Chapter Six, Understanding China’s Outward-Oriented HE Internationalization: Challenges and Suggestions.
2.1 China’s Cultural Diplomacy and Its Implementation through HE

Compared to its significant progress in economic development, it is obvious that China’s efforts in cross-cultural communication have not yet achieved desired results (Shen, 2013). Most people in the rest of the world are not well informed about China’s actual national conditions and Chinese culture, while some may promote the so-called “China threat theory” (Shen, 2013) intentionally or unintentionally. Generally speaking, due to the lack of an effective and influential approach to cultural diplomacy on the part of the Chinese government, China’s national image in the outside world is mainly shaped by the Western media (Shen, 2013). According to the data provided by China’s State Council Information Office, only one-fourth of the recent China-related news reported by the mainstream media in the US can be regarded as objective, and about one-third of them are obviously biased (Yao, 2011; cited in Shen, 2013). Meanwhile, the worldwide influence of Chinese culture is still relatively limited, although there have been significant improvements during recent years (Shen, 2013). For instance, the proportion of American teenagers who have read Chinese novels (which have been translated into English) is very small (Wu, 2011; cited in Shen, 2013). In contrast, it is obvious that the popular cultures of the US and other Western and former imperialist countries such as Japan are increasingly popular among young people in China. In a word, in contrast to its significant economic growth, China is still facing a serious “cultural deficit” (Shen, 2013) and has serious national “image problems” (Hartig, 2012). As pointed out by Hartig (2012), “the images of nations are a crucial factor in international relations” (p.53) and China “has
to deal with the reactions of skeptical publics across the globe” (Blanchard & Guo, 2008; cited in Hartig, 2012, p.54).

China has its own rich historical traditions in cultural diplomacy [wenhua waijiao] (Yuan, 2012; see also Ye, 2009) although in the modern era, this only became part of its national strategy in the 21st century (Ye, 2009). As a special envoy of the Han dynasty (202 BC-220 AD), Zhang Qian’s journey to the “Western Regions [xiyu]” enhanced the cultural exchanges and political connections between China and Central Asian countries (Ye, 2009). In the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), Zheng He’s expeditionary voyages down to the western seas supported by the imperial government not only showed China’s military, scientific, technological, and economic strength but also disseminated Chinese culture and established friendly relations with South and Southeastern Asian and African countries (Ye, 2009). In 2004, China’s State Councilor Tang Jiaoxuan published an article entitled “Constantly improve the ability of dealing with international affairs” in Qiushi, the official Journal of the CPC. Tang’s landmark article states that cultural diplomacy has an irreplaceable role in demonstrating China’s national image as equitable [gongzheng], democratic [minzhu], and progressive [jinbu] (Tang, 2004). In September 2005, China’s President Hu Jintao emphasized China’s goal of “maintaining the diversity of civilizations [weihu wenming de duoyangxing]” and “establishing a harmonious world in which all civilizations are compatible [xieli goujian gezhong wenming jianrongbingxu de hexie shijie]” in his speech at the 60th Anniversary Summit of the UN (Hu, 2005, para.18).

“The government-centered approach is the main feature of public diplomacy in
Chinese understanding” (Hartig, 2012, p.55). This strategy was put into practice, as China’s most important government-supported cultural/public diplomacy program when over 500 CIs were established in 130 countries/regions in the period since 2004 (Hanban, n.d.). CIs were usually established in foreign universities based on Sino-foreign HE collaboration (Li & Tian, 2015). According to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Confucius Institutes, “any corporate entity” (which is usually a HEI) “outside of China capable of facilitating language instruction, conducting educational and cultural exchange activities, and meeting the requirements for application […] may apply to the CI Headquarters for the permission to establish a CI” (Hanban, 2007a, para.9). The CIs Headquarter, also known as the Office of Chinese Language Council International or Hanban, in Beijing “is responsible for CIs” (Hartig, 2012, p.59). Hanban is a national-level functional unit of government which is “composed of representatives from 12 ministries and commissions within the Chinese central government, while the MOE carries the main responsibility” (Hartig, 2012, p.59). Under the administration of the central government, Hanban “is in charge of placing teachers, the development and distribution of teaching materials, and it coordinates the cooperation between the partner institutions in China and abroad which run CIs” (Hartig, 2012, p.59). According to China’s State Councilor Liu Yandong’s keynote speech at the Fifth CI Conference in 2010, Hanban “published teaching materials and reference books in 45 languages”, and about half of CIs’ teachers are sent by China (Liu, 2010; cited in Hartig, 2012, pp.58, 66).

CIs have been identified as “non-profit educational institutions” for facilitating
“the teaching of the Chinese language overseas” and promoting “educational and cultural exchange and cooperation” (Hanban, 2007a, para.1-5). One of the purposes of establishing CIs is obviously to “introduce China to the world and help foreigners to understand the real China,” also to enhance “friendship through international cultural exchange and communication” (Hartig, 2012, p.56). The Chinese government attempts to utilize its CI program as an instrument of cultural diplomacy to enhance its soft power and international status (Gil, 2009; Hartig, 2012; Hartig, 2015; Lueck et al., 2014; Pan, 2013; Paradise, 2009). Pan (2013) concluded that “the CI project can be understood as a form of cultural diplomacy that is state-sponsored and university-piloted, a joint effort to gain China a more sympathetic global reception” (p.22), and even its name reflects China’s “diplomatic concern” (p.27). “Confucius has positive associations with teaching and culture” (Hartig, 2012, p.59) while it is obvious that “a ‘Mao Zedong Institute’ probably would not be welcomed in most countries” (Jain & Groot, 2006; cited in Hartig, p.59).

However, as a “tool of Chinese cultural diplomacy” intended “to promote friendly relations with other countries” (Communications New Brunswick, 2007; cited in Hartig, 2012, p.64), the CI program has been criticized constantly by different stakeholders including foreign HEIs and professors (Ji, 2014), and its international image has not always been positive. According to “how the New York Times coverage of CIs functioned as a narrative in introducing these institutions in the US press” (Lueck et al., 2014, p. 324), “what was striking about the news coverage in the New York Times was the lack of coverage as news” (p. 343). While being reported, “the
[Confucius] institute was [introduced as] a tool that was being used by the Chinese government to favorably influence American perceptions of China’s domestic policies and international actions”, and the “contributions of the CI to Americans’ knowledge of China’s language and culture went largely unreported” (Lueck et al., 2014, p.244). It is also worth noting that stakeholders in the developing world seem to be relatively less critical towards CIs than those in Western countries. For instance, according to Wheeler’s (2014) interview research conducted in Kenya, “most of the participants [including students enrolled at the UONCI] had a positive […] view of the CIs” (p.56). Student participants believed that the major purpose of the CIs “was to ‘spread Chinese language and culture’” (Wheeler, 2014, p.56).

Obviously, the present international skepticism and criticism towards the CIs are mainly related to its administrative structure, especially “their links to the Chinese government via Hanban” (Hartig, 2012, p.64), as well as China’s political (communist) ideology. Hartig (2012) argued that there are “no differences between CIs and its equivalents in Great Britain, Germany, France, Spain or elsewhere” (p.70) as a cultural diplomacy program, which “is very much a political activity designed to serve national interests in an ostensibly cultural guise” (Taylor, 1997, p.80; cited in Hartig, 2012, p.69), and “the big difference […] springs from the authoritarian nature of the Chinese political system (p.70). Paradise (2009) attempted to “understand how the CIs and other language promotion activities may be helping China promote its goodwill agenda” (p.650). The author concluded that “whether China’s soft-power projection succeeds will ultimately depend on the sources from which soft power
derives -- a country’s culture, the attractiveness of its political values, and its foreign policies, as Nye states” (Paradise, 2009, p.664; Nye, 1990; cited in Paradise, 2009).

In contrast to the serious situation presented by Western scholars, the relevant studies conducted by scholars in Mainland China reflecting the awareness of China’s policymakers and implementers, suggest that the present challenges of China’s cultural diplomacy strategy have not yet received sufficient attention or been well understood. A large proportion of their studies concentrate on education in Chinese as a second language (e.g. Li, 2010; Liu & Gao, 2013; Liu & Si, 2012; Xie, 2012; Zhao, 2014) and identify it as the “core function” of the CIs (Liu & Si, 2012). These studies mainly investigate the quality of overseas Chinese language education (e.g. Liu & Si, 2012; Zhou, 2012) and foreign students’ language learning experience (e.g. Liu & Gao 2013). Although Chinese language education is apparently the direct task of China’s CI program, its role in enhancing China’s national image and international status through HE international collaboration requires more attention, no matter what position you take. Some of the Mainland Chinese scholars attempted to analyze its role in public diplomacy (e.g. Wu, Yongyi, 2012), cultural transmission, and intercultural communication (e.g. Cao & Li, 2014; Duan et al., 2015; Huang, 2014; Li & Tian, 2015; S. Shen, 2012; Wu, Ying, 2012; Yan, 2015; Yuan, 2012; Zhang & Guo, 2014; Zhou, 2012; Zhou, 2014). Although some of these studies attempt to discuss its functions of promoting intercultural exchange (e.g. Wu, 2012; Yan, 2015; Zhang & Guo, 2014) and enhancing national “soft power” (e.g. Shen, 2013; Huang, 2014; Yuan, 2012; Zhou, 2012; Zhou, 2014), the suggestions proposed by these studies are either
relatively superficial or vague, given the present serious challenges. The more pragmatic suggestions include improving the applicability of teaching materials and teaching methods (Zhou, 2012; Shen, 2012; Hu & Yi, 2014; Liu & Si, 2012), strengthening cooperation with enterprises (Zhou, 2012), optimizing the Internet platform (Zhang & Guo, 2014; Zhou, 2012), and increasing the number of CIs in “Third-World” countries (Huang, 2014). Given China’s ambitious strategy and the profound and rich connotation of CIs, it seems that the role of CIs as one major dimension of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization in enhancing status in the world knowledge system should be fully endorsed, and more in-depth suggestions for optimizing the status quo need to be presented, both for the sake of China’s national interests and for the overall benefit of the international community.

2.2 China’s HE-Related International Development Aid

In terms of the recent global trend, one of the major features of international aid to education is that the “overall aid from non-OECD countries (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Brazil, India, China) appears to be rising” (Benavot, 2010, p.106). Historically, many of the large donors, “particularly the United States of America”, “use aid principally as a stabilizing mechanism for foreign policy” (Babaci-Wilhite et al., 2012; cited in Babaci-Wilhite, 2015, p.30) rather than mainly considering the “human rights concerns and recipients’ development needs” (Babaci-Wilhite, 2015, p.30). In contrast to unilaterally receiving international aid from the developed countries, the potential of improving the implementation of foreign aid, especially to education, through
South-South cooperation involving countries like India, China, and Brazil has been emphasized (Riddell & Zarazu’a, 2015). Riddell and Zarazu’a (2015) pointed out that “while setting up South-South learning and knowledge exchange often draws on enormous enthusiasm of the involved actors, implementing longer-term activities can face challenges” (Riddell & Zarazu’a, 2015, p.14). The authors suggested that all of the stakeholders should pay “greater attention” to “the longer-term sustainability and capacities of the institutions and organizations” (Riddell & Zarazu’a, 2015, p.14).

China’s rapid expansion of “engagement in developing countries in recent years has aroused widespread interest and concern” (Bräutigam, 2011, p.753). In terms of its international development aid in education towards developing countries, China’s role goes back to the Bandung Conference in 1955 (Gillespie, 2001). “China’s behavior in the international community can […] be viewed as a reflection” of its images of the world and internal orders (Gillespie, 2001, p.7). During the Maoist reign, China’s international aid was implemented following the guidance of Mao’s “Three-World Theory” and the “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence” (Gillespie, 2001, pp.8-10). In 1955 at Bandung, modern China, for the first time, “played an active role, as an acknowledged, independent power, shaping the pattern of world order” (Ogunsanwo, 1974; Yahuda, 1978; cited in Gillespie, 2001, p.11). “China’s foreign policy drew away from the Soviet clutches” and it started an attempt to establish its role as “the primary center of the anti-imperialist” movement and “Afro-Asia solidarity” (Gillespie, 2001, p.11). Since 1956 when China and Egypt signed their first cultural cooperation agreement (Niu, 2010), China “began to provide
African students the opportunities for HE” (Gillespie, 2001, p.1) through recruiting international students from African countries and sending Chinese teachers there (Niu, 2010).

Although having a relatively long history, China’s development aid towards developing countries only began to burgeon since the turn of the century, which is reflected in both China’s support for university-to-university partnerships and the rapidly increasing number of scholarships for international students from developing countries (Niu, 2010; Zhang & Yu, 2015; Liu & Niu, 2009). Institutional collaboration is an important form of China’s foreign aid. For instance, from 1994 to 2002, under the China-Kenya HE Cooperation Program initiated by the MOE, a prestigious Chinese agricultural university, Nanjing Agricultural University, established a new modern biotechnology laboratory for Egerton University in Kenya to enhance its capacity in the fields of microbiology, plant tissue culture, and postharvest physiology of fruits and vegetables (Zhou & Zhang, 2013). It has improved the research conditions for its students and scholars and supported the establishment of its master’s program in horticulture (Zhou & Zhang, 2013). Since 2010, under the 20+20 Cooperation Plan, a “scheme for HE cooperation between China and Africa” (King, 2014, p.151), 20 prestigious Chinese HEIs, including comprehensive universities such as Peking University and Soochow University, agricultural universities such as the China Agricultural University, normal universities such as East China Normal University, and foreign language institutions such as the Beijing Second Foreign Language Institute, “were twinned with 20 HEIs in 17 African countries” (UNESCO,
With the support of the government, the selected 20 Chinese HEIs are responsible for providing human resource training, Chinese governmental scholarships and Chinese language training (Chen, 2010). In addition, for students from developing countries, China has provided degree or short-term training programs in Chinese universities (Han et al., 2010; Han et al., 2011; Zhang, 2012; Zhao, 2010) and vocational/technical institutions (Cen, 2014; Cheng, 2015; Cong, 2014; Zhu et al., 2015) to improve the quality of human resources in recipient countries. For instance, under the guidance and support of the MOC, since 2007, a Chinese vocational institution, Ningbo Vocational and Technical College, has provided short-term training programs for 42 groups of students (about 1,000) from 102 developing countries (Zhu et al., 2015).

It is obvious that China’s development aid in HE can be regarded as a dimension of its outward-oriented HE internationalization, for enhancing international influence and national “soft power” (King, 2013; Zhang & Yu, 2015). In spite of China’s goal of improving its national image, its development aid has faced considerable criticism. “Critics generally believe that China’s aid program is enormous and focused primarily on propping up pariah regimes or smoothing the way for Chinese companies to gain access to resources” (Bräutigam, 2011, p.753). In terms of African countries as the major recipients of China’s international development aid, “the [current] debates surrounding Chinese engagement in Africa, especially around aid and development issues” mainly concentrate on the “Chinese use of aid in exchange for preferential energy deals” (Tan-Mullins et al., 2010, p.857).
More pragmatic studies tend to come to opposite conclusions. Through reviewing “the historical development of China–Africa engagement” and conducting cases studies of Angola and Ghana, Tan-Mullins *et al.* (2010) argued that “increasing Chinese aid […] with African counterparts” provided an “‘alternative’ to Washington, which permits African leaders to ‘triangulate’ between donors”, and which “gave African states a choice about who to turn to for investment and aid for the first time since the end of the Cold War” (Tan-Mullins *et al.*, 2010, p.875). As Wang (2014) mentioned, “China highlights the difference of its aid policies from the Western discourse and actively promotes the Chinese model as suited to [the development of receiving countries]” (Wang, 2014, pp.22-23). Obviously, more constructive suggestions need to be proposed for eliminating these misunderstandings and clarifying China’s actual motivations in its aid programs. As a prerequisite, China’s HE-related international development aid should be fully regarded as an instrument or a major dimension of its outward-oriented HE internationalization for improving its international status and national image.

2.3 China’s HE-Level International Student Recruitment

In terms of the global trend of international student mobility or “international student circulation”, the “increased competition for international students to the traditional top countries [such as] US, UK, Germany, France, and Australia” “is [not only] coming from other industrialized countries such as Canada, New Zealand, Japan, and continental Europe but also from emerging economies such as China, Malaysia,
Singapore, Taiwan, South Africa, and the Middle East”, which are “also still the dominant sending countries” (De Wit, 2015, pp.13-14). As a developing country and an emerging economy, China has often been regarded as a major sending country, rather than one of the major receiving countries, of cross-border student mobility by previous studies (e.g. Bodycott, 2009; Li & Bray, 2007; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Sherry et al., 2010; Choudaha & Chang, 2012; King & Raghuram, 2013; Zweig, 2002). However, driven by the central government, China is presently becoming both “a major source country and an emerging major host country” (Guruz, 2011, p.285). The total amount of “foreign student enrollment in China” dramatically increased from three in 1950 to 61,869 in 2001, the year when China joined the WTO and “foreign student enrollment in Chinese institutions started to take off” (Guruz, 2011, pp.287-288). In 2008, the number of “those coming to China to study (223, 499)” had already outnumbered “those leaving China to study abroad (179,800)” (Su, 2009; cited in Yang, 2014, p.158). By 2015, the number of international students in Chinese universities increased to 397,635, placing China third in the world after the US and the UK. (Institute of International Education, 2015). Over 40,600 students from developing countries were financially supported by China’s programs (Zhang, 2015). Meanwhile, English instruction graduate degree programs for international students have been offered by some Chinese universities. “More and more countries are [also] reaching mutual recognition agreements with China” (Guruz, 2011, p.287). From the perspective of foreign students, Guruz (2011) argued that the “student rationales driving the growth in foreign student enrollment in China are now better job
opportunities, forming strategic alliances and networking in a country with a growing economy and an increasing international influence” (Guruz, 2011, p.289).

Compared to the dramatic increase of total enrolment, challenges still exist and need to be emphasized and addressed by both the Chinese government as policymaker and Chinese HEIs as major policy implementers. For instance, “the numbers cover up the real gap in the movement of international students between China and abroad” (Jiang, 2014, p.183). The majority of overseas Chinese students are full-time degree students and “only a small number of students coming to China enroll in degree programs” (Jiang, 2014, p.183). Moreover, “the academic level of overseas education in China is relatively low” since “among the 80,005 international students in degree programs at China’s” HEIs in 2008, “undergraduate students accounted for 81.1%” and only 6.4% of them were graduate students. (Jiang, 2014, pp.183-184). There is a large proportion of non-degree international students in short-term language programs, and the majority of the degree students are from developing and “neighboring Asian countries” (MOE, 2009; Jiang, 2014, p.184). The number of international degree students from Western/developed countries was very limited, about “1,191 from the US, 736 from Canada, 667 from France, 388 from Germany, and 219 from the UK” in 2008 (Jiang, 2014, p.184). In 2015, according to the MOE data, about 73% of China’s international students were from either Asian or African countries (MOE, 2016). Meanwhile, the number of students from European countries compared to the previous year has declined (MOE, 2016). Given the present circumstances, it is obvious that China is facing significant challenges in achieving the strategic goal of
optimizing its geopolitical standing based on international students’ role of “bridge” (Wang, 2014, p.89). China’s challenges in international student recruitment, as a dimension of its outward-oriented HE internationalization, will be further discussed in Chapter Six, Challenges and Suggestions.

While investigating China’s situation in student mobility, the “push-pull model of international student mobility” first propounded by Altbach (1998) for analyzing the decision-making process of students from developing or the “Third World” countries (Altbach, 1998; cited in Li & Bray, 2007) has profoundly influenced the previous studies in the relevant fields (e.g. Bodycott, 2009; Li & Bray, 2007; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Altbach (1998) “pointed out that some students were pushed by unfavorable conditions in their home countries, while others were pulled by scholarships and other opportunities in host countries” (Altbach, 1998; cited in Li & Bray, 2007, p.793). He listed eight home/source country push factors (i.e. “availability of scholarship for study abroad”, “poor-quality [domestic] facilities”, “lack of research facilities”, “lack of educational facilities and/or failure to gain admission to local institutions”, “politically uncongenial situation”, “enhanced value of a foreign degree”, “discrimination against minorities”, and “recognition of inadequacy of existing forms of traditional education”) and seven host/destination country pull factors (i.e. “availability of scholarship to international students”, “good-quality education”, “availability of advanced research facilities”, “availability of appropriate educational facilities with likely offer of admission”, “congenial political situation”, “congenial socioeconomic and political environment”, and “opportunity for general
international life experience”) which affect the “decision to study abroad by third world students” (p.240).

It seems that Altbach’s (1998) model has been widely used by scholars in Mainland China, no matter what aspects they have investigated. As the dominant force of China’s HE internationalization progress, the Chinese government’s policy interventions have been extensively studied (e.g. Liu, 2008; Lu, 2002; Ma, 2009; Jin, 2006; Zeng, 2015). These studies mainly concentrate on China’s governmental financial support (or governmental scholarships) towards international students (e.g. Liu, 2008; Lu, 2002; Ma, 2009; Jin, 2006). Other factors affecting international students’ decision-making process of choosing China as their study abroad destination country have also been studied in detail (e.g. Li et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2013; Liu, 2014; Song & Liu, 2014; Yue, 2013). For instance, Liu et al. (2013) surveyed international students in six universities in Beijing, by using a questionnaire designed based on Altbach’s (1998) push-and-pull paradigm, to explore influential factors. These authors concluded that there were several influential pull-factors based on their empirical inquiry, including Chinese (traditional) culture, China’s rapid development, and the high quality of Chinese HE. Some other scholars conducted purely quantitative studies on macro-level data for exploring potential push and pull factors (e.g. Liu, 2014; Song & Liu, 2014; Yue, 2013). For instance, Yue (2013) examined the relationship between the total number of international students in China and several indicators related to China’s domestic socioeconomic status and HE, such as its annual GDP, foreign trade turnover, unemployment rate, and the number of “world
top 500 universities”. Such studies consider the number of international students as the main indicator of China’s status in international student recruitment.

Above all, driven by the government, China has achieved considerable success in international student recruitment and become one of the major destination countries of HE-level overseas study. However, according to the present situation, “it has [still] remained peripheral […] in comparison to major industrialized countries” (Jiang, 2011, p.183). The highly increased numbers of recruited international student cover up some deep-seated problems. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct further research in this field in order to propose constructive suggestions to the Chinese government. As mentioned, studies conducted by Mainland China’s scholars, to some extent, reflect the awareness of China’s policymakers and implementers. A large proportion of their studies concentrate on the major pull factors of China as a receiving country following Altbach’s (1998) model, such as China’s governmental financial aid (e.g. Zeng, 2015), socioeconomic and HE development status (e.g. Song & Liu, 2014; Yue, 2013), opportunities for international students (e.g. Liu et al., 2013), and the attractiveness of Chinese culture (e.g. Liu et al., 2013). There is a lack of research which investigates the relationship between China’s domestic context, including its positive and negative factors as a receiving country, and the contextual factors of international students’ source countries. Moreover, China’s international student recruitment should be considered as one dimension of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization with the intention of enhancing the nation’s soft power and status in the world knowledge system.
2.4 Summary

Mainly driven by the central government, China has made significant achievements in each of the three major dimensions of outward-oriented HE internationalization. CIs as China’s knowledge/cultural diplomacy program have been established throughout the world since 2004, and China’s development aid in HE has yielded fruitful results. Meanwhile, the number of tertiary students coming to China increased dramatically especially since the turn of the century. However, China’s CI program and development aid towards developing countries have been constantly criticized in the Western media and by different foreign stakeholders. China’s international student recruitment strategy is also facing serious problems in different aspects, such as the quality of recruited foreign students and the percentage of those in formal degree programs and graduate study. For each dimension, no matter what position one takes, it is obvious that the Chinese government needs constructive suggestions for improving the present situation. Therefore, further research is needed in order to deepen understanding of the existing problems.

The CI program is presently a popular research topic. Its achievement and challenges have been extensively studied and discussed by scholars in both Mainland China and the rest of the world. While the goal if this program is clearly ambitious, it seems that the problems related to its role as an instrument of cultural diplomacy for enhancing China’s national image and international status have not been fully understood by many of its domestic researchers. In terms of China’s development aid in HE towards developing countries, it seems that China should more fully emphasize
its role of providing an “alternative” to the West. In terms of China’s international student recruitment at the HE level, a large proportion of scholars has viewed China only as a major source country of international student mobility, although China has already made remarkable achievements in international student recruitment and proposed ambitious objectives (e.g. MOE, 2010a). Following Altbach’s (1998) model, Mainland China’s scholars mainly concentrated on the pull factors of China as a receiving country, rather than other indicators such as the socioeconomic, political, ideological, and cultural contexts of the source countries of students.

Moreover, it is obvious that the typologies and analytical frameworks utilized by the mentioned studies mainly concentrate on the phenomena of the mobility of people, resources, and HE programs/providers, rather than the purposes and dynamics of HE internationalization coupled with political agendas reflected in the spread of knowledge, culture, HE models or norms, and educational philosophy. Previous studies, therefore, treat the three interdependent dimensions of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization (i.e. CIs, HE-related development aid, and HE-level international student recruitment) as three unrelated approaches. In contrast, this study analyzes these three dimensions as mutually correlated components of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization approach, which, as mentioned, has been utilized by the Chinese government for enhancing its influence and status in the world knowledge system. According to the present challenges and the lack of studies based on this perspective, a multidimensional study on China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization needs to be conducted. In order to conduct this research in an
appropriate way, a theoretical framework has been constructed based on several interdependent neo-Marxist theories and concepts in international relations, the notions of soft power, public diplomacy, and knowledge diplomacy, as well as relevant concepts in Confucian philosophy. The following chapter, Theoretical Framework and Review of Literature, presents the theoretical framework of this study. Moreover, further discussion on China’s challenges in promoting outward-oriented HE internationalization and the existing tensions/gaps between China’s ambition/goal and the challenges it faces will be presented in Chapter Six, Understanding China’s Outward-Oriented HE Internationalization: Challenges and Suggestions.
Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework and Related Literature

This chapter reviews the relevant theoretical perspectives behind HE internationalization and presents the theoretical and conceptual framework of the thesis. Due to the historical roots and the domestic and geopolitical contexts of China’s HE internationalization, I have constructed the theoretical framework based on several interdependent neo-Marxist theories and concepts in international relations: dependency theory, center-periphery model, and world-system theory. The notions of soft power, public diplomacy, knowledge diplomacy, and relevant concepts in Confucian philosophy are also utilized for constructing the theoretical framework of this study. These theories and notions have been treated critically since as mentioned in Chapter One, one of the major purposes of conducting this investigation is to test if the existing theoretical perspectives are appropriate to be used in guiding the research on China’s HE internationalization considering its historical and current context.

3.1 Theoretical Perspectives behind HE internationalization

Although the term of “internationalization” has been “used for centuries in political science and governmental relations”, “its popularity in the education sector has really only soared since the early 1980s” (Knight, 2003, p.2). Knight (2003; 2008) defined HE internationalization at the “national, sector, and institutional level” as a “process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of higher/postsecondary education” (Knight, 2008, p.21;
see also Knight, 2003, p.2; 2015, p.2). Knight (2012) divided the process of HE international at a global level into three phases: 1) the generation of student mobility, 2) the generation of program and provider mobility, and 3) the generation of education hubs. For the second phase, Knight (2005) described the cross-border mobility of programs as the “movement of individual education/training courses and programs across national borders through face to face, distance or a combination of these modes”, and the cross-border mobility of providers as “physical or virtual movement of an education provider (institution, organization, company) across a national border to establish a presence in order to offer education/training programs and/or services to students and other clients” (p.13). Following Knight’s (2003; 2005) definition and typology, Söderqvist (2007) distinguished five stages of the HE internationalization process: 1) “internationalization as marginal activities” (zero stage) while “Internationalization is an exotic and status phenomenon”, 2) “student mobility” (first stage), 3) “curriculum and research internationalization” (second stage), 4) “institutionalization of internationalization” (third stage) while “the quality of internationalization is receiving more attention”, and 5) “commercializing the outcomes of internationalization” (fourth stage) while HE services are exported (Söderqvist, 2007, p.120).

From a national perspective, HE internationalization strategies are usually driven by different stakeholders based on their different interests and such rationales as the political, economic, academic, and social-cultural, for serving different purposes (Marginson, 2009; Knight, 1997). Since “different stakeholders aim at different goals
through the internationalization of HE” (Wang, 2014, p.10), the overall phenomenon of HE internationalization in a specific country reflects the interests of different relevant stakeholders. Due to their long-term national interests, the governments of some emerging economies have utilized HE internationalization as an instrument to improve their own domestic HE systems. For instance, Malaysia and Dubai both imported international branch campuses for HE capacity building (Lane, 2011).

In terms of the international relations in the world knowledge system, Altbach (1981; 1998) used “a center-periphery framework to analyze the relationship between universities in industrialized countries and those in the developing world” and “focuses on ways in which universities in countries at different levels of economic and technological development relate to one another in the international knowledge system” (Altbach, 1981; 1998; cited in Jiang, 2014, p.183). According to Altbach’s (1981; 1998) argument, the international HE systems can be divided into centers and peripheries. “While centers give directions, provide models, produce research, and in general function as pinnacles of the academic system, peripheries emulate developments from the centers, produce little that is original, and are generally at a remove from the frontiers to knowledge” (Jiang, 2014, p.183). Following this theory, Altbach (2001) used the term “gigantic periphery” to describe China’s status in the world system of knowledge production (Altbach, 2001). Altbach (2001) argued that although China is a “large and powerful” country and has “made particularly significant progress [in HE] at the end of the 20th century”, it is still a periphery country (Altbach, 2001, p.199). Altbach (2001) pointed out that “all contemporary
universities [in developing countries including China] are based on the Western model, regardless of their locations” (Altbach, 2001, p.200) and “no developing country has made a serious attempt to build a new university model” (Altbach, 2001, pp.200-201).

Since the late 1990s, globalization has become a “key explanatory framework for understanding international educational relationships” (Gopinathan & Altbach, 2005, p.118). Gopinathan and Altbach (2005) pointed out that China has made significant gains in the process of globalization in terms of enhancing its influence and significance in the world knowledge system. For instance, China’s HE system is now supplying prestigious HE and research institutions in the developed world with a significant number of outstanding graduates each year (Gopinathan & Altbach, 2005). Meanwhile, the large number of overseas students attending HEIs in China reflects the fact that the Chinese language is increasingly gaining significance (Gopinathan & Altbach, 2005). The authors argued that the breakup of the bipolar world system and the rise of emerging economies raised the question that whether “we [have] arrived at a post-dependency moment in educational theory” (Gopinathan & Altbach, 2005, p.119).

Wang (2014) argued that China “has shifted its strategy of internationalization from catching up in the 1980s and 1990s to attempting to ‘walk on two legs’ more recently” based on a content analysis of China’s landmark policies in education since 1985 (p.17). Wang’s (2014) term “walking on two legs” refers to promoting HE internationalization with “Chinese characteristics” through both “bringing in talent” and “going global” (pp.17-23). Wang (2014) highlighted two typical approaches of
“going global” through HE internationalization: 1) the CI program “as response of the Chinese government to address the ‘sharp increase in the world’s demands for Chinese learning’ (CIs Online, 2011; cited in Wang, 2014, p.22), and 2) China’s educational aid towards developing countries (Wang, 2014, p.22). The mission of the Chinese government in establishing overseas CIs is to “serve as a bridge for information exchange and communication of minds between the CIs around the world as well as between Chinese people and those who love Chinese language and culture” (Liu, 2008; cited in Yang, 2010, p.238). In terms of China’s development aid in education, “different from the Western paradigm of educational aid concerned mainly with universal access to basic education as promoted by projects such as Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG), China’s education aid focuses on training human capital for economic development through HE and vocational education” (China-Africa Minister of Education Forum Beijing Declaration, 2005; cited in Wang, 2014). In addition to the cross-border mobility of people, educational resources, and HE providers, Wang (2014) focused on both the cultural and geopolitical connotations of HE internationalization, as well as the role of HE internationalization “to expand [China’s] international influence and to promote the Chinese model globally” (Wang, 2014, p.21).

3.2 Neo-Marxist Theories and Concepts

Neo-Marxist theories may be appropriate to be used as a lens to analyze the status of and interactions between HE systems within the world knowledge system where a
significant imbalance in development still exists among HE systems in different
countries and regions. Holsti made the point that “capitalism does not develop evenly
around the world”. It “emerges initially in a few cores and as these accumulated
wealth it spreads laterally, eventually engulfing the globe.” (Holsti, 1985, p.64).
Therefore, there is a huge gap between the development stages of Western/former
imperialist countries and non-Western/postcolonial countries. “Marx’s view of the
spread of capitalism did not portray the cores exploiting the non-European hinterlands”
(Holsti, 1985, p.64). Marx believed that the development of capitalism “was not a
zero-sum game” between capitalist country and non-European regions (Holsti, 1985,
p.64). Sharing this optimism, Lenin predicted that “the centers of production would
shift to the colonial areas” due to “increasing advantages” such as lower wage rate
(Holsti, 1985, p.64). In a word, classical Marxism did not anticipate the exploitation
between imperial powers/developed countries and the post-colonial/developing
countries during the development of capitalism on a global scale. Although the
neo-Marxist paradigm “borrows a great deal from classical Marxism” (e.g. “historical
materialism”, “the creative and progressive opportunities offered by social conflict”,
and “a system-dominant perspective which explains typical patterns of actor behavior
by the structure of economic modes of production”), “where it diverges fundamentally
is in the view of the role and future of the colonial and postcolonial lands” (Holsti,
1985, p.65) within an unequal world system.

As mentioned, I utilized the widely used neo-Marxist theories of dependency, a
center-periphery model, and world-system theory to construct the theoretical
framework, primarily for the sake of further exploring if they are appropriate to analyze China’s approach of using HE internationalization to enhance its worldwide influence and international status. Dependency theory originally came out of Latin America, based on Argentine economist Raúl Prebisch’s contributions in structuralist economics (e.g. the Prebisch–Singer hypothesis). It was promoted and developed by both political economy scholars such as Andre Gunnar Frank (e.g. 1966; 1978; 1996) and politicians such as the former Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (in office 1995–2002), and thereafter got applied to comparative education. Dependency theory borrows the notions of “dialectical processes, the determining influence of economic structures, social contradictions, and the overriding normative concern with exploitation, domination, and dependence at the international level” from Marx (Holsti, 1985, p.63). It “argues that the world’s present state can be most validly seen as the outcome of domination by the ‘have’ countries over the ‘have-nots’ and, within countries, by the domination of ‘have’ over ‘have-not’ classes” (Eckstein & Noah, 1985, p.213). In terms of the development of developing countries, dependency theory has a radical version, which recommends delinking from the global capitalist system, and a moderate version, recommending actions to reduce the degree of international exploitation. “The dependency thesis suggest[s] that the character of the structural relationship between the developed and less-developed states obstructed the achievement of balanced and positive development in educational [field]”, similar to the situation in the economic field (McLean, 1983, p.25)

Following dependency theory, the center-periphery (or core-periphery) model is a
“metaphor which describes and attempts to explain the structural relationship between the advanced or metropolitan ‘center’ and a less developed ‘periphery’” commonly applied to the relationship between developed and developing countries and regions. (Scott & Marshall, 2009). According to the center-periphery model, the HE systems and HEIs in different countries can be categorized as “center” universities and HE systems, which “have always dominated the production and distribution of knowledge”, and “periphery” universities and HE systems, with fewer resources and lower academic standards, which “have tended to be dependent on [the center universities and HE systems]” (Altbach, 2007, p.124). It is obvious that “all contemporary universities [in developing countries] are based on the Western model, regardless of their locations” (Altbach, 2001, p.200), and none of the developing/postcolonial countries in the world has successfully established its own worldwide influential HE model.

Compared to dependency theory, the world-system theory developed by Wallerstein (2004) is more historically based and more flexible in terms of the changing status of periphery and semi-periphery areas within the world system. Wallerstein (2004) divides countries into core/center, peripheral, and semi-peripheral countries, as well as the external areas, based on their economic status within the world economic structure. Wallerstein (2004) argued that the semi-peripheral countries, such as South Korea, Brazil, and India, usually have aggressive strategies and policies of further developing themselves and to “advance themselves toward the core [of the world]” (p.230). The core, periphery, and semi-periphery in the
world-system theory may also be understood as a feature of HE systems within the
global arena. As mentioned, compared to its remarkable achievement in economic
growth and huge economic scale (the world’s second-largest economy with $18,088
billion GDP (PPP) in 2014 according to IMF data), China’s HE system still has
comparatively limited worldwide influence, and its international status in culture and
knowledge production can be termed as a “gigantic periphery” (Altbach, 2001, p.199).
As mentioned, Altbach (2001) argued that China is still a “gigantic periphery” in the
world system of knowledge production although “significant progress” has been made
(p.199). Based on these interrelated theories and concepts, China’s HE system can be
identified as a semi-peripheral HE system. In order to advance the Chinese HE system
towards the core of the world, the Chinese government is now implementing its
ambitious strategy of shifting from an inward-oriented to a mainly outward-oriented
HE internationalization process.

Hayhoe (2000) argued that “one problem with the neo-Marxist literature as a
framework for comparative education […] has been that it has dealt with the
waywardness of only one part of the modernity project, capitalist modernization, but
remained largely blind to […] the equally serious distortions of the other—socialist
construction” (p.428). Under the Neo-Marxist theories, the Soviet domination of
communist China in the 1950s can hardly be attributed to either dependency or
world-system theories since the Soviet Union was a socialist country, separate from
the global capitalist economy. “By contrast, Johann Galtung’s ‘Structural Theory of
Imperialism’ provided a fundamental critique of both socialist and capitalist versions
of modernity” (Hayhoe, 2000, p.429). It shows “how the patterns of domination and oppression that developed within the Soviet Union’s empire paralleled […] those that existed in both the colonial and neocolonial relations of the capitalist West” (Hayhoe, 2000, p.429), which may be helpful in terms of understanding China’s peripheral status in the 1950s and 1960s. Together with the above-mentioned Marxist version of dependency theory, Galtung’s structural theory of imperialism can be used to explain the Soviet influence on China since the early 1950s and China’s strategy of delinking from both the global capitalist system and the Soviet-led socialist camp during the Cold War.

3.3 Soft Power, Public Diplomacy, and Knowledge Diplomacy

As an important notion in international relations, the concept of “soft power” has been popularly used in international HE research and therefore deserves further exploration as to whether it is appropriate to be used for analyzing China’s situation of shifting from a mainly inward-oriented higher education internationalization to a more balanced approach. To some extent, promoting outward-oriented HE internationalization can be regarded as an approach to enhancing national soft power for serving national interests. In contrast to the traditional definition of national power, which relates to factors such as population, territory, natural resources, economy size, military forces, and political stability (Nye, 1990, p.154), soft power is defined as “the ability to affect what other countries want, [and] tends to be associated with intangible power resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions” (Nye, 1990, pp.166-167).
Nye (2008) pointed out that “to win hearts and minds” is more important after the Cold War, and the “overreliance on hard power […] is not the path to success” (p.94). Obviously, China’s HE internationalization process reflects its strategy of using HE as an instrument to enhance its soft power to serve its long-term goal of enhancing its status in the world knowledge system.

Nye (2008) argued that public diplomacy is an important approach for enhancing soft power. Cull (2008) divided the practices of public diplomacy into five elements: “listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy and international broadcasting” (pp.31-32). As one of the five elements of public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy has been used by the Chinese government as one of the three dimensions of its outward-oriented HE internationalization approach for enhancing its national soft power. As noted in Chapter Two, CIs have been established all over the world by the Chinese government through the Hanban for strengthening Sino-foreign cultural exchange and promoting Chinese culture overseas (Hanban, 2007b). Exchange diplomacy, as one of the five elements of public diplomacy, can be identified as the activities of “sending its citizens overseas and reciprocally accepting citizens from overseas for a period of study and/or acculturation” (Cull, 2008, p.33). China’s strategy of hosting more international students for “training future generations of intellectuals, technicians, and political elites from other nations” (Yang, 2007, p.25) can therefore also be regarded as its public diplomacy practice for enhancing soft power.

Nye (2013) argued that foreign aid can be used as a soft power instrument for
enhancing international influence. Nye (2013) suggested that while discussing the notion of “soft power” as “soft power instrument”, people should not only concentrate on the money or “aid” itself. Instead, Nye (2013) suggested that people should focus on how the aid-providing countries “help to create a more peaceful, prosperous and democratic world” (Nye, 2013, para.8). China’s HE related development aid towards developing countries can be regarded as its soft power instrument for enhancing international influence and status. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Tan-Mullins el at. (2010) pointed out that “increasing Chinese aid […] with African counterparts” provided an “‘alternative’ to Washington which permits African leaders to ‘triangulate’ between donors”, and which “gave African states a choice about who to turn to for investment and aid for the first time since the end of the Cold War” (p.875). China’s rationale for providing HE-related foreign development aid is not, of course, solely geopolitical. China stated that “as the world’s largest developing country, […] it insists on combining the interests of the Chinese people with that of people in other countries” via supporting the development of developing countries “to reduce poverty and improve people’s livelihood” (State Council Information Office, 2014).

Nye (2008) argued that “the soft power of a country rests primarily on three resources: its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority)” (p.97). Gill and Huang (2006) highlighted that China has its “unique advantages in expanding [its cultural] influence” due to the splendors of its ancient civilization which has lasted for over 3,000 years.
“China’s soft power also depends on how it implements its values and policies domestically” (Gill & Huang, 2006, p.19). Joshua Cooper Ramo claimed that China’s development achievement “presents the developing world a recipe for success” (Gill & Huang, 2006, p.20). He pointed out that the “Beijing Consensus’ can be seen as the antithesis of the Washington Consensus” (Ramo, 2004; cited in Gill & Huang, 2006, p.20) which “emphasizes development based on a country’s own characteristics” (Gill & Huang, 2006, p.20). However, China’s existing potential soft-power resources “will not automatically translate into desired policy outcomes”, and it is still facing numerous constraints in enhancing its soft power (Gill & Huang, 2006, p.23). For example, Gill and Huang (2006) concluded “imbalance in resources, legitimacy concerns of its diplomacy, and a lack of a coherent agenda [in promoting its foreign policy]” as “three major factors [which] hinder its efforts to project its soft power effectively” (p.26). It is obvious that the three dimensions of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization approach (i.e. CIs as cultural diplomacy program, HE-related development aid, and international student recruitment) could enhance China’s soft power in the three aspects of culture, political values, and foreign policies.

According to Knight’s (2015) perspective, for those HE-related “soft power” instruments/projects for promoting “exchange of students, faculty, culture, science, knowledge, and expertise” (e.g. China’s CI program), although “there are self-interests at play”, “there is [also] a mutuality of interests and benefits involved for all partners” (Knight, 2015, p.8). Rather than treating them as a zero-sum game,
Knight (2015) prefers to identify HE internationalization as a mutually beneficial process, which “focuses on exchange and builds on the respective strengths of institutions and countries” (p.9). Therefore, Knight (2015) believes that the notion of “knowledge diplomacy” may be “more appropriate to frame the role of HE in international relations, [rather] than the soft power paradigm”, and international HE may take “a proactive role to ensure that knowledge is effectively used to address worldwide challenges and inequalities, by recognizing the mutuality of interests and benefits” in the future (p.9). Given China’s situation, Knight’s argument provides an important perspective in analyzing China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization approach as a reciprocally beneficial tool for enhancing the worldwide influence of its knowledge and culture.

3.4 Confucian Philosophy and Outward-Oriented HE Internationalization

In terms of its ancient/pre semi-colonial spiritual/philosophical traditions, China’s traditional Confucian philosophy would suggest a more moderate position in terms of international relations and the world structure, which still has a strong impact on Chinese society. In contrast to the clash of civilizations described by Samuel Huntington (1993; 1996), Confucianism promotes the possibility of the relationships between countries with different civilizations being based on some commonly shared positive values, such as “benevolence [ren]”, “love [ai]”, and the idea of “harmonious co-existence within diversity [he er butong]”.

Huntington (1993) argued that “the fundamental source of conflict in this new
world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic” (p.22). Instead, “the
great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be
cultural” (Huntington, 1993, p.22). Huntington (1993) anticipated that although
“nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs”, “the principal
conflicts of global politics [in the future] will occur between nations and groups of
different civilizations”, and the “conflict between civilizations will be the latest phase
in the evolution of conflict in the modern world” (p.22). Huntington (1993)
categorized “seven or eight major civilizations” which include “Western, Confucian,
Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American, and possibly African
civilization” (p.25). He argued that “the most important conflicts of the future will
occur along the cultural fault lines separating these civilizations from one another”,
mainly due to the “basic” differences among civilizations, the increasing interactions
between people from different civilizations, the “processes of economic
modernization and social change throughout the world” which “are separating people
from longstanding local identities”, the enhanced “civilization-consciousness” in the
West, the “less easily compromised and resolved” cultural characteristics and
differences compared with the “political and economic ones”, and the increasing
“regionalism” (Huntington, 1993, pp.25-27).

role universities [or HE] might play in promoting understanding across civilizations
which have profoundly different roots” (p.27). Hayhoe (1995) pointed out that “realist,
liberal, and Marxist perspective on social change are all fundamentally European and
emerged in the process of rationalization or Enlightenment which brought the West to global supremacy”, and the university, as a “Western institution”, is “deeply implicated in such Western historical experiences” (p.28). Different from “modern state schooling systems [which] came into being in the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe” and reflected the needs of “rapidly industrializing societies”, universities “date back to the 12th century” and “were inspired in their patterns by […] four medieval institutions: the guild, the merchant city, the monastery, and the church” (Hayhoe, 1995, pp.29-30). Due to its historical roots, autonomy, and academic freedom became the core values of the university even within a government-led system, which means the university “can connect on a fundamental level” with different civilizations (Hayhoe, 1995, p.30; p.31). Therefore, it seems a reasonable approach for China to use outward-oriented HE internationalization as a tool to enhance its international status and avoid the civilizational clash predicted by Huntington via promoting HE-based civilizational dialogue.

The Confucian heritage of Chinese HE should enable China’s HE internationalization to contribute to a more harmonious international community. In the late 6th century BC, “Confucius [in ancient China] carried a message of love with justice in his extensive travels among the surviving [warring] kingdoms of the late Zhou dynasty” (Qu, 1996; cited in Hayhoe, 2012, p.339). Love is the core message of Confucius, “as is peace with social justice, something very difficult to attain in times of war and conquest” (Hayhoe, 2012, p.343). Within a warring era of the late Spring and Autumn Period, rather than delving into the art of war or the “school of vertical
Confucius “focused on two qualities that he saw as essential for human flourishing”: Trust \([xin]\) and Benevolence \([ren]\) (Hayhoe, 2012, p.342). “Trust \([xin]\) is a character that indicates how the words proceeding from one’s mouth must be true” (Hayhoe, 2012, p.342) and “Benevolence \([ren]\) suggests that “whenever two human beings come face to face there comes into being a code of ethics which those two must mutually observe” (Inoue, 1989, p.49; cited in Hayhoe, 2012, p.342) “This idea of goodness is also explained as ‘putting oneself in the other’s position and thinking about things’” (Hayhoe, 2012, p.342). It is obvious that his idea of goodness can be seen as the principle of intercultural or inter-civilizational dialogue.

In contrast to Huntington’s (1993) point, following such core values of love, trust, and benevolence, Confucius raised the idea of “harmonious co-existence within diversity \([he er butong]\)” and “harmony being the most precious \([he wei gui]\)” in the Analects (Li, X., 2008, p.213). Harmony \([he]\) can be seen as the highest realm of Confucianism (Zhang, W., 1997) and something which has profoundly influenced the attitude of Chinese civilization towards different cultures (Fang, 2003). Although Taoism and Buddhism also profoundly influenced Chinese intellectuals’ spiritual world, there is no doubt that Confucianism is China’s most influential traditional philosophical/spiritual heritage in breadth and depth. It seems reasonable to anticipate that China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization would not bring new conflicts if it draws rich nutrition from its spiritual heritage of Confucianism. However, China still needs a dialectical view while dealing with its rich historical heritage in the field
of international relations. For instance, imperial China’s traditional tributary relationships with East Asian and Southeast Asian countries “were [always] ‘hierarchic and non-egalitarian, like Chinese society itself’ (Fairbank, 1968, p.10; cited in Pan & Lo, 2017, p.19)”, and such a “mentality [can] still [be] observed in China’s contemporary international behavior” (Pan & Lo, 2017, p.19).

3.5 A New Typology: Inward and Outward-Oriented HE Internationalization

Following the previously mentioned theories and concepts, as briefly explained in the introductory chapter, I attempted to construct a new typology for examining my target situation, which categorizes the interactions between domestic HE systems and the outside world into “inward-” and “outward-oriented” HE internationalization. HE internationalization refers to the exchange of not only people, goods and services but also ideas “between two or more nations and cultural identities” (Yang, 2000, p.320). In contrast to the mobility of people (including both student and scholarly mobility) and HE programs/providers, the new typology of inward- and outward-oriented HE internationalization concentrates on the spread of innovations through HE internationalization initiated by national governments in the service of their national interests. The notion of “innovation” refers to “an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by […] unit of adoption” (Rogers, 1962, p.11), which includes knowledge, culture, HE models or norms, and educational philosophy as a part of HE internationalization. Following this typology, no matter what patterns the innovations spread by, the roles of HE systems in HE internationalization can be divided into two
categories: recipients of innovations and providers of innovations. Due to their domestic and international contexts, HE internationalization has been used by governments as an instrument or modality of exporting and/or importing foreign innovations under the guidance of national strategies.

The notion of trans-cultural diffusion of innovations was borrowed and utilized for constructing the new typology. “There is widespread agreement that diffusion is the transmission, adoption, and eventual acculturation of an innovation by a recipient population” (Kaufman & Patterson, 2005, p.83; see also Coleman, et al., 1966; Rogers, 1995; Wejnert, 2002; Palloni, 2001). In terms of Rogers’s (1962) theory, the notion of diffusion refers to “the process by which an innovation” or a message “concerned with new ideas” “is communicated through certain channels over time among the members [or unites] of a social system” (p.5). In terms of the trans-cultural diffusion of innovations, a typical pattern can be described as that “an active or aggressive culture invades the territory of a neighbor and succeeds in planting a colony within that territory” (Willey, 1953, p.379). Such patterns of diffusion of innovations “have been between cultures of similar or of different economic bases” (Willey, 1953, p.382).

According to Rogers’s (1962) theory, there are four major elements in diffusion: “innovation”, “communication channel”, “time”, and “social system”. As mentioned, the notion of “innovation” can be defined as “an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other units of adoption” (Rogers, 1962, p.11). The element of “communication” refers to “the process by which participants [or
participating units] create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding” (Rogers, 1962, p.17). “The time dimension is involved in diffusion in the innovation decision process by which an individual [or unit] passes from first knowledge of an innovation through its adoption or rejection” (Rogers, 1962, p.20). “A social system is defined as a set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal” (Rogers, 1962, p.24). The units of a social system “may be individuals, informal groups, organizations, and/or subsystems” (Rogers, 1962, p.24).

In terms of HE internationalization, I used the term “innovations” to describe the knowledge, culture, HE models or norms, and educational philosophy which spread from one country/region/HE system to another. The world system of knowledge production can be regarded as a “system” which contains the units of regional/national HE systems as subsystems. Following Knight’s (2015) argument about knowledge diplomacy which considers the reallocation of knowledge and its being “effectively used” as a common interest, the reallocation of innovations for ultimately benefiting the international community can be regarded as a common goal of HE internationalization participants. The notion of “communication” therefore refers to the process whereby HE systems export or accept innovations or have them imposed. In terms of the “time” dimension, it is involved in a HE system’s process of adopting or rejecting foreign innovations.

In the world knowledge system, during the process of HE internationalization, a HE system in a certain country/region may tend more to be a recipient of foreign
innovations but also be a provider to a limited extent, and vice versa. It may also switch between the two at different stages of development. The process of spreading domestic/original innovations through the process of HE internationalization can, therefore, be defined as “outward-oriented” HE internationalization. It includes but is not limited to the activities of promoting/exporting HE programs/providers, implementing HE-related cultural diplomacy programs overseas, and recruiting international students for enhancing worldwide cultural influence. In contrast, the process of accepting (spontaneously learning from or having imposed) foreign innovations through the process of HE internationalization can be defined as “inward-oriented” HE internationalization. It includes but is not limited to the activities of using foreign languages as major academic languages, following foreign models or criteria while developing domestic HE, recruiting foreign scholars, importing foreign HE programs/providers (e.g. branch campuses of foreign institutions), and sending domestic students to foreign universities in order to learn from foreign innovations.

Through the lens of this typology, China’s HE internationalization during the past three decades experienced a significant shift, from a mainly “inward-oriented” internationalization to a more balanced approach. As mentioned, China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization contains three major dimensions: 1) a cultural diplomacy program based on Sino-foreign HE collaboration (i.e. the CI program), 2) international development aid for HE in developing countries, and 3) international student recruitment at the HE level. They will be further discussed in
Chapter Six, Challenges and Suggestions. For analyzing the present situation of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, a multidimensional lens is pursued. I treated these three dimensions as three mutually dependent aspects of HE internationalization as a reciprocally beneficial instrument utilized by the Chinese government for enhancing its worldwide cultural influence and international status in the world knowledge system. While proposing and modifying policy solutions, these three dimensions were treated as a whole rather than three unrelated aspects of China’s HE internationalization.

3.6 Summary

As a concept based on neo-Marxist theories, the center-periphery model describes the relationship between advanced capitalist countries and less developed societies. Being applied in the field of HE, this model can be used to explain the position of relatively advanced and less developed HE systems in the world system of knowledge production, as well as their interrelationships. Together with the structural theory of imperialism, this model can be applied to China which experienced exploitation from the capitalist world before 1949 and then from the Soviet Union as a socialist country. In the field of HE, after experiencing a long history of learning from the West and importing foreign HE models since the first Opium War and a bumpy course of exploring its own models within an isolated geopolitical context during the Cold War, China began to make its effort to move from periphery to the center of the world system of knowledge production through HE internationalization. Meanwhile, as
China’s most influential philosophical/spiritual tradition, Confucian principles such as “harmonious co-existence within diversity [he er butong]” will probably make China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization be able to contribute to a more harmonious world. A dialectical view needs to be taken while dealing with its historical traditions. China’s efforts at enhancing its worldwide influence and international status through the CI program, international development aid, and international student recruitment can be regarded as its outward-oriented HE internationalization approach, following a new typology proposed in this study. For exploring China’s ambitions and challenges while promoting its outward-oriented HE internationalization, an exploratory empirical study has been conducted. In the following chapter, Chapter Four, I will explain the methodology and research design of this study.
Chapter Four: Methodology and Research Design

This chapter presents the methodology and specific research design of this mixed-methods exploratory inquiry. To investigate the challenges and opportunities of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, as well as to propose and modify hypothetical policy suggestions, a research methodology is developed by using the problem approach in comparative education developed by Brian Holmes (1981). Holmes (1981) based his post-positivist methodology, the problem approach, on John Dewey’s five-phase model of reflective thinking and Karl Popper’s falsificationist methodology. In contrast to the positivist, the post-positivist holds that the acquisition of human knowledge and the intellectualization of real-world issues may not rely on inductive/scientific reasoning based on immutable objective truth. A post-positivist methodology explores real-world issues and problems based on conjectures and rigorous critical testing. As an exploratory/pioneer inquiry into the views of a unique group of international students conducted through the lens of a new typology (i.e. inward- and outward-oriented HE internationalization), utilizing a post-positivist methodology provides the potential of exploring a wide range of aspects of my target situation. Moreover, as a crucial component of the methodology of the problem approach, Holmes’s (1981) four-pattern taxonomy, constructed on the basis of Popper’s critical dualism, for analyzing the influence of contextual features towards human behavior is well suited for analyzing my target situation. In many aspects of Chinese society, including HE, there are widely existing tensions between its ideology,
political and economic systems, socioeconomic development status, and deep cultural roots. Holmes’s (1981) problem approach therefore has been utilized to design the overall structure and specific implementation of this investigation, particularly the data analysis.

4.1 Brian Holmes’s Problem Approach

Drawing on Karl Popper, Holmes described critical dualism as “the position researched when a conscious differentiation is made between the man-enforced normative laws”, which can be made, changed, and estimated by man, and the “natural regularities” or “sociological laws”, which “are connected with the functioning of social institutions” and “play a role in our social life similar to natural law in engineering” (Holmes, 1981, p.77). Critical dualism made it possible for Holmes “to draw a distinction between a social world of convention and a social world of institutions” (Holmes, 1981, pp.76-77). Holmes constructed his taxonomy to guide contextual information collection for understanding the setting of the target problem, which contains four kinds of patterns: 1) the normative patterns based on Popper’s idea of normative laws, 2) institutional patterns based on Popper’s idea of sociological laws, 3) environmental patterns which provide the context for the national conditions of the sociological laws, and 4) the patterns of mental states or people’s “lower valuations” or “mores” which “motivate their behavior” (Holmes, 1981, p.83). The normative patterns “include the statements about the norms and normative law” (Holmes, 1981, p.80), such as political ideology which usually can be
found in national constitutions. The institutional patterns contain the descriptions of the system, which includes the education system, legal system, and political system of a certain country. The environmental patterns contain the physical contextual information, such as the natural environment and economic development status. The patterns of mental states include persistent beliefs that reflect internalized features like cultural traditions and the spiritual core of a given civilization. Holmes believes that human behavior does not always follow the expressed beliefs (normative statements) but often reflects what people truly believe deep in their hearts or their mental states. After understanding the mentioned features of the context, “solutions to an identified problem are worked out through deductive logic in carefully defined specific initial conditions” (Hayhoe, 1989, p.159).

John Dewey (1933) developed a five-phase model to describe people’s reflective thought while facing a situation that “arises containing a difficulty or perplexity” (Dewey, 1933, p.102). The model includes 1) suggestions, “in which the mind leaps forward to a possible solution”; 2) “an intellectualization of the difficulty or perplexity that has been felt into a problem to be solved, a question for which the answer must be sought”; 3) “the use of one suggestion after another as a leading idea, or hypothesis, to initiate and guide observation and other operations in collection of factual material”; 4) “the mental elaboration of the idea or supposition as an idea or supposition”; and 5) “testing the hypothesis by overt or imaginative action” (Dewey, 1933, p.107). Popper’s (1959) falsificationist methodology advocates testing a certain hypothesis as rigorously as possible to disprove it, and those that survive can be
regarded as tentatively true. Following Dewey’s five-phase model of reflective thinking and Popper’s falsificationism methodology, Holmes developed a five-step hypothetical-deductive approach: “1) problem analysis or intellectualization, 2) hypothesis and policy solution formulation, 3) specification of initial conditions or the context, 4) logical prediction of likely outcomes from the adopted hypothesis, and 5) comparison of logically predicted outcomes with observable events” (Holmes, 1981, p.76).

4.2 Research Design: A Post-Positivist Approach

For this study, national-level policy documents, reports published by governmental functional units, and relevant academic literature were comprehensively reviewed for understanding the historical context of China’s HE internationalization and intellectualizing the target problem, for the sake of proposing hypothetical policy solutions. In order to test and modify the hypothetical solutions, I conducted an exploratory empirical investigation. Both qualitative and quantitative/quantifiable data were collected through a survey.

This study first analyzes the historical contexts of China’s HE internationalization through reviewing its modernization and development process, as well as its pre-semi-colonial philosophical and epistemological heritage. During the process of HE development within the context of internationalization, China’s approach and policies may have been dominated by its Marxist ideology and one-party system, with the profound additional influence of Chinese traditional culture and Confucian
philosophy. The government and the policymaking process are mainly influenced by the normative values and institutional features, while for the HEIs, the factors reflecting mental states or deep cultural roots might be influential. Therefore, there might be tensions between the policy and strategy formulation at the macro level, and policy implementation at the institutional level. China’s one-party system and socialist ideology, which were originally learned from Continental Europe (Marxism), may stimulate the Chinese government to be more aggressive and ambitious while formulating its HE internationalization strategy. Meanwhile, China’s traditional Confucian philosophical root idea that promoted “harmonious co-existence within diversity [he er butong]” may cause Chinese HEIs as participants of policy implementation to be more willing to accept the notion of dialogue, rather than clash (as described by Samuel Huntington (1993; 1996)), between different civilizations.

Second, it investigates the present situation of China’s HE outreach, identifies the existing challenges, and proposed hypothetical solutions among the three dimensions of outward-oriented HE internationalization, especially for improving the way that international students are handled. For understanding the present challenges, in terms of the national/macro level strategy, it reviews China’s landmark policies and strategic plans in HE development and internationalization. In terms of the three dimensions of China’s outward oriented HE internationalization, it reviews relevant policy documents, governmental reports, and scholarly perspectives. Following a comprehensive review of the literature, it proposes hypothetical policy suggestions for
optimizing China’s present approach. Then, a survey was conducted to explore the attitudes and reflections of international graduate students in English instruction programs in education-related majors in three Chinese HEIs towards China’s strategy and effort, particularly the dimension of international student recruitment. Participants were welcomed to provide comments on all three aspects of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization. Based on the empirical study, hypothetical solutions, particularly in the dimension of international student recruitment, were then modified.

This post-positivist investigation mainly contains five steps: 1) identifying the target situation and problem; 2) intellectualizing existing challenges via scrutinizing relevant documents (e.g. academic literature, policy documents, governmental reports) and proposing hypothetical solutions; 3) implementing an exploratory empirical inquiry, surveying the target population for collecting quantitative and qualitative data; 4) performing quantitative and qualitative data analysis; and 5) interpreting the research findings and modifying the hypothetical solutions particularly in the dimension of international student recruitment. For understanding the context of China’s situation, the second step contains a brief review of China’s experience of HE development.

4.3 Overview of Research Design

My five-step research design contains two major components: 1) a comprehensive review of relevant literature for intellectualizing the target problem; and 2) an exploratory empirical investigation into the perceptions of a unique group of
international students in Chinese HEIs. The purpose of the first part of understanding historical and policy contexts and identifying challenges is to propose hypothetical solutions for optimizing and further promoting China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, especially for improving the way that potential and current international students are treated in China. The major purpose of the empirical research is to test and modify the hypothetical solutions particularly in the dimension of international student recruitment. I used the afore-mentioned Holmes’ (1981) taxonomy for analyzing the contextual features of international students’ source countries (i.e. normative patterns, institutional patterns, environmental patterns, and mental states).

4.3.1 Comprehensive review of relevant literature

This comprehensive review section focuses on four major aspects: 1) national-level policy context; 2) CIs as a cultural diplomacy program; 3) HE-related international development aid, and 4) international student recruitment. The relevant literature can be classified into three categories: academic literature, policy documents, and reports published by the Chinese government or governmental functional units. National-level policy documents include China’s Five-Year Plans, landmark education policies, such as the previously mentioned five strategic education policy documents, and other policy documents in the relevant fields for implementing certain programs or policies, such as the Regulations of Higher Education Institutions Recruiting International Students (MOE, MFA, & MPS, 2000). Reports published by the
government sector (such as the 2012 National Concise Statistical Report of Foreign Student (MOE, 2012)), the national-level governmental functional units (e.g. Chinese Language Council International (Hanban)), and governmental news agencies (e.g. Xinhua News Agency (Xinhua She)), related to the three dimensions of China’s approach are also reviewed. Hypothetical solutions are proposed based on the identified challenges for improving the present situation.

4.3.2 Empirical exploratory inquiry: research sites and survey population

As mentioned, my target population is international graduate students in English instruction programs in education-related majors in Chinese HEIs from both developing and developed countries, who have already spent at least one semester (i.e. three full months) in China. These students are selected due to their unique “triple identity”: 1) foreigners in China and thus outsider observers; 2) international students in Chinese HEIs and thus policy recipients of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization strategy; and 3) graduate students in education-related majors and thus insiders of my research field. According to currently available information, two Chinese HEIs – University A and University B, have established their own English-based master and doctoral programs in education-related majors focused on international students. The MOE and the MOC initiated English-based master programs in comparative education for students from developing countries, mainly African countries, at two other Chinese HEIs, Universities C and University D, as international development aid projects. I attempted to survey the entire target
population\textsuperscript{1} at the beginning. Since the mentioned program at University D does not allow external researchers to survey their current international students, I ultimately conducted the survey research at Universities A, B, and C.

University A is a comprehensive normal university in Northeast China originally established in the 1940s. Its postgraduate English instruction degree program in education was established in 2008 and now it has 32 students from 15 different countries focusing on seven different research concentrations (i.e. HE, educational psychology, comparative education, education economics and management, education leadership and management, pedagogy and curriculum, and pre-school education). These 32 students include both master (2-year program) and doctoral students (3-year program). University B is a comprehensive major normal university located in the heart of the capital of China. It established its English instruction graduate degree programs in seven different majors (i.e. environment, economics, MBA, comparative education, HE, social development and public policy, and law) in 2011, and two of them are education-related majors (i.e. comparative education and HE). It has both a 3-year doctoral program and a 2-year master program in the major of comparative education, and a 2-year master program in HE. It now has about 70 students, including both master and doctoral students, from nearly 20 different countries in these two majors. University C is a comprehensive provincial normal university in Southeast China located in a small city. In 2015, the MOE and the MOC initiated an English instruction 2-year master program in comparative education for international

\textsuperscript{1} It is difficult, even for the HEIs themselves, to reach their graduates who have returned to their source countries.
students from developing countries in this university. It now has 29 international students and most of them are from African countries.

The total accessible population size is therefore about 130. I used both paper-based and online (based on OISE’s Survey Wizard 2 program, an Internet-based survey platform) questionnaires to collect data. I reached almost the entire accessible population via Email or in person. About 63% (81) of them responded to the questionnaire and 78 of them provided valid quantitative data. These 78 participants, 68 of them answered open-ended and/or short-answer follow-up question(s) and therefore provided qualitative data. Before conducting survey research in these three Chinese HEIs, ethics approval was obtained from The Office of Research Ethics, University of Toronto. The Ethics Approval Letter from the University of Toronto’s Office of Research Ethics is attached in Appendix I. The Participants Consent Form and Institutional Consent Form are attached in Appendices II and III.

4.3.3 Exploratory empirical inquiry: survey design

The target construct of my survey is the participants’ attitudes towards China’s approach to international student recruitment as one of the three dimensions of outward-oriented HE internationalization. My survey contains three sections: background information questions, Likert-type items and follow-up short-answer questions, and open-ended questions. Dichotomous questions, multiple choice, and other forms of questions were used to collect the information about participants’ source countries, current institutions and programs, financial aid status, and number of
month(s) in China for their current programs. Three sections of Likert-type items collected information about 1) participants’ general attitudes towards China’s strategy of further promoting international student recruitment, 2) their attitudes towards their application processes and China’s relevant activities in treating its potential international students in source countries; and 3) their attitudes towards the way that international students are treated in China based on their experience as current international students in Chinese HEIs. In other words, my survey focused on their attitudes towards China’s general strategy, activities in the source countries, and policies and institutional-level policy implementation as a destination country of overseas studies. I used Likert-type items with one statement and five options (strongly disagree; disagree; neutral; agree; strongly agree). Three follow-up sort-answer questions were asked about the answers to two Likert-type items for collecting further information about participants’ attitudes. An open-ended question was asked about participants’ personal opinions towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization besides the dimension of international student recruitment. Another open-ended question was asked about their suggestions and comments relating to this investigation.

4.3.4 Survey modification: experts’ review and pilot test

I modified my initial survey items based on experts’ review and a pilot study. I invited three expert reviewers to scrutinize my initial items. Expert A is a professor in education at University A and the founder of University A’s program (Program A).
Expert B is an associate professor in comparative education at University B and one of the co-founders of University B’s program (Program B). Expert C is originally from Canada and worked at University B at that time as an international professor. Both Expert A and Expert B have overseas study, research and teaching experience and are now directing international master and doctoral students in the fields of comparative, international, and HE. I modified the questionnaire based on their suggestions and comments.

Ten international students from University A’s program A voluntarily participated in the pilot test. They are masters and doctoral students in different concentrations, including comparative education, educational economics and management, curriculum and pedagogy, and educational/applied psychology. As mentioned, Program A has 32 students, including both 2-year MA program students and 3-year doctoral students. These 10 students are from seven different countries, which are Cambodia, Russia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Kenya, Ghana, and Thailand. Eight of them are doctoral students and all of them have spent at least one semester at University A as full-time international students. These ten participants were counted in the numerator and denominator of the mentioned response rate. I introduced the entire research and specifically explained the methodology and theoretical framework. They spent half an hour to review and complete the pilot survey, and then we had a one-hour group discussion. The initial items were modified based on the suggestions and critical comments provided by the expert reviewers and participants in the pilot test.

The modified survey contains six background information questions (Item 1 to
5.2), 24 Likert-type items (Item 6 to 29) about the participants’ attitudes towards China’s strategy and activities related to international student recruitment, and two open-ended questions (Q1 and Q2). Likert-type items contain three sections. Items 6 to 11 (the first section) ask about participants’ general attitudes towards China’s international student recruitment strategy. Items 12 to 18 (the second section) ask about their attitudes towards China’s policies and activities in treating potential international students while they were in their source countries. This section contains three short-answer follow-up questions (Items 14.1, 14.2 and 16.1) for collecting additional information related to Items 14 and 16. Items 19 to 29 (the third section) ask about their attitudes mainly towards China’s institutional-level policy implementations as a study abroad destination. The modified version is attached as Appendix IV.

4.3.5 Quantitative data coding and analysis

I coded the collected data for conducting both quantitative and qualitative analysis. In terms of the quantitative analysis, I coded the source country information and created a dataset based on Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy. The source country dataset contains four kinds of data, two kinds of continuous data for describing the development status and political systems of the source countries, and two kinds of categorical data for reflecting their ideological perspectives and deep cultural roots.

In terms of the continuous data, I used the HDI, which was created and published by the UNDP “to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate
criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone” (UNDP, 2015a), to describe the development status of participants’ source countries. “The HDI is the geometric mean of the three-dimensional indices” (i.e. health, education, and income; see Eq. 1) (UNDP, 2015b). Health index equals the actual national life expectancy at birth (years) minus the minimum value of Life expectancy (years), and divided by the maximum value of life expectancy (years) minus the minimum value of life expectancy (years) (see Eq. 2). Education index equals the mean years of schooling index plus the expected years of schooling index and is then divided by two (see Eq. 3). Income index equals the natural logarithm of actual gross national income per capita (PPP 2011 US dollar) minus the natural logarithm pf minimum gross national income per capita (PPP 2011 US dollar), and is then divided by the natural logarithm maximum gross national income per capita (PPP 2011 US dollar) minus the natural logarithm of minimum gross national income per capita (PPP 2011 US dollar) (see Eq. 4). I used the HDI published by UNDP in 2015.

\[
\text{HDI} = (I_{\text{Health}} \times I_{\text{Education}} \times I_{\text{Income}})^{1/3} \tag{1}
\]

\[
I_{\text{Health}} = \frac{(\text{LE}_{\text{actual}} - \text{LE}_{\text{min}})}{(\text{LE}_{\text{max}} - \text{LE}_{\text{min}})} \tag{2}
\]

\[
I_{\text{Education}} = \frac{(\text{MYSI} + \text{EYSI})}{2} \tag{3}
\]

\[
I_{\text{Income}} = \frac{\ln(\text{GNIpc}_{\text{actual}}) - \ln(\text{GNIpc}_{\text{min}}))}{\ln(\text{GNIpc}_{\text{max}}) - \ln(\text{GNIpc}_{\text{min}}))} \tag{4}
\]

The DI that I used was published by the Economist Intelligence Unit in 2015 for providing “a snapshot of the state of democracy worldwide for 165 independent states and two territories” (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2015, p.1). I attempted to use this index to describe the political systems of source countries. According to its
2015’s report, “the DI is based on five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture” (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2015, p.1). The DI “on a 0 to 10 scale is based on the ratings for 60 indicators, grouped into five [mentioned] categories” (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2015, p.45). “Each category has a rating on a 0 to 10 scale, and the overall Index is the simple average of the five category indexes” (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2015, p.45).

In terms of the categorical data or the two dummy variables, for describing the source countries’ roots in political ideology, I classified them into two categories, according to whether the country had had Socialist connotations in its constitution by the end of the Cold War (i.e. the end of the 1980s). For describing their cultural connections with ancient China, or whether they can be described as Confucian heritage or “quasi-Confucian” heritage societies, I classified them into two categories: 1) China’s East Asian tributary states and Southeast Asian quasi-tributary states during the Ming dynasty, and 2) other countries. I determined the inheritance relationships between ancient and modern states based on their current territories and major ethnic groups.

The quantitative analysis contains statistical and regression inquires. The five options of Likert-type items (strongly disagree; disagree; neutral; agree; strongly agree) were transformed into scores (-2, -1, 0, 1, 2). For each of the three sections of Likert-type items, I calculated the mean of each participant’s responses (a_i) in each section as the value of attitudes (A_1, A_2, and A_3; see Eq. 5)
\[ At = \frac{1}{n_a} \sum a_i \quad (n_a = \text{number of items}) \]  

Psychometric analysis was implemented among each section of Likert-type items. I calculated the coefficient alpha of each section and the item-total correlation of each Likert-type item within each section for testing the internal consistency of each section and quality of each item respectively. In terms of statistical analysis, I calculated the major descriptive statistics (i.e. mean, range, standard deviation, maximum and minimum values) for describing participants’ answers to each item and section. Multiple regression analysis was used (via SPSS (IBM Inc.)) for exploring the relationship between source-country contextual indicators identified based on Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy and participants’ attitudes reflected by their answers to the Likert-type items in each section. I used the following equations to model the relationship between participants’ attitudes and source-country contextual indicators (see Eq.6, 7, and 8).

\[ A_1 = b_0 + b_1D + b_2P + b_3I + b_4C + b_jV_j + \varepsilon \]  \hspace{1cm} (6)
\[ A_2 = b_0 + b_1D + b_2P + b_3I + b_4C + b_jV_j + \varepsilon \]  \hspace{1cm} (7)
\[ A_3 = b_0 + b_1D + b_2P + b_3I + b_4C + b_jV_j + \varepsilon \]  \hspace{1cm} (8)

The dependent variables \( A_1, A_2, \) and \( A_3 \) refer to participants’ attitudes towards China’s international student recruitment strategy at the macro level and its corresponding policies and activities in treating its potential and current international students respectively. The independent variables are source countries’ national development status (D) reflected by HDI (2014) values, political systems (P) reflected by DI (2015) values, political ideological roots (I) reflected by their previous or current
constitutions, and cultural roots (C) reflected by their tributary relations with ancient China. The control variables are participants’ degree programs (i.e. doctoral or master) and number of month(s) in China for their current programs (i.e. Vj; j = each control variables), which are not my target indicators but related to the dependent variables.

4.3.6 Qualitative data analysis

As a parallel mixed-methods exploratory approach, I implemented qualitative analysis among the answers to the first open-ended question and the three follow-up short-answer questions for collecting additional information about the participants’ answers to the corresponding Likert-type items, for discussing the participants’ reflections in addition to the findings of regression analysis. In contrast to the quantitative analysis which targets on revealing participants’ general attitudes and its relation with source-country contextual features, the qualitative analysis digs into the details through scrutinizing the qualitative survey data. In terms of the three follow-up short-answer questions, the provided information was used to further interpret their answers to the corresponding Likert-type items. In terms of the first/major open-ended question (“Could you please share with me any personal opinions you have towards China’s HE internationalization approaches (e.g. CIs, HE international aid, international student recruitment, government scholarship) and any suggestions you have for improvement?”), their suggestions and comments were summarized for the purpose of modifying the proposed hypothetical solutions, together with other quantitative and qualitative research findings. Their suggestions and comments
provided through answering the second open-ended question (“Any comments about this investigation are welcomed”) were used to discuss the limitations of this investigation and the future research plan(s).

4.4 Summary

As a post-positivist mixed-methods approach, this study has been conducted following Brian Holmes’s (1981) problem approach in comparative education. It first reviews the history of HE development in China. Then, it proposes hypothetical policy solutions through investigating the present situation of China’s HE outreach in three dimensions through reviewing the relevant literature. Finally, for the sake of testing and modifying the proposed policy solutions, it analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data collected through a survey. In the next chapter, Chapter Five, I will briefly review the ancient history of China’s HE, and the modernization and development process of its modern HE system since the First Opium War.
Chapter Five: China’s Modern HE Development and Ancient Heritage

In order to deepen the understanding of the historical context of China’s HE internationalization, this chapter reviews the history of China’s modern HE development and its historical tradition. It concentrates on both China’s HE transformations and its interactions with the outside world. China’s HE modernization and development can be roughly divided into three periods: 1) the semi-colonial period after the First Opium War (1840) and before its Communist Revolution (1949), 2) the period between its Communist Revolution in 1949 and the end of the Cultural Revolution, and 3) the period after its “reform and opening-up” policy (1978). Before reviewing the history of China’s HE modernization and development, this chapter reviews China’s ancient/pre-semi-colonial traditions of HE.

5.1 China’s Historical Traditions of HE

Although both Taoism and Buddhism have profoundly influenced Chinese intellectuals, Confucianism can be regarded as the dominant philosophy of ancient China’s education (Gan, 2011) since the mid-2nd century BC when it became the official philosophy of the empire (Wang, B., 1990). During the Spring and Autumn Period (770 BC – 403 BC) of the Eastern Zhou dynasty, Confucius, China’s most influential philosopher and educator, started his private school and “begun to nurture disciples” (Hayhoe, 2012, p.341). In his era, the six arts [liuyi] of rites [li], music [yue], archery [she], charioteering [yu], calligraphy [shu], and mathematics [shu] were
the major contents of aristocratic education in official schools (Niu, 2006). In his non-official school, Confucius provided aristocratic education to civilians and advocated that “instruction knows no class distinction [you jiao wu lei]” based on the concept of benevolence [ren] (Tang, 2009). Confucius’s idea of education popularization was finally realized to some extent over a thousand years after his death through the establishment of a meritocratic examination based civil service system, the keju system. However, in contrast to the idea of popular education, Confucius’s “highest goal was to attract rulers into his school, such that the precepts of love and justice, and the idea of a society based on ritual could be realized in action for the social good” (Hayhoe, 2012, p.341). Confucius “traveled among the warring kingdoms” for 14 years with his loyal followers “as an educator and missionary for moral and social transformation” (Hayhoe, 2012, p.342). Although Confucius felt that he was unable to “have a measurable influence over any ruler” through his “fruitless travel” (Hayhoe, 2012, p.342), Confucianism essentially became China’s official philosophy in the era of Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty (156 BC - 87 BC) (Wang, 1990) and thereafter became the philosophical core of education in ancient China through the establishment of official education based on the Confucian classics and imperial examination system (Gan, 2011).

In 124 BC, “to serve the need of the Han dynasty”, ancient China’s “first imperial academy […] was created […] for candidates for official posts who had been schooled in the Confucian classics”, and “thus Confucian education was put to the service of the state” (Marginson, 2011, p.600). In the Tang dynasty (618-907), the
three-grade imperial civil service examination system [keju] originally established by the Sui dynasty (581-618) was “fully systematized” by Empress Wu Zetian (624-705), with the “role of the examination in the training, recruitment and promotion of the scholar civil service” (Marginson, 2011, p.600). “The subsequent major Chinese dynasties”, the Song (960-1279), Ming (1368-1644), and Qing (1644-1912), “relied heavily on a series of public, competitive examinations to recruit state officials” (Menzel, 1963, p.vii). During the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), the most systematic civil service examination [keju] system was developed with the four-grade Keju system containing entry-level “child exams [tongshi]”, provincial level “township exams [xiangshi]”, national level “conference exams [huishi]”, and the final court exams [dianshi] (Gan, 2006). Candidates were required to write “eight-legged essays” [ba gu wen] based on their knowledge of the Confucian classics (Gan, 2006; see also Wang et al., 2006).

Ancient China’s “classical institutions of higher learning […] had reached their definitive form in the 12th century” (Hayhoe, 2001, p.327). In the Song dynasty (960-1279), “the formal pole of traditional Chinese higher learning, imperial institutions at capital, provincial and prefectural levels which administered the civil service examinations [keju], had reached institutional forms that were relatively stable – the taixue, the guozijian, the Hanlin academy” (Hayhoe, 2001, p.326). In terms of non-government HEIs, the academies [shuyuan], “grew up from [private] libraries and Buddhist monasteries in quiet rural settings, where scholarship could be pursued outside of the ambit of the imperial bureaucracy and its examination system” (Hayhoe,
2001, p.327). According to Huang Zongxi’s (1610-1695) *Song Yuan Xue An* [*Education in Song and Yuan Dynasties*], generally speaking, the curriculum in Song academy mainly contains *Four Books* [*sishu*] and *Five Classics* [*wujing*], Song Dynasty neo-Confucianism scholars’ commentaries, history, and poetry (*Song Yuan Xue An*; cited by Liu, 2014).

HE in ancient China can be regarded as a holistic endeavor which concentrated mainly on knowledge in the field of humanities and social sciences. As an important feature of Confucian education, “Confucian scholarship tends to focus on understanding history and human inter-relationships and to explore issues of good governance, from the local to the global” (Hayhoe & Liu, 2010, p.94). According to the Great Learning [*Da Xue*], one of the Four Books [*Si Shu*], the aim of HE in ancient China can be concluded as for “self-cultivation, family harmony, state-governing, and world peace [*xiushen qijia zhiguo pingtianxia*]” (Zhang, 1998).

From a global perspective, cultural exchanges between China and the West were bilateral, mutually beneficial, and substantially equal before the late 18th century (Mungello, 2005). From 1500 to 1800, “Europeans were influenced by China because they regarded Chinese culture as superior, and they were receptive to borrow from China” (Mungello, 2005, p.77). However, the situation changed dramatically before and after the Opium Wars.

### 5.2 China’s HE Modernization

From the First Opium War in 1840, although it was officially independent, China
had started to become a semi-colonial society. China’s HE modernization during this period can be considered as a process of Westernization. Western technology was introduced for the purpose of national salvation and one of China’s earliest modern government HEIs, the School of Combined Learning [tong wen guan] was established for providing education “in specific areas needed to deal with the Western incursion” during the “self-strengthening movement [yangwu yundong] (1861-1895) (Hayhoe, 1996, p.32 & p.36). In 1905, the Qing government ended the civil service examination [keju] and China’s “traditional institutions of higher learning” based on the keju system therefore “lost their legitimacy and viability” (Hayhoe, 1996, p.33).

In the early 1900s, China attempted to establish its modern HE through importing different western HE models. The earliest plan of establishing modern education system was formulated, “with the Japanese model as the main point of reference” (Hayhoe, 1996, p.35). The Qing government planned to establish a “Confucian academy for high-level research” and to “maintain a role similar to that of the Hanlin Academy in terms of regulating all scholarship at lower levels” (Hayhoe, 1996, p.35). “Under it were to be eight kinds of [specialized] universities” (i.e. universities of Confucian classics, political science, arts, medical science, agriculture, engineering, and commerce) (Hayhoe, 1996, p.35). During the 1890s, modern schools were “set up by provincial gentry and scholar-officials”, and some of them, such as Beiyang gongxue in Tianjin and Nanyang gongxue in Shanghai, “became the basis for modern universities” (Hayhoe, 1996, p.37).

The period from 1911 to 1927 “saw the first real effort to establish a ‘university’,
in the sense of the defining value of autonomy and academic freedom” (Hayhoe, 1996, p.43). “Explicit indications were given in the [new] legislation [passed in 1912] concerning the internal government of universities” to protect academic freedom and university autonomy “along the lines of the German model” (Hayhoe, 1996, p.43). Meanwhile, a Chinese Jesuit priest and also a high-level advisor to Yuan Shikai’s Beijing government in 1913, Ma Xiangbo, “attempted to persuade the government to provide support for a Chinese national academy [hanxia kaowenyuan] that would be modeled after the French Academy” (Hayhoe, 1996, p.45). Ma’s plan was, to some extent, realized in 1928, when the Academia Sinica was established. Besides Continental Europeans models, China had “considerable interest in the American model”, cumulating in the year 1926 (Hayhoe, 1996, p.32), when Tsinghua University, a HEI “developed from a language school for preparing young Chinese to study in America established with Boxer indemnity funds”, became a national institution (Hayhoe, 1996, p.49). The US had initiated the Boxer Rebellion Indemnity Scholarship Program in 1908 for supporting outstanding students in China to study in American HEIs (Liu, 2010).

During its semi-colonial period, China’s ancient HE traditions were interrupted. China experimented with several different Western HE models during its modernization process. Indeed, the HE modernization or westernization process in China during this historical period can be considered as a process of becoming a peripheral country in the world system of knowledge production. It was a transformation from being a major source civilization in terms of exporting original
knowledge and culture to a semi-colonial society as a recipient of Western knowledge and culture, and a latecomer in terms of modern civilization. In other words, China moved from the center to the periphery of the world knowledge system during the era of imperialism. Moreover, in spite of the trend of actively learning from the West in HE, China also had a strong tendency to xenophobia (Liu, 2010). In July 1905, for instance, China had a nationwide boycott of American commodities (Liu, 2010). Therefore, recruiting outstanding Chinese students became an instrument used by the US government to maintain and enhance its national influence in China.

5.3 China’s HE Development in the Cold War Era

China’s HE system was dramatically transformed by the government after 1949. “All foreign [Western] universities or those financed by foreign religious bodies and governments in China were abolished” in the early 1950s (Huang, 2003, p.232). China attempted to establish a highly centralized and structured HE system following the Soviet model (Yao, 1996). In 1952, six major [military] regions” became “units for political-administrative planning” (Hayhoe, 1996, p.77) and HEIs in each “region” were restructured around specialist definitions of knowledge. “One or two comprehensive universities, one or two [leading] polytechnic universities, one major normal university, one to three agricultural universities, and other specialist institutions” were established or reconstructed in each region (Hayhoe, 1996, p.77). The main purpose of “the restructuring of HEIs” was “to meet the needs of national construction” (Yang, 2000, p.321). Many comprehensive universities were
restructured into polytechnic institutions. “Departments within the universities became more specialized; physics, for example, was subdivided into numerous categories such as theoretical physics, solid state physics, and optics, with a different teaching plan for each” (Wang & Li, 2001, p.315). Leading polytechnic and comprehensive universities were directly administrated by the Ministry of HE, while specialized HEIs, such as those focusing on agriculture, engineering, medicine, economics, political science and law, were under the administration of corresponding central ministries (Hayhoe, 1996).

In 1956, Mao Zedong “criticized the practice of ‘total acceptance and mechanical application’ of Soviet examples” in his On Ten Major Relationships (Yao, 1996, p.245). Accordingly, within its isolated geopolitical context, China ended the Soviet practice of separating basic science and technology after 1958 and attempted to combine teaching, scientific research, and productive labor (Yao, 1996). China brought basic science back into the specialist polytechnic and engineering universities, and new universities were founded “that taught basic science and technology, areas that had been institutionally separated under the Soviet model” (Hayhoe, 1996, p.94). Meanwhile, China started to decentralize its HE administration system through enhancing provincial-level control. Provincial universities were reinvigorated and more attention was given to indigenous knowledge, with the founding of colleges of traditional Chinese medicine in every province and autonomous region between 1956 and 1960 (Hayhoe, 1996). In September 1958, China proposed the target of popularizing HE in 15 years under the climate of the Great Leap Forward (1958-1960)
(Zhou, 2014). Although this target was unrealistic given its socioeconomic capacity and the serious challenges it faced, Chinese HE still experienced three years of expansion. The total number of Chinese HEIs increased from 229 in 1957 to 1289 in 1960 (Zhou, 2014). In most provinces, new provincial comprehensive universities were established, mainly through either integrating local specialized colleges or establishing entirely new institutions (Hayhoe, 1996). Moreover, some previous specialist ministry institutions that “had been established and controlled from Beijing became absorbed into new provincial universities” (Hayhoe, 1996, p.95).

Generally speaking, with a strong central government, China implemented pragmatic strategies in HE development and accumulated rich HE legacies during this period, which has provided the foundations of its present HE systems. At present, it is noteworthy that many of China’s globally ranked top universities are former national level polytechnic HEIs which were established or reconstructed during the Cold War era, such as the reconstructed Tsinghua University and the University of Science and Technology of China originally established in 1958.

5.4 China’s HE Development Trends during the Post-Cold War Era

Since 1978, Deng Xiaoping’s theory of developing socialism with Chinese characteristics has become the cornerstone of the policy of “Reform and Opening Up” and the development of a socialist market economy with Chinese characteristics (Han, 2008; Wei, 2014). China re-opened its door and started learning again from the developed world while developing its HE system. During the 1990s, Chinese HE
gained priority for the sake of economic growth needs. The “milestone 1993 policy paper”, *Outline for Education Reform and Development in China*, “set expansion as a goal of the 1990s” (Zha, 2011, p.26). It states that “HE must meet the needs of accelerating reform and opening up […] in order to achieve a bigger growth in size, better rationalization in structure, and a visible improvement in quality and efficiency” (State Council of China, 1993; cited by Zha, 2011, p.26). In 1996, China’s Ninth Five-Year Plan and *Plan for Education Development by 2010* made its goal “explicit”, “aiming for the aggregate enrollment in all forms of HE to reach 6.5 million by 2010” (Zha, 2011, p.26). A new goal, which is that 15% of its 18-22 age cohort would “be participating in [the] same form of post-secondary education” by 2010, was set in 1999, and it was actually met in 2002 (Zha, 2011, p.27). The total enrollment was expanded at an annual rate of 17% between 1998 and 2010, and the fiscal appropriation was increasing annually by 17.4% between 1998 and 2006. According to the MOE, the aggregate annual enrollment of Chinese HE increased from about 1.55 million in 1999 to 9.87 million in 2014. The number of universities and colleges (excluding short-cycle and vocational colleges) increased from 597 in 1999 to 1,202 in 2014.

The capacity of HE was enhanced through boosting comprehensiveness in curricular and program offerings in the 1990s. Chinese HEIs “commonly accept[ed] the notion of […] the benefit of curricular comprehensiveness” (Zha, 2011, p.38) and therefore started to “broaden their curricular coverage” (Zha, 2011, p.40). Many polytechnic universities reconstructed during the 1950s restored departments or
schools in humanities and social sciences or established new programs in these areas.

To raise some of its HEIs to a world-class level, China launched its elite university schemes. China’s Project 21/1 “officially launched in 1995” was “to identify and give special financial support to [about] 100 top universities” “selected through a rigorous process” for promoting them to reach “world standard” in the 21st century (Zha, 2011, p.31). “[A]n even bolder scheme”, the Project 98/5, was announced in 1998 to support a smaller number of top universities (initially nine and finally expanded to 43) (Zha, 2011, p.31). Compared to the Project 21/1, Project 98/5 supports a smaller group of HEIs and with relatively more abundant funds (Zha, 2011). In 2015, China’s State Council published the Overall Plan of Promoting Establishing World-Class Universities and First-Class Disciplines, in order to “have first-class teachers [jianshe yiliu shizi duiwu]”, “educate top innovative talents [peiyang bajian chuangxin rencai]”, “enhance the level of scientific research [tisheng kexue yanjiu shuiping]”, “inherit outstanding cultures [chuancheng chuangxin youxiu wenhua]”, and “promote the transformation of research results [zhuoli tuijin chengguo zhuanhua]” (State Council of P.R China, 2015, chap.2).

During the 2000s, China’s non-government HE system was developed through a unique pathway with Chinese characteristics. “Independent colleges [du li xueyuan]” were established by some of the prestigious public universities (Liu, C., 2005). “Independent colleges” were run in a new mode between public and traditional private universities (Liu, C., 2005). They share the reputation and other intangible assets of their parent universities but are usually funded by non-government sectors
(Liu, C., 2005). Meanwhile, transnational HE developed rapidly. Numerous Chinese universities started Sino-foreign joint degree projects in cooperation with their foreign partners. Independent Sino-foreign joint HEIs were also established. In 2004, the University of Nottingham Ningbo China, the first independent Sino-foreign joint HEI in China, was established conjointly by the University of Nottingham in the UK and Zhejiang Wanli College in China (Feng, 2013). It “conducted its first class [in 2004] on the campus of Zhejiang Wanli College” and its own campus was completed in 2005 (Feng, 2013, p.477). In 2006, it started to accept master level students, and in 2008, “Ph.D. students were admitted” (Feng, 2013, p.477). The Xi’an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, a Sino-foreign joint HEI established conjointly by the University of Liverpool in the UK and Xi’an Jiaotong University in China, “welcomed its first class in September 2006” (Feng, 2013, p.478). This Sino-foreign joint institution “aimed at educating technical and managerial professionals with international perspectives and competitive capabilities, matching global economic and social development” (Feng, 2013, p.479). There are more recent examples of transnational HE providers in China. “Duke-Wuhan University campus in Kunshan and New York University Shanghai in collaboration with East China Normal University” enrolled their first classes in 2013 (Feng, 2013, p.471).

5.5 Summary

Above all, as a major non-Western civilization, China experienced moving from the center where it had exported original knowledge, culture, and philosophy
throughout the ancient world to the periphery of the world system of knowledge production during its modernization process. On the one hand, China’s present status of “gigantic periphery” in the world knowledge system has its deep historical reason. As an ancient civilization, different from many other developing countries which had never had a profound influence on the rest of the world through disseminating or exporting their cultures and philosophies, China’s modernization can be regarded as a sharp decline in its status in the world knowledge system. On the other hand, it to some extent reflects the reality that the status of a nation in the world knowledge system may dramatically change due to changes in domestic and/or geopolitical contexts. As mentioned, the dramatic change in China’s international status based on its rapid economic development can be regarded as a major intrinsic driving force of China’s strategy of promoting outward-oriented HE internationalization.

After its communist revolution and under bipolarity during the Cold War, pragmatic strategies of (HE) development became its inevitable choice, due to both “the obvious and pressing demands of a growing industrial society” (Wang & Li, 2001, p.315) and the feeling of being threatened. After the “Reform and Opening Up”, China’s HE has made remarkable progress in terms of massification, decentralization, and internationalization. All these extraordinary changes constitute the context of China’s present strategy of promoting outward-oriented HE internationalization. As explained in the previous chapters, China is no longer satisfied with the success achieved so far, through importing foreign/Western HE models and resources. The following chapter, Chapter Six, will consider China’s challenges and opportunities in
the outward-oriented HE internationalization approach it is developing for the purpose of enhancing its global influence and international status.
Chapter Six: Understanding China’s Outward-Oriented HE Internationalization:

Challenges and Suggestions

This chapter first analyzes China’s strategic plan and policy innovation related to HE internationalization through reviewing China’s landmark policy documents in education and Five-Year Plans since 1985. Then, it analyzes the three dimensions of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization (i.e. CIs, HE-related development aid, and HE-level international student recruitment) through reviewing policy documents, academic and non-academic articles, and reports published by China’s national level functional units such as the Hanban. It attempts to reveal China’s present situations and challenges while using these three dimensions of HE outreach to enhance its soft power and international status in the world knowledge system. Finally, it concludes with hypothetical policy solutions for optimizing China’s present approach.

6.1 China’s Strategic Plans and Landmark Policies

As explained in Chapter Five, in the early 1950s, China established its HE system by following the Soviet rationales of specialization, unification, and centralization (Pepper, 1996). The central government (and CPC CC) therefore played the leading role in HE development and reform. Since 1985, according to China’s Five-Year Plans and landmark policies in education, the Chinese government has demonstrated an increasing awareness of the importance of HE development and
internationalization. Its policies and strategic plans are the dominant force in the progress of China’s HE internationalization and its present transformation as it moves from inward-oriented to outward-oriented approaches. I reviewed China’s Five-Year Plan documents published by the central government from 1985, the year when China published its first landmark policy in education after the “Cultural Revolution” (i.e. CPC CC Decision on Educational System Reform (CPC CC, 1985), to 2011 (the 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015)), as well as the sub-documents in educational development that were accessible, in order to deepen the understanding of China’s national strategy in HE development and internationalization. “‘Five-Year Plan’ is short for the ‘Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development’”, which is “a key feature of centralized Communist economies” (Wen, 2013, p.128). It was as “series of […] development initiatives shaped primarily by the […]CPC] through the plenary sessions of the […]CPC CC and National Congress” (Wen, 2013, p.128). The full documents of China’s Five-Year Plans can be accessed through the CPC News on People website (www.cpcnews.cn) and the website of Xinhua News Agency (www.xinhuanet.com). The sub-documents of China’s Five-Year Plans in educational development can be accessed through the official website of the MOE (www.moe.edu.cn).

Before 1978, “two famous slogans define the Chinese state’s approach to education”: “knowledge is useless” and “class struggle priorities” (Wen, 2013, p.128). In 1978, “a major change in the guiding philosophy underpinning China’s education policy occurred when Deng [Xiaoping] claimed that ‘nurturing scientific and
technological talents is the primary task of education” (Wen, 2013, p.128). In 1985, China published its first landmark policy document in educational development since the end of the “Cultural Revolution”, the *CPC CC Decision on Educational System Reform* (CPC CC, 1985). The Seventh Five-Year Plan (1986-1990) was formulated in 1985 and published in March 1986. Chapters 30 (Ordinary HE [*putong gaodeng jiaoyu*]) and 32 (Major Policy Measures in Education Development [*fazhan jiaoyushiye de zhuyao zhengce cuoshi*]) of the Seventh Five-Year Plan state China’s HE-related strategic plans. Chapter 30 presents China’s aims of improving HE quality, increasing enrollment scale, and developing several key universities into both education and research centers. Chapter 32 presents the objective of decentralizing the HE administration system through granting “center cities” [*zhongxin chengshi*] the authority to run their HEIs. Although they haven’t mentioned HE internationalization directly, these two chapters reflect the trend of learning from the West while developing HE in the late 1980s.

China’s Eighth Five-Year Plan (1991-1995) presents HE-related strategic plans in the second section (Education Development [*jiaoyu shiye fazhan*]) of Chapter Five (Tasks and Policy of Science, Technology and Education Development during the Eighth Five-Year Plan Period [*bawu qijian kexuejishu jiaoyufazhan de zhengce he renwu*]). Several strategic plans in HE internationalization have been stated, such as promoting HE international cooperation and exchange, improving the treatment [*daiyu*] for returning overseas/returning Chinese students, and optimizing the policies related to overseas studies. Comparing to the Seventh Five-Year Plan, China’s
strategy of learning from the West while developing HE started to become a specific approach of inward-oriented HE internationalization.

The Ninth Five-Year Plan (1995-2000) presents HE-related plans in its Section Two (Give Priority to the Development of Education [youxian fazhan jiaoyu]) of Chapter Five (Implement the Strategy of Invigorating China through Science and Education [shishi kejiao xingguo zhanlue]). Compared to the previous Plans, the inward-oriented approach of sending exchange/overseas students had no longer been emphasized. Instead, the Plan concentrates on exploring new models of running schools and implementing the Project 21/1 for developing over 100 Chinese universities into high-level research universities, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Chapter Five. A sub-document of the Ninth Five-Year Plan, the Ninth Five-Year Plan in Education and Plan for Educational Development by 2010 [quanguo jiaoyu shiye jiuwu jihua he 2010 nian fazhan guihua] also highlights the Project 21/1 and presents China’s aim of increasing aggregate HE enrolment (Zha, 2011). As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Project 98/5 was implemented by the Chinese government during this period for the purpose of raising several Chinese key HEIs to a world-class level. It seems that the major concentration of China’s strategic plan started to shift from unilaterally learning from the Western/foreign knowledge and experience to attempting to develop its own worldwide influential universities.

The 10th Five-Year Plan (2001-2005) uses three Sections (Sections 10, 11, and 12) in Chapter Three (Science and Technology, Education, and Talent [keji jiaoyu he rencai]) to present China’s strategic plan in HE development and internationalization.
It states China’s strategic plans as utilizing foreign education resources, attracting overseas talent and returnees, and supporting overseas studies. It also highlights the plan of further promoting the Project 21/1 and developing high-level research universities. A sub-document of the 10th Five-Year Plan, *The 10th Five-Year Plan for Educational development* [quanguo jiaoyu shiye dishige wunian jihua], emphasizes China’s plans of further promoting HE international cooperation and exchange, supporting overseas Chinese students, promoting overseas talent recruitment through reforming the HE recruiting system, and developing China’s own world-class universities particularly through implementing the second stage of the Project 21/1. It also, for the first time, presents China’s goal of enhancing Chinese universities’ status of internationalization. Comparing to the previous Plans, China started to promote HE internationalization through supporting individual-level activities, such as international student mobility and overseas talent recruitment.

In terms of the 11th Five-Year Plan (2006-2010), its Chapter Seven, Implement the Strategies of Invigorating China through Science and Education and Strengthening China through Talent [shishi kejiaoxingguo zhanlue ne rencaiqiangguo zhanlue], presents China’s education-related strategic plans. It emphasizes the importance of recruiting returnees (i.e. returning overseas Chinese students) and attracting overseas talent. A sub-document of the Plan published by the MOE in 2005, *The Outline of the 11th Five-Year Plan of National Education Development* [guojia jiaoyu shiye fazhan shiyiwu guihua gangyao], presents China’s strategies of supporting overseas studies, promoting international student recruitment, supporting Sino-foreign cooperation in
running schools, and promoting Chinese as second language education overseas. It highlights four aspects of China’s goals related to international student recruitment: 1) expanding the scale, 2) optimizing the student administration system, 3) improving education patterns, and 4) enhancing levels [cengci] (or quality) of recruited international students. Obviously, comparing to the previous Plans, China started to emphasize bilateral collaborations and outward-oriented HE internationalization approaches, such as promoting overseas Chinese language education and international student recruitment.

The 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015) explains China’s strategic plans in educational development in Chapter Seven (Implement the Innovation-Driven Strategies of “Invigorating China through Science and Education” and “Strengthening China through Talent” [kejiao xing guo zhanlue]), Sections 27 (Enhancing the Capacity of Scientific and Technological Innovation [zengqiang keji chuangxin nengli]) and 28 (Accelerating Education Reform and Development [jiakuai jiaoyu gaige fazhan]). Rather than emphasizing international student and scholarly exchange, it states the aims of improving HE quality, developing world-class universities, and establishing globally influential scientific and technological innovation centers. A sub-document in education, the 12th Five-Year Plan for National Education Development [guojia jiaoyu shiye fazhan di shierge wunian guihua], presents more details in promoting HE internationalization. It explains China’s strategic plans of importing high-quality foreign education resources, establishing international (Sino-foreign) joint labs, promoting international student recruitment through
reforming education pattern(s), supporting the development of CIs overseas, enhancing the quality of Sino-foreign joint institutions, and enhancing the worldwide influence of the Chinese HE system. The Chinese government has clearly emphasized the importance of the outward-oriented HE internationalization in this document and started to attempt developing world-influential HE with Chinese characteristics.

In addition to its Five-Year Plans, China’s landmark policies also reflect the transformation of its HE development trend, especially in HE internationalization. Wang (2014) conducted a content analysis on the five landmark policy documents in education published by the central government and the CPC CC since 1985 (i.e. *CPC CC Decision on Educational System Reform* (CPC CC, 1985), *Outline for Reform and Development of Education in China* (CPC CC and State Council, 1993), *Action Plan for Revitalization of Education in the Twenty-First Century* (MOE and State Council, 1999), 2003–2007 *Action Plan for Revitalization of Education* (MOE, 2004), and *The National Outline for Mid and Long Term Education Planning and Development* (State Council, 2010)) for investigating “the changing discourse of internationalization manifested in education policy in China” (Wang, 2014, p.11). Wang (2014) first looked for “expressions and synonyms of internationalization in Chinese, such as international [guojì], world [shìjiè], and global [quánqióu]”, in each document (p.12). Then, “the frequency of appearance of the expressions is counted and categorized according to the relevant aspects of internationalization” (Wang, 2014, p.12). Finally, “the contexts in which the expressions are used are analyzed to determine the specific goals of internationalization and the means of accomplishing them” (Wang, 2014,
Wang (2014) revealed that rather than unilaterally learning from the West, the Chinese government focuses more on Sino-foreign HE exchange, promoting “China’s overall [worldwide] influence”, and “going global” through promoting HE internationalization (Wang, 2014, p.12, p.21). Wang (2014) concluded that the Chinese government’s understanding of the significance of HE internationalization was shifting over time since the 1980s, “from an awareness of the changing context” to “the facilitation of economic competition”, and then to “the enhancement of international status” (Wang, 2014, p.23). Wang (2014) argued that such strategic transformation is “consistent with China’s overall development strategy” (p.23).

I reviewed the two landmark policies published by the Chinese government in the 21st century, 2003–2007 Action Plan for Revitalization of Education (MOE, 2004) and National Outline for Mid and Long Term Education Planning and Development (State Council, 2010). The full documents can be accessed through the official website of the Chinese central government (www.gov.cn). According to these two landmark policies, China’s present outward-oriented HE internationalization approach contains three major dimensions: 1) CIs as a cultural diplomacy program based on international HE cooperation, 2) HE-related international development aid, and 3) HE-level international student recruitment. The 2003–2007 Action Plan for Revitalization of Education (MOE, 2004) states that China has planned to implement its “education brand strategy” and increase the total amount of international students. It also explains China’s strategy of further supporting the development of CIs and encouraging Chinese HEIs to run educational programs in foreign countries. In terms
of the *National Outline for Mid and Long Term Education Planning and Development* (State Council, 2010), in addition to the strategies of improving the quality of CIs, increasing international students in Chinese HEIs, and optimizing the “structure” and quality of the recruited students, it also emphasizes increasing the intensity of international education aid and training specialized talents for developing countries (State Council, 2010).

### 6.2 Confucius Institutes: China’s Cultural Diplomacy Program

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, according to the *Constitution of the Confucius Institute* published by the *Hanban*, CIs are non-profit educational organizations established on the basis of Sino-foreign HE collaboration for providing overseas Chinese language and culture education. CIs are created mainly based on “a partnership between two academic institutions, one foreign and one Chinese”, and the start-up money is provided by *Hanban* (Paradise, 2009, p.651). They are usually established within foreign universities for providing Chinese language education, training Chinese language teachers, conducting Chinese language teacher qualification exams, providing consultation about Chinese language and culture, and organizing Sino-foreign cultural exchange activities. It is different from other countries’ overseas cultural exchange and language education agencies, such as Germany’s Goethe Institute (Goethe-Institut) and France’s French Alliance (Alliance Française), which are independent agencies rather than being established as part of a foreign university.
In 2004, the first overseas CI was established in Seoul, South Korea. As China’s cultural diplomacy program based on Sino-foreign HE cooperation and administered by Hanban, a permanent functional agency affiliated with the MOE, it developed rapidly during the past decade. From 2008 to 2015, the total number of CIs increased from 249 to 500. These 500 institutions were established in 125 countries and regions. According to the Development Plan of Confucius Institute 2012-2020 published by Hanban, China planned to further promote cultural exchanges and cooperations through CIs and utilize CIs as a platform for introducing Chinese history and culture (Hanban, 2013). As mentioned, a typical kind of CI is usually established conjointly by a local and a Chinese university. The following table provides some examples of CIs in different countries as well as their local and Chinese parent institutions (see Table 6.1). According to the Confucius Institute Constitution [kongzi xueyuan zhangcheng] published by Hanban, the main purposes of implementing the CI program are strengthening educational/cultural exchange, promoting the “development of worldwide multi-culture”, and “contributing to a more harmonious world” (Hanban, 2007b, para.1). China promotes the development of CIs not only to “spread its language and culture and to increase collaboration with foreign academic institutions”, but also to increase its soft power and “project an image of itself as a benign country” (Paradise, 2009, p.647).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Local HEI</th>
<th>Chinese HEI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London Confucius Institute</td>
<td>London, UK</td>
<td>SOAS, University of London</td>
<td>Beijing Foreign Studies University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although it seems obvious that “the network of […CIs] is a significant tool” that has been actively used by the Chinese government “to expand its international influence […] via the promotion of Chinese language and culture” (Yang, 2010, p.235), some of the administrators at the university level have a different understanding towards the value and rationales of promoting such a cultural diplomacy program (Paradise, 2009). This is the case even though it has been clearly described by one of the Chinese political leaders as “a huge element of China’s great plan of international publicity” (said by Li Changchun, then-member of the Politburo Standing Committee of the CPC, in 2007; cited by Hartig (2012, p.57). A Chinese university administrator who was involved in the establishment of one CI said: “I
don’t think the creation of CIs has anything to do with soft power and the rise of China. It is better to think of it academically, not politically” (Paradise, 2009, p.657).

Meanwhile, CIs established within foreign HEIs have been seen as a “Chinese Trojan Horse” by some Westerners due to various reasons (Paradise, 2009, p.659). Due to the lack of attractiveness of China’s political values (Paradise, 2009, p.650) and China’s non-transparent administration system, some Western HEIs believe that they are facing the dilemma of accepting a CI for enhancing Chinese language education and cooperative relations with Chinese HEIs, versus rejecting the CI and not taking the risk of sacrificing academic freedom. At present, although it seems that there is little evidence to suggest that CIs can become a threat towards academic freedom (McCord, 2014), “these [Confucius] institutes are not without their critics” in the West (Hartig, 2012, p.64). According to Hartig’s (2012) research, the Western world’s views towards CIs are differentiated. The author argued that although there are “critics who see CIs as ‘a sinister attempt to extend Chinese political control activities to Western universities, most foreigners actually involved in the program reject these fears’” (Starr, 2009, p.79; cited in Hartig, 2012, p.64). Hartig (2012) summarized three points of criticism: 1) due to their linkages with the Chinese government (via Hanban), CIs are often “labeled as one of ‘China’s foreign propagandists’” (Brady, 2008; cited in Hartig, 2012, p.64); 2) people are concerned that “CIs might influence the teaching activities at their host universities” (Hartig, 2012, p.64) since they are created within the foreign HEIs; and 3) some of the critics charge that the CPC aims to “establish CIs around the world to spread communist
party culture in the name of Chinese culture” since “none of the CIs offer the Confucian teachings but in language courses communist propaganda is spread” (Xu, 2008; cited by Hartig, 2012, p.65), mainly due to China’s political ideology.

In November 2014, President Xi Jinping addressed the International Confucian Association to mark the 2,565th anniversary of the birth of Confucius (Ching, 2014). “It may be logically inconsistent for the Communist Party to honor both Mao and Confucius” mentioned a news report (Ching, 2014, para.3). It seems that the West still remember that “Mao had launched a nationwide campaign to criticize Confucius and that Red Guards had desecrated the graves of the sage’s descendants in Qufu, Shandong Province” (Ching, 2014, para.2). China’s ethnic minority issues, especially the Tibet issue, also negatively impact its cultural diplomacy. In 2015, a worldwide “Protect Academic Freedom-Say No to CIs” campaign spearheaded by Tibetan groups took place “after major universities in the US, Canada, and Sweden ditched the institutes amid concerns they were being turned into propaganda tools” (Leask, 2015, para.4).

According to the Development Plan of Confucius Institute Development 2012-2020 published in 2012, China planned to establish 500 CIs by 2015. This goal has been reached by the end of 2015. The following table shows the distribution of CIs in different continents (see Table 6.2). In spite of the significant achievement, during the past decade, several universities terminated their contracts and closed their CIs. These previous host universities include McMaster University (2013) (Bradshaw & Freeze, 2013), University of Lyon (2013) (Ching, 2014), University of Chicago
(2014) (Redden, 2014a), Pennsylvania State University (2014) (Redden, 2014b), Stuttgart Media University (2015) (Inside Higher Ed, 2015), University of Hohenheim (2015) (Inside Higher Ed, 2015), and Stockholm University (2015) (Fiskesjö, 2015). In some universities, such as University of Melbourne (Maslen, 2007) and University of Manitoba (macleans.ca, 2011), professors have expressed their trepidation towards the establishment of CIs. Moreover, most of the present host HEIs of CIs, especially those in North America, are usually not the most prestigious universities in the host countries. According to the data from Hanban, among the 122 American host HEIs of CIs, only six (i.e. University of California, Santa Barbara; Stanford University; University of California, Los Angeles; University of Michigan; Columbia University; Tufts University) were in the top 50 of 2016’s US News National Universities Rankings.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, in contrast to the situation in Western countries, stakeholders in developing countries tend to hold relatively more positive views towards CIs. For instance, at the opening ceremony of Kenya’s second CI, Kenya’s Vice-President Kalonzo Musyoka stated that “the teaching of Chinese language in Kenya is a very exciting business […] and we are trying in a little way to put our population together so that we can begin to relate to China” (Musyoka, 2010; cited by Wheeler, 2014, p.53). In the same ceremony, Kenya’s Assistant Minister of HE stated that “the learning of the Chinese language and culture [through CIs] will be instrumental in strengthening a cordial relationship between our two countries” (Xinhua News Agency, 2005, para. 7; cited by Wheeler, 2014, p.52). According to
Wheeler’s (2014) research in Kenya, the views of local stakeholders including students, faculty members, and administrators towards CIs were generally positive but pragmatic. Some of them believed that “China was ‘coming up’ in Africa as a result of its economic interests” and CIs were used mainly for enhancing its “trade relationships” with African countries (p.56). Local faculty members believed that learning Chinese “would be important ‘for the future of Kenya’” and one of them pointed out that “the establishment of the CI was a result of the [HE] internationalization” (Wheeler, 2014, p.57). However, some of the students “were […] skeptical of the motivations behind the CIs” because of the “inconsistencies with the curriculum and teacher training” (Wheeler, 2014, p.56).

Table 6.2
Numbers and Percentages of Confucius Institutes in Different Continents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continent</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>22.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>9.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>31.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>33.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data retrieved from the official website of Hanban: http://www.hanban.edu.cn/confuciousinstitutes/node_10961.htm

6.3 International Development Aid in HE

Wang (2014) pointed out that “in addition to the global spread of Chinese language, another [major] strategy [of China] essential to expanding China’s international influence is education aid” (p.22). Kitano (2014) argued that “with its remarkable economic growth, China has been rapidly expanding the scale of its
foreign aid and extending its impact to every corner of the developing world” (p.301). According to the 2010 Outline, the Chinese government “will not only continue to provide but also dramatically increase educational aid to ‘developing countries’ to help them to train a skilled labor force” (State Council, 2010; cited in Wang, 2014, p.22). According to the China Foreign Aid (2014) White Book published by the State Council Information Office, the education related development aid activities can be categorized as follows: educational condition improvement, teacher training, supporting vocational/technical education, and increasing the quota of government scholarships for supporting international students from African, ASEAN, and Pacific island countries. China states that the rationale for providing education-related international development aid towards developing countries is that “as the world’s largest developing country, during the process of development, China insists on combining interests of the Chinese people with that of people in other countries” and to “support and assist developing countries, especially the least-developed countries, to reduce poverty and improve people’s livelihood”. “Different from the Western paradigm of educational aid concerned mainly with universal access to basic education as promoted by projects such as Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG), China’s education aid focuses on training human capital for economic development through HE and vocational education” (China-Africa Minister of Education Forum Beijing Declaration, 2005; cited in Wang, 2014, p.22).

Africa has long been one of China’s target regions of international development aid. Since the 1950s, according to Niu’s (2010) research, the history of education
cooperation between China and Africa can be divided into three periods. From the 1950s to the 1980s, the main form of Sino-Africa education cooperation was student exchange. From the 1980s to the 2000s, China enhanced material aid in education and recruited more African students. During the second period (1980s-2000s), China started to send teachers to African countries and to establish training programs for African teachers. By 2003, China established education and research cooperation programs in 21 African countries and 23 laboratories in African universities. In the 21st century, after the first ministerial-level meeting of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2000, the Sino-African Education Minister Forum in 2005, and especially after the establishment of the African Human Resources Development Foundation, China has further promoted Sino-African student and scholarly exchange and increased government scholarships for African students in Chinese HEIs. The major purpose of establishing the Foundation is to develop vocational training, Chinese as second language education, and other human resource training programs for Africans. China highlighted “the difference of its aid policies from the Western discourse and actively promotes the Chinese model as suited to Africa’s development” (Wang, 2014, pp.22-23).

China’s development aid programs towards ASEAN countries are mainly in the fields of science, technology, education, and human resource training (Wu, 2010). In addition to establishing CIs in ASEAN countries, China has promoted student exchanges and provided government scholarships for supporting ASEAN international students. In 2014, Chinese language teachers were sent to Southeast
Asian countries through the International Chinese Language Teachers to Teach in Southeast Asia Project initiated by the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council. In addition to providing educational resources, recruiting international students, sending teachers, and providing training programs, China also provided special degree programs in Chinese HEIs. For instance, in 2011, a Developing Countries Master program in education has been established in the East China Normal University for training future education leaders for developing countries (especially African countries). Such degree programs focused on students from developing countries have also been established in other Chinese HEIs such as Tsinghua University and Peking University.

From the perspective of implementation, as an emerging educational aid provider, China is now facing many challenges while initiating and promoting its projects. In terms of its development aid programs in HE towards African countries, Teng et al. (2016) summarized China’s existing challenges from several aspects. For instance, the government sectors, mainly including the MOC, the MOE, the CSC, and Hanban, are still the dominant force in terms of implementing relevant projects, and Chinese HEIs, corporations, and non-governmental organizations are not yet fully involved as project sponsors and promoters with sufficient autonomy (Teng et al., 2016, p.25). In terms of Chinese teachers who have been sent to Africa through educational aid projects, their teaching methods are usually not suitable for local students due to cultural differences, and therefore their bilingual teaching capacity and cross-cultural communicative competence still require improvement (Teng et al., 2016). China’s HE
for government-supported international students also has quality problems (Teng et al., 2016). A recent study shows that the international students who are supported by China’s governmental scholarship as a form of international aid are not satisfied with the quality of HE in China (Yuan, 2014; cited in Teng et al., 2016, p.25). Moreover, China’s international aid in HE has been carried out by several functional agencies of government that are not affiliated with each other (e.g. the MOC, CSC, Hanban), and therefore its policy implementation and evaluation mechanisms need to be improved (Teng et al., 2016, p.26).

Meanwhile, by contrast to the motives stated by the Chinese government in its official report, it seems that people in both developed and developing countries have different understandings towards China’s international development aid. According to a Voice of America (VOA) article, China’s development aid towards African countries has been described as neo-colonialism by the Western media (Mu, 2015). In addition to the Western media’s criticism, it seems that China’s present challenge is also from the attitudes of the local people in recipient countries. According to an Economist article, in 2013, the central-bank governor of Nigeria “excoriated the Chinese for exuding ‘a whiff of colonialism’” (The Economist, 2013, March 13, para.12). “China’s quest for regional influence in Southeast Asia […] has not been immune from controversies” (Yang, 2012, p.487), and it still faces a seriously critical climate of opinion in its neighboring countries (Xia & Luo, 2011). As mentioned in the introductory chapter, Chapter One, a Pew Research Center survey “of 15,313 people in 10 Asia-Pacific nations and the US” conducted in 2015 shows that a significant
proportion of people in some of the ASEAN countries including Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia “do not see China in a positive light” (Stokes, 2015, September 2, para.2 & 11). A survey about China’s national image in Southeast Asian countries, implemented by the Academia Sinica and National Taiwan University as part of the Asian Barometer Survey during 2006 to 2008, reflects that factors like ethnic differences, intergenerational differences, religious differences, and education level differences, have affected Southeast Asian people’s understanding of China’s national image. Ideology is also a major issue. Kasongo (2011) commented that China “did not contribute to the demands about democracy and democratic consolidation” while discussing the China-Africa relation (p.261). On the other hand, the Chinese government, to some extent, still regards its international aid programs as a “national secret”, and therefore the relevant data is still not open and transparent enough, which means China’s motivations are easily questioned by foreign stakeholders (Teng et al., 2016, p.17).

6.4 International Student Recruitment

Huang (2003) identified two phases in China’s HE internationalization process. During the first phase from 1978 to 1992, “the emphasis was on sending students and scholars abroad, inviting visiting scholars from abroad, and learning English”, and in the second phase from 1993 to the present, the emphasis “has been on encouraging those who were sent abroad and the expatriate Chinese scholars to come back, attracting more foreign students, and internationalizing curriculum” (Huang, 2003;
cited in Guruz, 2011, p.286). During the past three decades, the overall phenomenon of international student recruitment has undergone a profound transformation. According to the UNESCO data, the total number of foreign students in China were only about 3 and 119 in 1950 and 1960 respectively (Guruz, 2011, p.288). Due to the changes in both international geopolitical situation and domestic socioeconomic and political context, “after Deng Xiaoping’s opening up of China to the outside world in 1978 […] Chinese universities have continued to attract students from around the world” (Hayhoe & Liu, 2010, p.79). According to Hayhoe and Liu’s estimation, the “total number of international students studying in China between 1979 and 2006” was about 1,034,040 (Hayhoe & Liu, 2010, p.79). According to the data published by the MOE, the number of international students coming to China greatly increased since the turn of the century (Hayhoe & Liu, 2010, p.79). From 1991 to 2000, the total number of international students in China increased from 10,000 to 52,000, and then rose to 85,000 in 2002 (Wang, 2005; cited in Hayhoe & Liu, 2010, p.79). By 2005, “the number increased to 141,087 and continue increasing to 195,503 by 2007” (MOE (2008) data cited by Hayhoe & Liu, 2010, pp.79-80). According to the 2012 National Concise Statistical Report of Foreign Student (MOE, 2012), in 2012, there were 328,330 international students coming to China from 200 different countries and regions, registered in 690 different Chinese HEIs. 133,509 of them were degree program students. 28,768 international students (8.76%) were supported by government scholarship or other forms of financial aid provided by the Chinese government in 2012. In 2015, the number increased to 397,635 (MOE, 2016), and
China became the third largest destination country in the world for overseas studies after the US and UK (Zhang, 2015).

The rapid increase in international students in Chinese HEIs during the past decade was mainly brought about by the central government due to its strategy of recruiting more international students. According to the policy documents published by the Chinese government during the past decade, China’s policy interventions for supporting HE-level international student recruitment can be classified into two categories: 1) improving the administration system (e.g. Administrative Rules on the Acceptance of Foreign Students by Colleges and Universities (MOE et al., 2000) and 2) providing financial support (e.g. Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance Announcement of Reforming the International Students Scholarship Standards (MOE & MOF, 2008)).

In 2000, the MOE published the Administrative Rules on the Acceptance of Foreign Students by Colleges and Universities (MOE, 2000) together with the other two cabinet-level ministries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Public Security, for optimizing HE international student recruitment and administration. The second chapter of this policy document lists four major points in terms of administration. First, the MOE is responsible for policymaking, managing the government scholarship for international students, and evaluating the quality of international student education and administration at the local and institutional level. The CSC, a national-level governmental functional agency, was commissioned by the MOE to implement “specific works [juti gongzuo]” in international student
recruitment and [national level] administration. Second, provincial level (departments of education, foreign affairs, and public security) approvals are required for the institutional level international student enrolment. The national scholarship for international students is directly administrated by the MOE. Third, the provincial level departments of foreign affairs and public security have the responsibility to assist local education department and HEIs in managing international student administration. Finally, HEIs are responsible for international student recruitment, education, and day-to-day work of administration [richang guanli gongzuo]. HEIs are required to formulate their own regulations and establish a specific (administrative) division in international student administration.

Although the central government plays a dominant role in international student recruitment and administration, the third chapter of this policy document provides HEIs a certain degree of autonomy. HEIs are allowed to provide both degree and non-degree programs to foreign students. Foreign student admission is fully determined by institutions, which are also allowed to recruit exchange students and foreign students at their own expense (not only those supported by China’s governmental scholarship). It is obvious that the international student administration policy in China reflects the characteristics of China’s HE administration system and even its political system, which are relatively centralized and hierarchical. However, comparing with the domestic student admission policy, HEIs have more autonomy in terms of international student recruitment.
In 2008, the MOE published the *Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance Announcement of Reforming the International Students Scholarship Standards* together with the MOF for enhancing governmental financial support for international students in Chinese HEIs. The document states that due to the steady and rapid economic development [*jingji kuaisu pingwen fazhan*] and the significant improvement of international status and influence [*guoji yingxiang he diwei xianzhu tigao*], the number of international students in China has significantly increased, and China decided to enhance government financial aid to express government’s concern towards international students [*zhengfu dui xuesheng de guanxin*] (MOE & MOF, 2008). The policy document lists two major policy changes. First, the Chinese government increased the overall amount of scholarships, and provided more financial support to foreign students in higher level degree programs. Since 2008, undergraduate international students can receive 1,400 RMB per month, and the financial support for master and doctoral students are 1,700 RMB and 2,000 RMB per month respectively. Second, foreign students who have studied in China for a full year can receive 1,500 RMB as additional financial support. The policy document states that the Chinese government hopes that all the foreign students study hard [*nuli xuexi*], obey the institutional rules [*zunshou xuexiao jilv*], and “become talents who understand China and become useful to their home countries [*chengwei liaojie zhongguo xueyousuocheng dui ziji zuguo jianshe youyong de rencai*]” (MOE & MOF, 2008, para.5).
In 2010, the MOE formulated the *Plan for Study in China* (MOE, 2010a; MOE, 2010b) based on the *National Outline for Mid and Long Term Education Planning and Development* (State Council, 2010) for “increasing the number, optimizing the structure, institutionalizing the administration system, and assuring the quality [kuoada guimo, youhua jiegou, guifan guanli, baozheng zhiliang]” (MOE, 2010a, para.5) of international students in China, in order to set up the “brand […] of education in China internationally” (MOE, 2010b, para.4). According to this plan, China planned to recruit 500,000 international students and become the largest study abroad destination country in 2020. The plan states China’s aims as “to develop China into the country with the largest number of international students in Asia, to establish a comprehensive system, compatible with the overall scale and development of education in China, to produce a number of highly-qualified teachers, to build up a group of HEIs with distinguishing features and a number of high-standard disciplines for Study in China, and to generate a large number of graduates who both understand China and contribute to connecting China to the rest of the world” (MOE, 2010b, para.2). In the development strategies section, the document explains the plan of promoting “reforms in administration system, funding system, school-operation system, and inner-school management system” (MOE, 2010b, para.6) for promoting international student recruitment. The plan also mentions optimizing curriculum, pedagogy, and the quality evaluation system, as specific approaches. For example, it highlights that “training mode for international students will be continuously
innovated” (MOE, 2010b, para.12) and a new course system will be developed to make it “more attractive to international students” (MOE, 2010b, para.13).

Wang (2014) concluded that there are three major national-level goals of promoting international student recruitment: 1) enhancing the status of HE internationalization; 2) educating “seed talent” with Chinese characteristics for other countries; and 3) optimizing China’s geopolitical standing based on international students’ role of “bridge” (Wang, 2014, p.89). Although China has made remarkable achievement in international student recruitment, there are still numerous challenges that have to be dealt with while HE in China is taking part in the international competition. For example, although the number of international students has grown rapidly during the past decade as mentioned (from 1999 to 2013, the rate of increase was 797% and the average annual rate of increase was 17.2% (Wang, 2014)), the percentage of international students as against local students is still low. In 2008, international students in China “account for less than 1% of the total enrolment” of Chinese HEIs (Yang, 2011). In 2010, the percentages of international students in Peking University and Tsinghua University were 6.28% and 4.99% respectively. Meanwhile, the percentages in Harvard, Oxford, and Cambridge were 20.4%, 35.8%, and 31.3% respectively (Wang, 2014). Second, the academic level of international students is relatively low. Although “those coming to China to study (223,499) historically outnumbered those leaving China to study abroad (179,800)” in 2008 (Su, 2009; cited in Yang, 2014, p.158), the majority of overseas Chinese students are full-time degree students and “only a small number of students coming to China
enroll in degree programs” (Jiang, 2014, p.183). In 2010, only 40% of international students in Chinese HEIs were degree students. In 2015, according to the MOE data, the total number of international students taking degree programs in Chinese HE was 184,799, about 46%. In the US and Japan, the proportions were over 90% and 80% respectively in 2012. In 2012, 73% of the degree program international students in China were undergraduate students (Wang, 2014, pp.88-89). Meanwhile, in the US, 49% of the degree program international students were graduate students.

According to the present situation, it is obvious that there is a gap between China’s goals, especially its goal of using international students’ role of “bridge” to optimize its geopolitical standing (Wang, 2014, p.89), and its current achievement in this area. As reviewed in the second chapter, Altbach (1998) categorized the factors that influence potential international students’ decision-making process of selecting study abroad destination as home country/push factors and host country/pull factors, which are mainly related to educational resources and facilities, national political context and socioeconomic conditions, and financial aid. Altbach’s (1998) model explains the decision-making process of students from developing/“Third World” countries and mainly focuses on the indicators related to the receiving countries’ national conditions, education systems, and financial aid. Nowadays, China has planned to recruit more international students from both developing and developed countries and more additional indicators need to be explored while analyzing present challenges in order to optimize its present approach.
6.5 Hypothetical Solutions in Optimizing the Status Quo

Following the previous review of relevant documents for examining the existing gaps between China’s goals and present phenomena, hypothetical solutions for improving China’s present approach in outward-oriented HE internationalization are proposed. According to Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy for analyzing the context, as explained in the methodology chapter, it seems reasonable to consider the contextual features of the home/source countries of the policy recipients and direct stakeholders (e.g. foreign scholars, students, and HE administrators) as significant influential factors affecting their attitudes towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization approaches. Following the previous analysis and Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy, the hypothetical solutions for improving China’s relevant policies and activities can be suggested as 1) reducing the emphasis on communist ideology, 2) introducing and explaining China’s socio-economic, political and HE administration systems, 3) diversifying the forms of governmental and institutional support, and 4) promoting traditional Chinese culture, especially the Confucian heritage.

As mentioned, some of the critics charged that the CPC aimed to “establish CIs around the world to spread communist party culture in the name of Chinese culture” since “none of the CIs offer the Confucian teachings but in language courses communist propaganda is spread” (Xu, 2008; cited by Hartig, 2012, p.65). Therefore, it seems necessary for China to attempt to reduce the influence of its communist ideology towards education and further promote traditional Chinese culture through CIs. Promoting China’s intangible cultural heritage via CIs may be considered as an
appropriate approach. The CI of Chinese Opera (CICO) at the State University of New York at Binghamton (SUNY-Binghamton), established conjointly by SUNY-Binghamton and China’s National Academy of Chinese Theater Arts (NACTA) in 2009, can be seen as an example. In addition to providing Chinese language and culture education, it “also focuses on promoting Chinese opera and music” as a specialized CI (SUNY-Binghamton, 2016). “In addition to offering courses […] [it] has also established the only performance group in the United States to feature Beijing opera” (SUNY-Binghamton, 2016, para.1). As mentioned, people in the host countries of CIs also criticized the role of the Hanban and were concerned about the potential negative influence towards the teaching activities and academic freedom of the host HEIs. Therefore, it seems necessary for CIs to explain more about their administration system and the goals of the Chinese government. China needs to clarify or indeed emphasize that the Hanban does not send any government officials to manage CIs in the way that other countries usually do, since cultural diplomacy programs are almost always carried out by government officials in the case of other countries. In fact, the Hanban only supports the financial cost of Chinese teachers for CIs who are sent from Chinese partner universities. As a unique model of cultural diplomacy, CIs are a kind of franchise since they simply need recognitions from the Hanban on the basis of which they get financial assistance, but they are not directly controlled by it.

Moreover, China may also need to consider diversifying the forms of its support for CIs since financial assistance, to some extent, may be sensitive in the Western
universities. In addition to financial and material support, for instance, China may consider greater effort to develop alternative teaching method(s) through learning from its pre-colonial epistemological tradition, and introducing the value of inclusiveness in Chinese traditional culture. Meanwhile, the approach to financial support also needs to be diversified. Channeling the financial and material support towards CIs through the partner universities in China rather than directly from the functional unit of government, the Hanban, may be one of the possible improvements. Meanwhile, in terms of institutional-level implementation, it seems necessary to enhance university administrators’ awareness of CIs’ role of implementing cultural diplomacy intended to enhance national soft power.

As mentioned, Tan-Mullins el at. (2010) argued that the “increasing Chinese aid […] with African counterparts” provided an “‘alternative’ to Washington which permits African leaders to ‘triangulate’ between donors”, and which “gave African states a choice about who to turn to for investment and aid for the first time since the end of the Cold War” (p.875). Although sometimes being criticized by both recipient countries and the West, it is obvious that most of the critiques are related to ideological issues and China’s political system, rather than the benefits of stakeholders in recipient countries. Therefore, it seems necessary for China to reduce the ideological hue in future while explaining and conducting its HE-related development aid programs, and utilizing these programs to introduce China’s political system. The real situations of human rights and ethnic minorities in China may also be introduced through CIs since misunderstandings about these negatively impact
China’s cultural diplomacy. Furthermore, the Confucian values of “benevolence [ren]”, “love [ai]”, and “harmonious co-existence within diversity [he er butong]” promote the possibility of the relationships between countries with not only different cultural backgrounds, but also different ideologies and policy systems, being based on some commonly shared consensus. It seems necessary to utilize the mentioned degree programs for training students from developing countries, as one of the important forms of international development aid in HE, to introduce traditional Chinese culture and China’s present political system in an appropriate way.

Policy proposals for improving China’s international student recruitment have been proposed by many researchers in Mainland China based on the pull factors that they have identified. Zeng (2015) suggested that courses with traditional Chinese characteristics, such as “Chinese food”, should be included in the curriculum for international students. Zeng (2015) also mentioned the approaches of optimizing the administration system and enhancing governmental financial aid for attracting international students. Zhu (2009) concentrates on the institutionalization of education quality assurance and international student support systems, including both financial and academic support. Li et al. (2015) proposed several policy suggestions in the aspects of research capacity building, overseas promotion, government scholarship enhancement, and developing non-degree education. Some of the proposals/suggestions are related to Altbach’s (1998) receiving-country factors, such as research capacity building, enhancing government scholarships (e.g. Li et al., 2015), improving education quality (e.g. Zhu, 2009), and optimizing the administration
system (e.g. Zeng, 2015). In contrast, some of them concentrate on the aspects that have rarely been emphasized by Altbach’s (1998) paradigm, such as enhancing overseas promotion and providing more courses with traditional Chinese characteristics (e.g. Chinese food and cooking).

According to Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy, it seems appropriate to anticipate that the attitudes of potential international students, from both developing and developed countries, towards China’s international student recruitment may be significantly influenced by the corresponding features of their source countries. Obviously, there is a gap between the varieties of the source countries’ contexts and the uniformity of China’s interventions in international student recruitment. In other words, similar to the situation in the field of cultural diplomacy and HE-related international aid, there is a lack of understanding of the different contexts from which students come in China’s international student recruitment policies and activities. For improving both the quantity and quality of international students in Chinese HEIs, policy interventions may be needed on the part of the Chinese government in the following areas: 1) the admission process or the foreign students’ application process, and 2) their life and learning experience in Chinese HEIs, considering the different features of their home/source countries in terms of ideology, political and HE administration system (as mentioned, China’s HE administration system reflects the characteristics of its political system), national socioeconomic development status, and traditional cultural roots. These may be responsible for some of the challenges that have been noted.
First of all, it seems necessary for China to provide different kinds of information and support to its current and potential students from countries with different development statuses and political systems. During their decision-making and application process, in addition to optimizing its Internet or paper-based application systems in technical terms, it seems necessary for China to provide more information, through either its governmental functional units like the CSC or the HEIs, about its governmental financial support particularly to the students in developing countries. China may also need to provide information about its HE and political systems to its potential international students, especially to those who are from countries/regions with very different political systems. For instance, it may be necessary for China to specifically introduce its People’s Congress system and the system of CPPCC to its potential international students from Western countries with deep traditions of multiparty democracy and parliamentary systems. Hayhoe (2015) argued that it may challenge “the widely held stereotype of a highly centralized system where decisions are imposed from above by the all-powerful Chinese Communist Party” (Hayhoe, 2015, p.164) while reviewing Wen’s (2013) book which “map[s] out how certain education policy discourses such as marketization and equity have emerged and function given China’s […] political […] context” (Wen, 2013, p.i). “Few are aware of the multi-party cooperation and consultation that takes place, and the role of non-party elites in the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference in the policy-making process, whose proposals feed into policy decisions” (Hayhoe, 2015, p.164).
In terms of current international students in Chinese HEIs, the Chinese government may consider diversifying the forms of governmental support according to their home countries’ development statuses. The Chinese government may consider providing different levels of governmental financial aid towards students from countries with different development levels. It seems appropriate for the Chinese government to encourage HEIs to improve living conditions (e.g. dormitory and cafeteria) and learning facilities (e.g. library, computer lab, and Internet environment) in order to attract international students. Moreover, as mentioned by previous studies, it seems necessary to modify the international student administration system considering the features of their home countries’ HE systems. For instance, the government may consider allowing international and domestic students to live in the same dormitory buildings in order to enhance communication. Second, as mentioned, ideology is an important issue in outward-oriented HE internationalization. Similar to the suggestions for improving the CIs and development aid in HE, China may further reduce the ideological flavor of its discourse in its international student recruitment. It seems necessary to reduce the influence of ideology on its curriculum, classroom teaching, and overseas promotion. For instance, China should modify the narratives in the relevant documents, including but not limited to the officially published introductions of programs, institutions, and relevant policies.

Finally, as mentioned in the methodology chapter, Holmes believed that human behaviors do not always follow formally adopted beliefs (normative statements) but may reflect what people truly believe deep in their hearts, or their mental states.
Therefore, is seems necessary for China to further promote its traditional culture and learn from its ancient philosophical and epistemological heritage while interacting with the cultural backgrounds of its current and potential international students. In terms of the potential students in their home/source countries, especially those who are from non-Confucian heritage societies, China should better utilize its cultural diplomacy programs. For instance, China should consider using the CIs in different countries to introduce traditional Chinese culture, particularly to those who are finishing their bachelor degrees and considering taking a master or doctoral degree in China. In terms of current international students in China, the Chinese government may encourage the HEIs to increase courses related to traditional Chinese culture for international students. It may be necessary for Chinese HEIs to formulate different kinds of Chinese culture courses and programs of cross-cultural adaptation for students from Confucian/East Asian or non-Confucian heritage societies.

6.6 Further Discussion: China’s “One Belt One Road” Initiative

Recently, China’s “One Belt, One Road” (“The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road” or “yidai yilu”) initiative proposed in 2013 provides a unique perspective for analyzing the roles of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization considering its geopolitical context. Liu (2015) discussed the role of HE in the strategy of the “One Belt, One Road” initiative and argued that China should enhance HE exchange and cooperation with “One Belt, One Road” countries via implementing numerous possible initiatives, such as attracting their outstanding
students to study in China to “train [their] future leaders [peiyang weilai lingxiu renca]” (p.6), establishing Sino-foreign joint universities/faculties/departments and research centers conjointly, as well as promoting the development of CIs in these countries. Along with this strategy, the features of the “One Belt, One Road” countries in the aspects of ideology, political and HE systems, socioeconomic status, and pre-colonial cultural heritage are worthy of being studied and may stimulate suggestions regarding China’s HE exchange and collaboration with these countries.

6.7 Summary

It seems obvious that the Chinese government is promoting HE internationalization and its present transformation of moving from inward-oriented to outward-oriented as a dominant force, through making strategic plans and implementing policy interventions, due to its increasing awareness of the strategic position of HE in international relations. Three major dimensions of outward-oriented HE internationalization, the CI program, international development aid in HE, and international student recruitment, are used as instruments of knowledge diplomacy by the Chinese government in order to enhance its national soft power and international status in the world system of knowledge production. Meanwhile, the tension between China’s ambition and the challenges it faces in the response to its approach still exist. In terms of the CI program, in contrast to its significant achievement during the past decade, it has been constantly criticized by different foreign stakeholders. Several foreign universities, especially those in the Western countries, terminated their
contracts and closed their CIs. Meanwhile, stakeholders in the developing world tend to hold generally positive but pragmatic views towards CIs.

In terms of its development aid in HE towards developing countries, China is still facing image problems in both recipient countries and the West. In terms of the international student recruitment, the gap still exists between China’s goal of using international students’ role of “bridge” (Wang, 2014, p.89) to optimize its geopolitical standing and enhance its international status, and the current situation of international students in Chinese HEIs.

According to the present situation, several hypothetical solutions have been proposed for modifying China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization approach, which can be summarized in terms of reducing the emphasis on communist ideology, introducing and explaining the political and administration systems, diversifying the forms of governmental support, and promoting traditional Chinese culture. For the CI program, it might be necessary for China to explain more about its administration system, diversify the forms of financial and material support, and develop alternative teaching methods which reflect the spiritual core of Confucianism. While providing development aid in HE towards developing countries, it seems necessary for China to reduce the emphasis on communist ideology, introduce its political system, and promote traditional Chinese culture, through appropriate ways. In terms of international student recruitment, in addition to the above aspects, it seems necessary for China to diversify the information and the forms of support provided by its functional units of government and HEIs, considering the features of source countries.
For modifying the proposed hypothetical solutions, an exploratory empirical inquiry has been conducted to explore the attitudes and reflections of a unique population, international graduate students in English instruction programs in education-related majors in Chinese HEIs, towards China’s HE internationalization, particularly the dimension of international student recruitment. Both qualitative and quantitative data have been collected through a survey. The following chapter, Chapter Seven, will present the quantitative data analysis and findings. The qualitative data analysis and findings will be explained in Chapter Eight.
Chapter Seven: Reflections of International Students: Quantitative Data Analysis and Survey Findings

This chapter describes the details of the empirical inquiry and the findings gathered through quantitative survey data analysis. It first explains the findings of the quantitative exploration through statistical descriptions, and then explains the findings of multiple regression analysis. As mentioned, the empirical data, including both quantitative and qualitative, was collected through a survey. The major purpose of conducting the empirical inquiry is to explore the attitudes of international graduate students in English instruction programs in education-related majors at three Chinese universities towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, particularly its policies and activities in international student recruitment, in order to test and modify the hypothetical policy solutions which had been proposed in Chapter Six based on previously presented theoretical perspectives and a comprehensive review of relevant literature.

As an exploratory empirical inquiry, the major task of conducting regression analysis is not attempting to use mathematic modeling to predict future situations. Instead, it seeks to explore the potential relationships between participants’ attitudes and source-country contextual features identified following Brian Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy. Following the problem intellectualization and hypothetical solutions explained in Chapter Six, in terms of China’s international student recruitment, it seems appropriate to make the following hypotheses: 1) international students from
relatively more developed societies may tend to have more negative attitudes towards China’s strategy and policies in outward-oriented HE internationalization, particularly the dimension of international student recruitment; 2) international students from source countries with a more democratic political system may tend to have relatively more negative attitudes; 3) international students from source countries with socialist ideology roots may tend to have relatively more positive attitudes; and 4) the influence of Chinese culture on source countries may influence international students’ attitudes positively towards China’s policies and strategies. The following quantitative data analysis attempts to explore the relation between source-country contextual features and participants’ attitudes.

7.1 Statistical Descriptions and Findings

As mentioned in Chapter Four, Methodology and Design of Study, I received 81 questionnaires, including 55 paper-based and 26 Internet-based responses. 78 of them provided complete background information and completed at least one section of the three-section Likert-type items. One of the participants answered every question but did not provide the name of his/her source/home country. Sixty-eight participants answered the open-ended and/or the follow-up short-answer question(s) and therefore provided qualitative data. All of the 78 participants completed the first section of the Likert-type items, which concentrates on their general attitudes towards China’s international student recruitment strategy. Seventy of them completed the second section which concentrates on their attitudes towards China’s relevant policies and
activities during their application process while in their home/source countries. Seventy-two of the participants completed the third section which concentrates on their attitudes towards China’s policies and activities for dealing with the current international students in Chinese HEIs, as a destination country. The Likert-type item 27 ("I am satisfied with, if any, the place for cooking provided by my university [Please leave it blank if there is no such place provided]") in the third section is optional.

These 78 students are from 28 different countries, including both developed and developing countries. 32 of them are in 3-year doctoral programs and 46 are in 2-year master programs. Most of them are in the majors of comparative education (38) and HE (19). Other research concentrations include educational leadership and management, pedagogy and curriculum, economics of education and management, pre-school education, and educational psychology. The average number of months that they have spent in China for their current degree programs is about 11.85 (median=9; maxima=35; minima=3). Sixty-eight of them are financially supported by China’s governmental scholarship through the CSC, and the average amount of money that they have received from the CSC per month is about 3222.39 RMB (about 482.98 US Dollar or 636.91 Canadian Dollar). Ten participants have received other kinds of financial support, including six of them who are financially supported by both the CSC and other agencies.

Some descriptive statistics are shown in Table 7.1. The table shows the mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum values of the average values of
participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in each section. As mentioned in Chapter Four, the five options of Likert-type items (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree) were coded as -2, -1, 0, 1, and 2 respectively.

Table 7.1
Descriptive Statistics of Average Values of Participants’ Answers to the Likert-Type Items in Each Section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First (macro-level strategy)</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>-0.83</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second (treating potential international students)</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>-1.26</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third (treating current international students)</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>-1.10</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of the first section of six Likert-type items for exploring the participants’ general attitude, the mean of the average values of the 78 participants’ answers is 0.95. To some extent, it (0.95) reflects that participants have generally positive attitudes towards China’s strategy of promoting international student recruitment. In terms of the 70 participants who completed the second section of seven Likert-type items, the average value of their answers is about 0.07, which, to some extent, reflects that their attitudes towards China’s international student recruitment policies and activities in source countries are much more negative than their attitudes towards China’s macro strategy and are almost “neutral” (0). In terms of the 72 participants who completed the third section, the average value of their answers to the 10 Likert-type items except the optional Item 27 is 0.75, which, to some extent, reflects that their attitudes towards China’s policies and activities of dealing with current international students as a destination country of overseas studies are much more positive than their attitudes towards China’s relevant policies and activities for dealing with its potential students.
in source countries, and are slightly more negative than their attitudes towards China’s macro strategy. For the optional item 27 (i.e. I am satisfied with if any, the place for cooking provided by my university. [Please leave it blank if there is no such place provided]), 71 participants provided their answers and the average value of their answers is about 0.9, reflecting their overall positive attitude.

Psychometric analysis was implemented among each section of Likert-type items. The coefficient alpha values of all three sections, which to some extent explain each section’s internal consistency, are all above 0.5. The coefficient alpha value of the second section is about 0.6 and in terms of the third section, it is above 0.8. As an important parameter of psychometric analysis, the item-total correlation of each Likert-type item within each section was calculated, which to some extent explains the quality of items. The values of item-total correlations of all Likert-type items are above 0.1, while the values of 18 of the 23 required Likert-type items are above 0.3 (see Tables 4, 5, and 6). In terms of the third section about participants’ attitudes towards China’s policies and activities for treating its current international students, values of item-total correlations of all items are above 0.4 (see Table 7.4). Generally speaking, as a highly exploratory study, the overall reliability and quality of Likert-type items is acceptable in the current research phase. The coefficient alpha for each section did not significantly increase when the item with the lowest item-total correlation in each section was deleted. For the second section, particularly, the coefficient alpha significantly increased (from 0.59 to 0.63) when the two items with the lowest item-total correlations in this section, Items 12 (“In my experience, the
application process of my current program was smooth.”) and 17 (“I had the opportunity to learn traditional Chinese culture in my home country before coming to China as an international student.”) were deleted. I decided to keep these two items since they represent important aspects of the construct that I was trying to measure. There is obviously room for improvement for future research, which will be discussed in the last chapter, Chapter Nine.

Table 7.2 shows the frequencies of participants’ answers and the item-total correlations of each item in the first section which is about participants’ general attitudes towards China’s relevant strategy. In terms of the first section of Likert-type items, 65 of the 78 participants agree or strongly agree with the statement that “China’s strategy of recruiting more international students during the next decade is positive and beneficial to the entire international community” (Item 6). Four participants disagree or strongly disagree with this statement, and the rest of them answered “neutral”. 61 participants agree or strongly agree that “China’s strategy of recruiting more international students is positive towards the development” of their home countries (Item 7) and 65 believe that China’s strategy of recruiting international students is positive towards its global cultural influence, or “soft power” (Item 8). Similarly, most of the participants held relatively positive attitudes towards the other statements of Items 9 (“I believe that China’s policies in attracting international students may enhance the reputation or influence of its universities and HE system in my home country”), 10 (“China’s strategy and policies of actively recruiting international students may enhance its global cultural influence”), and 11
I will recommend students in my home country study in China as graduate level
degree students”) about China’s strategy of international student recruitment.

Table 7.2

*Frequencies of Participants’ answers and Item-Total Correlations of Items in the First Section*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Item-Total Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 6</td>
<td>1(1.3%)</td>
<td>3(3.8%)</td>
<td>9(11.5%)</td>
<td>38(48.7%)</td>
<td>27(34.6%)</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 7</td>
<td>1(1.3%)</td>
<td>5(6.4%)</td>
<td>11(14.1%)</td>
<td>42(53.8%)</td>
<td>19(24.4%)</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 8</td>
<td>1(1.3%)</td>
<td>1(1.3%)</td>
<td>11(14.1%)</td>
<td>39(50.0%)</td>
<td>26(33.3%)</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 9</td>
<td>1(1.3%)</td>
<td>6(7.7%)</td>
<td>18(23.1%)</td>
<td>42(53.8%)</td>
<td>11(14.1%)</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 10</td>
<td>1(1.3%)</td>
<td>3(3.8%)</td>
<td>13(16.7%)</td>
<td>42(53.8%)</td>
<td>19(24.4%)</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 11</td>
<td>2(2.6%)</td>
<td>3(3.8%)</td>
<td>18(23.1%)</td>
<td>38(48.7%)</td>
<td>17(21.8%)</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. coefficient alpha of the first section equals 0.54

Table 7.3 shows the frequencies of participants’ answers and the item-total
correlations of each item in the second section which is about participants’ attitudes
towards China’s policies and activities in dealing with its potential international
students while in their source countries. In terms of the second section of the
Likert-type items, 55 of the 70 participants agree or strongly agree with the statement
that the application process of their current program was smooth based on their
personal experience (i.e. Item 12). 32 (about 45.7%) of them agree or strongly agree
that Chinese universities are becoming more attractive in their home countries (i.e.
Item 13) during their application. About 44.3% (31) of them agree or strongly agree
that they had been “well informed about universities and their programs in China
before coming to China as an international student” (i.e. Item 14). Many of them
provided further comments towards the Item 14 by answering the two follow-up
short-answer questions (i.e. Items 14.1 “If you agree or strongly agree with Item 14,
could you please briefly explain that how this information” and 14.2 “For Item 14, if
you choose neutral, disagree or strongly disagree, any comments are welcomed”). Discussions about their answers to the two follow-up short-answer questions will be included in Chapter Eight, Qualitative Analysis and Findings. It seems that most of them (43, about 61.4%) had been “well informed about China’s government financial aid before coming to China” (i.e. Item 15), but only 13 (18.6%) of them received information “about other international student support programs” in addition to financial support “provided by Chinese universes before coming to China” (i.e. Item 16). Therefore, very few participants answered the follow-up question related to Item 16 (i.e. Item 16.1 “If you agree or strongly agree with Item 16, please briefly explain what the other existing supporting programs are”). It will also be further explained in Chapter Eight. Only 16 (22.9%) participants believe that they “had the opportunity to learn traditional Chinese culture” in their home country as potential international students of Chinese HEIs (i.e. Item 17). In terms of Item 18, only 27 (38.6%) of them believe that they were “familiar with or well informed about China’s political system” before coming to China (i.e. Item 18).

Table 7.3

 Frequencies of Participants’ answers and Item-Total Correlations of Items in the Second Section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Item-Total Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 12</td>
<td>2(2.9%)</td>
<td>4(5.7%)</td>
<td>14(20.9%)</td>
<td>35(50.0%)</td>
<td>15(21.4%)</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 13</td>
<td>2(2.9%)</td>
<td>11(15.7%)</td>
<td>25(35.7%)</td>
<td>22(31.4%)</td>
<td>10(14.3%)</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 14</td>
<td>7(10%)</td>
<td>18(25.7%)</td>
<td>14(20.0%)</td>
<td>26(37.1%)</td>
<td>5(7.1%)</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 15</td>
<td>4(5.7%)</td>
<td>14(20.0%)</td>
<td>9(12.9%)</td>
<td>27(38.6%)</td>
<td>16(22.9%)</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 16</td>
<td>12(17.1%)</td>
<td>33(47.1%)</td>
<td>12(17.1%)</td>
<td>11(15.7%)</td>
<td>2(2.9%)</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 17</td>
<td>21(30.0%)</td>
<td>26(37.1%)</td>
<td>7(10.0%)</td>
<td>12(17.1%)</td>
<td>4(5.7%)</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 18</td>
<td>10(14.3%)</td>
<td>14(20.0%)</td>
<td>19(27.1%)</td>
<td>21(30.0%)</td>
<td>6(8.6%)</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. coefficient alpha of the second section equals 0.59
Table 7.4 shows the frequencies of participants’ answers and the item-total correlations of each item in the third section which is about participants’ attitudes towards China’s policies and activities in dealing with its current international students in Chinese HEIs. In terms of the third section of Likert-type items, most of the 72 participants who completed this section held relatively positive attitudes towards the institutional administration system (i.e. Item 19 “I hold a positive attitude towards my Chinese university’s administration relative to my needs as an international student”) and China’s governmental financial support (i.e. Item 20 “As an international student, I feel that I am well supported financially by the Chinese government”). 46 (63.9%) of them agree or strongly agree that they are “satisfied with the curriculum content” in their current international student focused degree programs (i.e. Item 21), and 49 (68.1%) of them agree or strongly agree that the teaching methods used in their programs are effective (i.e. Item 22 “The teaching methods used in my degree program are effective for my learning and of a high standard”). 53 (73.6%) of them believe that professors are “academically supportive” (i.e. Item 23) and 59 (81.9%) believe that professors “are friendly towards international students” (i.e. Item 24). 56 (77.8%) of the participants “are satisfied” with their dormitory (i.e. Item 25) and only half (36) of them are satisfied with the food choices and quality of their universities’ dining halls (Item 26 “I am satisfied with the food choices and quality available in my Chinese university’s dining hall”). As mentioned, 70 participants answered the optional Likert-type item (Item 27 “I am satisfied with, if any, the place for cooking provided by my university”) and 55 of them are satisfied
with the place for cooking provided by the universities. 49 of the 72 participants are satisfied with the quality of university libraries (Item 28 “I am satisfied with the quality of the libraries of my Chinese university as sources for study materials”), and 46 of them agree or strongly agree that “the Internet access to content in [their] Chinese university is adequate for studying and doing research” comparing to the situation in their home countries (Item 29).

Table 7.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Item-Total Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 19</td>
<td>3(4.2%)</td>
<td>2(2.8%)</td>
<td>12(16.7%)</td>
<td>39(54.2%)</td>
<td>16(22.2%)</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 20</td>
<td>4(5.6%)</td>
<td>5(6.9%)</td>
<td>11(15.3%)</td>
<td>37(51.4%)</td>
<td>15(20.8%)</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 21</td>
<td>3(4.2%)</td>
<td>9(12.5%)</td>
<td>14(19.4%)</td>
<td>33(45.8%)</td>
<td>13(18.1%)</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 22</td>
<td>2(2.8%)</td>
<td>6(8.3%)</td>
<td>15(20.8%)</td>
<td>39(54.2%)</td>
<td>10(13.9%)</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 23</td>
<td>2(2.8%)</td>
<td>3(4.2%)</td>
<td>14(19.4%)</td>
<td>38(52.8%)</td>
<td>15(20.8%)</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 24</td>
<td>1(1.4%)</td>
<td>1(1.4%)</td>
<td>11(15.3%)</td>
<td>36(50.0%)</td>
<td>23(31.9%)</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 25</td>
<td>4(5.6%)</td>
<td>9(12.5%)</td>
<td>3(4.2%)</td>
<td>33(45.8%)</td>
<td>23(31.9%)</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 26</td>
<td>7(9.7%)</td>
<td>9(12.5%)</td>
<td>20(27.8%)</td>
<td>29(40.3%)</td>
<td>7(9.7%)</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 28</td>
<td>1(1.4%)</td>
<td>8(11.1%)</td>
<td>14(19.4%)</td>
<td>28(38.9%)</td>
<td>21(29.2%)</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 29</td>
<td>13(18.1%)</td>
<td>7(9.7%)</td>
<td>6(8.3%)</td>
<td>22(30.6%)</td>
<td>24(33.3%)</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. coefficient alpha of the third section equals 0.81

Generally speaking, it seems that most of the participants hold positive attitudes towards China’s strategy of international student recruitment at the macro level, and believe that this strategy is positive towards both China as a destination country, particularly in enhancing its international cultural influence or soft power, and their source countries’ development. Closer scrutiny reveals that the participants hold different attitudes towards different aspects of China’s international student recruitment as policy recipients, observers and researchers, which is related in certain ways to certain features of the source countries they came from. As mentioned in
Chapter Four, Methodology and Research Design, I used Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy to categorize source countries, based on their development status (HDI), political system (DI), political ideology (having socialist constitution by the end of the 1980s or not), and deep historical/cultural roots (being China’s East Asian tributary states or Southeast Asian quasi-tributary states during the Ming dynasty or not). In terms of the fourth indicator, the fourth hypothesis can be further explained as an expectation that international students from source countries with tributary or quasi-tributary cultural/historical roots may tend to have relatively more positive attitudes towards China’s present strategy and policies in international student recruitment.

Among these three sections of Likert-type items, I compared the average values of responses provided by participants belonging to different categories. Basic statistical treatments of survey data reveal that the average values of responses provided by participants from countries with socialist ideological roots are higher than the overall average values. The average values of responses provided by participants from the countries with relatively high DIs and HDIs are lower than the overall average values. The average values of responses provided by participants from the countries with cultural roots of tributary or quasi-tributary traditions are lower than the overall average values. Table 7.5 shows the average values of answers to each section of Likert-type items provided by participants from different source countries categorized following source-country contextual features (see Table 7.5). I used the Mann-Whitney U test (significance level equals 0.05) to test the statistical significances of the previous mentioned inter-category differences. The null
hypothesis is that the distribution of the average values of participants’ answers to Likert-type items in each section is the same across categories of source-country ideological roots, development status (i.e. HDI values), political system (i.e. DI values), or deep cultural roots. Table 7.6 shows the interrelations between the averages of the responses to Likert-type items provided by participants and the categories of their source countries, classified following Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy.

For the first section of Likert-type items, the average value of answers provided by participants from countries that had socialist constitutions by the end of the 1980s is 0.960 (n=29), which is a little higher than the overall average value of the first section (0.949). The average value of responses provided by the participants from countries that were China’s East Asian tributary or Southeast Asian quasi-tributary states during the Ming dynasty is 0.742 (n=11), which is lower than the overall average value (0.949). The average value of DIs of the 78 participants’ source countries is 5.197. The average value of responses provided by the participants from countries with relatively high DIs (i.e. above the average value; or >5.197) is 0.921 (n=40), which is lower than the overall average value (0.949), and the average value of responses provided by participants from countries with relatively low DIs (i.e. equals to or below the average, or ≤ 5.197) is 0.978. The average value of HDIs of the 78 participants’ source countries is 0.609. The average value of the responses provided by participants from countries with relatively high HDIs (i.e. above the average, or > 0.609) is 0.778 (n=24), which is lower than the overall average value (0.949). The average value of the responses provided by participants from relatively
lower HDIs (equals to below the average, or \( \leq 0.609 \)) countries is 1.025, which is higher than the overall average value (0.949). In terms of this section, according to the Mann-Whitney U test, the distribution of the average values of responses provided by participants from source countries with relatively high or low development status (i.e. with HDIs above or below the average (0.609)) has a significant difference (p-value = 0.023). Therefore, it seems that participants from countries with relatively low HDIs may tend to hold relatively more positive attitudes towards China’s general strategy of enhancing international student recruitment.

In terms of the second section of Likert-type items (Items 12 to 18) about participants’ attitudes related to their application process and experience in source countries, the average value of responses provided by participants from countries with socialist ideological roots (i.e. had socialist constitutions) is 0.203 (n=26), which is higher than the overall average value of the second section (0.069). The average value of the responses provided by participants from countries with cultural roots of tributary or quasi-tributary tradition is -0.014 (n=11), which is negative and lower than the overall average value (0.069). The average value of DIs of the 70 participants’ source countries is 5.269. The average value of responses provided by participants from countries with relatively high DIs (above the average, or > 5.269) is -0.015 (n=37), which is negative and lower than the overall average value (0.069). The average value of responses provided by participants from source countries with relatively lower DIs (i.e. equals to or below the average, or \( \leq 5.269 \)) is 0.165. The average value of HDIs of the 70 participants’ source countries is 0.609. The average
value of responses provided by participants from source countries with relatively high HDIs (i.e. above the average, or >0.609) is -0.082 (n=22), which is negative and lower than the overall average value (0.069). The average value of the responses provided by participants from the relatively lower HDIs (i.e. equals to or below the average, or ≤ 0.609) countries is 0.134, which is higher than the overall average. However, for this section, the distribution across the categories does not show significant differences according to the Mann-Whitney U test.

In terms of the third section of Likert-type items (Items 19 to 29 except 27) about participants’ attitudes towards China’s policies and activities for dealing with current international students, the average value of responses provided by participants from countries that had socialist constitutions by the end of the 1980s is 0.879 (n=28), which is higher than the overall average value of the third section (0.735). The average value of the responses provided by participants from countries that were China’s East Asian tributary or Southeast Asian quasi-tributary states during the Ming dynasty is 0.609 (n=11), which is lower than the overall average value (0.735). The average value of DIs of the 72 participants’ source countries is 5.145. The average value of responses provided by participants from the countries with relatively high DIs (i.e. above the average, or >5.145) is 0.725 (n=37), which is lower than the overall average value (0.735). The average value of responses provided by participants from countries with relatively lower DIs (i.e. equals to or below the average, or ≤ 5.145) is 0.744. The average value of HDI of the 72 participants’ source countries is 0.607. The average value of the responses provided by participants from
the countries with relatively high HDIs (i.e. above the average, or > 0.607) is 0.509
(n=24), which is lower than the overall average value (0.735). The average value of
the responses provided by participants from relatively lower HDIs (i.e. equals to or
below the average, or ≤ 0.607) countries is 0.841, which is higher than the overall
average value of the third section. For this section, according to the Mann-Whitney U
test, the distribution of the average values of responses provided by participants from
source countries with relatively high or low development status (i.e. with HDIs above
or below the average (0.609)) has a significant difference (p-value = 0.024). Therefore,
it seems that participants from countries with relatively low HDIs may tend to hold
relatively more positive attitudes towards China’s policies in treating current
international students. The distribution across other categories does not show
significant differences according to the hypothesis testing.

Table 7.5
Average Values of Participants’ Answers to Each Section Categorized Following
Source-Country Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source-Country Features</th>
<th>First Section (General Attitude)</th>
<th>Second Section (Potential Student Policy)</th>
<th>Third Section (Current Student Policy)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High DI</td>
<td>0.921</td>
<td>-0.015</td>
<td>0.725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low DI</td>
<td>0.978</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High HDI</td>
<td>0.778</td>
<td>-0.082</td>
<td>0.509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low HDI</td>
<td>1.025</td>
<td>0.134</td>
<td>0.841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Root</td>
<td>0.960</td>
<td>-0.232</td>
<td>0.879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tributary Root</td>
<td>0.742</td>
<td>-0.014</td>
<td>0.609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section Average</td>
<td>0.949</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>0.735</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.6
Interrelations between Averages of Responses Provided by Participants from Countries
Belonging to Certain Categories and the Overall Average Value of Each Section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source-country Features</th>
<th>Section 1 (General Attitudes towards Strategy)</th>
<th>Section 2 (Treating Potential International Students)</th>
<th>Section 3 (Treating Current International Student)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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According to the statistical descriptions, participants’ reflections seem to be consistent with the previous-mentioned four hypotheses to a certain extent. However, according to the hypothesis testing (i.e. Mann-Whitney U test), it seems that only the first hypothesis (i.e. international students from relatively more developed societies may tend to have more negative attitudes) shows statistical significance in terms of the first and the third sections of Likert-type items. I conducted the following regression analysis and attempted to further explore the relations between source-country contextual features identified following Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy and the participants’ attitudes towards China’s relevant strategy and policies. In order to further clarify the hypotheses of the regression exploration, I restated the four hypotheses in the following way: 1) HDI value as the indicator of sources countries’ development status may have a negative linear relation with participants’ attitude; 2) DI value as the indicators of the degree of political democracy of source countries may have a negative linear relation with their attitude; 3) participants from source countries with socialist ideological roots may tend to have relatively more positive attitudes; and 4) source countries’ cultural roots of tributary or quasi-tributary relations with ancient China may influence the attitudes of participants towards China’s present strategy and policies. Moreover, in terms of the fourth hypothesis, the statistical

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Root</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI Value</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI Value</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tributary Root</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * = with statistically significant difference according to Mann-Whitney U test
description reflects that participants from source countries with tributary or quasi-tributary cultural traditions may tend to have relatively more negative attitudes.

7.2 Quantitative Exploration through Regression Analysis

Before conducting regression analysis in order to further explore the relation between each of the dependent variables ($A_1$, $A_2$, $A_3$) and source-country contextual indicators, I analyzed the correlation between each of the dependent variables which to some extent reflect participants’ attitudes toward China’s relevant policies and activities. As explained in Chapter Four, the dependent variable $A_1$ refers to the average values of participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the first section (Items 6-11), which to some extent reflects their general attitudes towards China’s macro-level strategy in promoting international student recruitment. The dependent variable $A_2$ refers to the average values of participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the second section (Items 2 to 18), which to some extent reflects their attitudes towards China’s policies and activities in treating potential international students in source countries. The dependent variable $A_3$ refers to the average value of participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the third section (Items 19 to 29; except the optional Item 27), which to some extent reflects their attitudes towards China’s policies and institutional-level implementations in treating current international students in Chinese HEIs. I used corresponding quantitative data provided by the 70 participants who completed all three sections of Likert-type items to explore the correlation between each pair of dependent variables ($A_1$, $A_2$, $A_3$). The
following table shows the Pearson’s correlation coefficients between each of the dependent variables (see Table 7.7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson’s Correlation Coefficients between Dependent Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A₁</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A₂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A₃</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***p< 0.01

According to the correlation coefficients shown in Table 7.7, there are positive correlations between each of the dependent variables (A₁, A₂, A₃). It indicates that while answering Likert-type items, participants who expressed relatively more positive attitudes toward one of the three aspects of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization approach in the dimension of international student recruitment may tend to hold relatively more positive attitudes towards other two aspects, and vice versa.

7.2.1 Macro-level strategy and source-country features

I first used multiple regression models to explore the potential linear relation between participants’ general attitudes towards China’s strategy of international student recruitment and each of the source-country contextual indicators identified based on Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy. In this case, the following table shows the dependent, independent, and control variables, as explained in Chapter Four (see Table 7.8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Description (Regression Analysis of the First Case)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variables</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Dependent Variable (A₁) (participants’ attitude) | Average values of participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the first section (Items 6-11) which
reflect their general attitudes towards China’s macro-level strategy in promoting international student recruitment.

**Independent Variables** (source-country features)

- **Ideological Root (I)**: Socialist constitutions: 1 = having socialist contents in constitutions by the end of the 1980s, 0 = otherwise
- **Political System (P)**: Level of democracy: Democracy Index (DI) values published by Economist Intelligence Unit in 2015
- **Development Status (D)**: Socioeconomic development status: Human Development Index (HDI) values published by UNDP in 2014
- **Deep Cultural Root (C)**: Tributary relations with ancient China: 1 = China’s East Asian tributary states or Southeast Asian quasi-tributary states during the Ming dynasty, 0 = otherwise

**Control Variables**

- **Month(s) in China (M)**: Month(s) in China for their current degree program
- **Level of Degree (L)**: Level of their current degree program in China: 1 = Doctoral, 0 = Master

Note. Independent variables “I” and “C”, and control variable “L” are dummy variables.

The **descriptive statistics** of independent and control variables are shown in the following table (see Table 7.9).

**Table 7.9**

*Descriptive Statistics of Independent and Control Variables (Regression Analysis of the First Case)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Root (I)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political System (P)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>9.17</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Status (D)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Cultural Root (C)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Months in China (M)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>11.85</td>
<td>6.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Degree (L)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.10 shows the results of regression analysis. According to their t-values and the significant level (see Table 7.10), there is a statistically significant negative linear relation between the independent variable D (i.e. value of HDI as development status...
parameter) and the dependent variable \( A_1 \) which reflects participants’ general attitudes towards China’s macro-level international student recruitment strategy. There is also a negative linear relation between the control variable \( M \) (i.e. months in China for the current degree program) and the dependent variable. It indicates that participants who are from source countries with relatively more advanced development status and have been in China for a longer time for their current degree programs may tend to hold relatively more negative attitudes towards China’s strategy of enhancing HE-level international student recruitment.

Table 7.10

| Results of Regression Analysis of the First Case - Initial Regression Model |
|-------------------------------|------|-----|-----|---|
| **B** | **SE** | **β** | **VIF** |
| Independent Variables | | | | |
| Ideological Roots (I) | -.068 | .136 | -.061 | 1.247 |
| Political System (P) | -.046* | .041 | -.151 | 1.558 |
| Development Status (D) | -.769 | .445 | -.217 | 1.347 |
| Deep Cultural Roots (C) | -.052 | .143 | -.041 | 1.098 |
| Control Variables | | | | |
| Month(s) in China (M) | -.019** | .009 | -.228 | 1.047 |
| Level of Degree (L) | -.037 | .127 | -.033 | 1.128 |

Note. *p<0.1, **p<0.05; \( R^2 = 0.17 \)

According to the VIFs (< 10) shown in the coefficients table (see Table 7.10), the model does not have the problem of multicollinearity. The assumptions of equal variance, linearity, and normality are fulfilled. The standardized residuals are uncorrelated with each of the predictor variables. Points 46, 54, 59, 73 are influential points (\( C_{46}, C_{54}, C_{59}, C_{73} > 4/n = 4/78 \sim 0.05 \)). I ran the regression model after deleting the influential points and got the result shown in Table 7.11.

Table 7.11

| Results of Regression Analysis of the First Case - Initial Regression Model - Initial Model Excluding Influential Points |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| **B** | **SE** | **β** | **VIF** |
| Independent Variables | | | | |
| Ideological Roots (I) | | | | |
| Political System (P) | | | | |
| Development Status (D) | | | | |
| Deep Cultural Roots (C) | | | | |
| Control Variables | | | | |
| Month(s) in China (M) | | | | |
| Level of Degree (L) | | | | |
According to the t-values and the significant level (see Table 7.11), the independent variables D (i.e. HDI value as national development status indicator) and M (i.e. month(s) in China for their current program) are still the only two indicators that have significant linear relations with dependent variable \( A_1 \). Therefore, I used D and M as the only independent and control variables, and the following equation shows the new/modified regression model (see Eq. 9). The result of regression analysis is shown in Table 7.12.

\[
A_1 = b_0 + b_1D + b_2M + \varepsilon. \tag{9}
\]

Table 7.12

Results of Regression Analysis of the First Case -Initial Regression Model -Modified Regression Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development Status (Human Development Index)</td>
<td>-1.011***</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>-.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Variable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month(s) in China</td>
<td>-.020**</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>-.237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. **p<0.05, ***p<0.01; \( R^2 = 0.17 \)

According to the t-values and the significant level (see Table 7.12), there is a statistically significant negative linear relation between the independent variable D (i.e. HDI value as national development status indicator) and the dependent variable
The control variable M (i.e. month(s) in China for their current program) also has a negative linear relation with the independent variable. In other words, there is a negative relation between HDI value as an indicator of source-country development status and the average values of participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the first section which reflect their attitudes towards China’s macro-level strategy in international student recruitment. When the control variable M (i.e. month(s) in China for their current program) remains constant, one unit increase in source-country HDI values is associated with a decrease of 1.011 units in the average value of participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the first section. (As mentioned in Chapter Four, the five options of Likert-type items strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree were coded as -2, -1, 0, 1, and 2 respectively). In terms of the source-country features/indicators identified following Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy, the modified fixed regression model reflects that these participants who are from countries with relatively high HDIs, which refers to relatively more advanced socioeconomic development statuses, may tend to have relatively more negative attitudes towards China’s macro-level strategy of enhancing HE-level international student recruitment.

### 7.2.2 Treating potential international students and source-country features

I used multiple regression analysis to explore the linear relations between participants’ attitudes towards China’s relevant policies and activities for dealing with its potential international students while in their source countries, and the context

145
indicators identified based on Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy. In this case, the following table shows the dependent, independent, and control variables.

Table 7.13

*Variable Description (Regression Analysis of the Second Case)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent Variable (A2)</strong></td>
<td>Average values of participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the second section (Items 2 to 18) which reflect their attitudes towards China’s policies and activates in treating its potential international students in source countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Root (I)</td>
<td>Socialist constitutions: 1 = having socialist contents in constitutions by the end of the 1980s, 0 = otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political System (P)</td>
<td>Level of democracy: Democracy Index (DI) values published by Economist Intelligence Unit in 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Status (D)</td>
<td>Socioeconomic development status: Human Development Index (HDI) values published by UNDP in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Cultural Root (C)</td>
<td>Tributary relations with ancient China: 1 = China’s East Asian tributary states or Southeast Asian quasi-tributary states during the Ming dynasty, 0 = otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month(s) in China (M)</td>
<td>Month(s) in China for their current degree program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Degree (L)</td>
<td>Level of their current degree program in China: 1 = Doctoral = 1, 0 = Master</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Independent variables “I” and “C”, and control variable “L” are dummy variables.

The descriptive statistics of independent and control variables are shown in the following table (see Table 7.14).

Table 7.14

*Descriptive Statistics of Independent and Control Variables (Regression Analysis of the Second Case)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Root (I)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political System (P)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>9.17</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Status (D)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Cultural Root (C)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The result of regression analysis is shown in Table 7.15.

Table 7.15  
*Results of Regression Analysis of the Second Case -Initial Regression Model*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Root (I)</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.155</td>
<td>.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political System (P)</td>
<td>-.087*</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>-.257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Status (D)</td>
<td>-.810</td>
<td>.517</td>
<td>-.208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Cultural Root (C)</td>
<td>.222</td>
<td>.190</td>
<td>.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month(s) in China (M)</td>
<td>-.003</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>-.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Degree (L)</td>
<td>-.124</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>-.103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p<0.1; $R^2 = 0.20$

There is a statistically significant negative linear relation between the independent variable P (i.e. DI values as political system indicator) and the dependent variable A2 according to the t-values and the significant level (see Table 7.15). The dependent variable A2 refers to participants’ attitudes towards China’s relevant policies and activates in dealing with its potential international students in source countries. Points id number 27, 41, 64, 67, 69 are the influential point (C27, C41, C64, C67, and C69 > 4/n = 4/70 ~ 0.06). After deleting the influential points and rerunning the model, I got the result shown in Tables 18.

Table 7.16  
*Results of Regression Analysis of the Second Case -Initial Regression Model Excluding Influential Points*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Root (I)</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.150</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political System (P)</td>
<td>-.111**</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>-.342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Status (D)</td>
<td>-.481</td>
<td>.507</td>
<td>-.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Cultural Root (C)</td>
<td>.233</td>
<td>.182</td>
<td>.157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Control Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Month(s) in China (M)</th>
<th>Level of Degree (L)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>-.091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.051</td>
<td>-.081</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. **p<0.05; \(R^2 = 0.22\)

The independent variable P (i.e. DI values as political system indicator) is still the only source-country contextual indicator which shows a significant linear relation with the dependent variable \(A_2\). Next, I used P as the only independent variable, and the following equation shows the new/modified regression model (see Eq. 10). Table 7.17 shows the result of regression analysis.

\[
A_2 = b_0 + b_1P + \epsilon
\]  

(10)

Table 7.17
Results of Regression Analysis for Participants’ Attitudes towards China’s Policies and Activities for Dealing with Potential International Student -Modified Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>(\beta)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political System (P)</td>
<td>-.137***</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>-.421</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ***p<0.01; \(R^2 = 0.18\)

According to the t-value and the significant level, there is a statistically significant negative linear relation between the independent variable P (i.e. DI value as political system indicator) and the dependent variable \(A_2\). It indicates that participants’ source-country DIs, which to some extent reflect the level of political democratization of political systems, have a negative linear relation with participants’ attitudes towards China’s policies and activities in treating its potential international students while in their source countries reflected by the average values of their answers to the Likert-type items in the second section. One unit increase in source-country DI values is associated with a decrease of 0.137 unities in the average value of participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the second section. It shows that participants who
are from source countries with relatively high DIs, which to some extent refers to more democratic political systems from the perspective of Western values, may tend to hold relatively more negative attitudes towards China’s relevant policies and activities in treating its potential international students in source countries.

7.2.3 Treating current international students and source-country features

I used multiple regression analysis to explore the potential linear relations between participants’ attitudes as current international students in Chinese HEIs towards China’s relevant policy and activities and source-country contextual indicators identified based on Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy. In this case, the following table shows the dependent, independent, and control variables (see Table 7.18).

Table 7.18
Variable Description (Regression Analysis of the Third Case)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variable (A&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt;)</td>
<td>Average values of participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the third section (Items 19 to 29 except the optional Item 27) which reflect their attitudes towards China’s policies and institutional-level policy implementations in treating current international students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(participants’ attitude)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Root (I)</td>
<td>Socialist constitutions: 1 = having socialist contents in constitutions by the end of the 1980s, 0 = otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political System (P)</td>
<td>Level of democracy: Democracy Index (DI) values published by Economist Intelligence Unit in 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Status (D)</td>
<td>Socioeconomic development status: Human Development Index (HDI) values published by UNDP in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Cultural Root (C)</td>
<td>Tributary relations with ancient China: 1 = China’s East Asian tributary states or Southeast Asian quasi-tributary states during the Ming dynasty, 0 = otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Variables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month(s) in China (M)</td>
<td>Month(s) in China for their current degree program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Degree (L)</td>
<td>Level of their current degree program in China: 1 = Doctoral = 1, 0 = Master</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note. Independent variables “I” and “C”, and control variable “L” are dummy variables.

Table 7.19 shows the descriptive statistics of the data of both independent and control variables in this case:

Table 7.19
Descriptive Statistics of Independent and Control Variables (Regression Analysis of the Third Case)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Root (I)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political System (P)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>9.17</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Status (D)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Cultural Root (C)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Months in China (M)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>11.83</td>
<td>6.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Degree (L)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.20 shows the result of regression analysis.

Table 7.20
Results of Regression Analysis of the Third Case -Initial Regression Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Root (I)</td>
<td>.272</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>.208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political System (P)</td>
<td>-.018</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>-.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Status (D)</td>
<td>-1.286**</td>
<td>.559</td>
<td>-.301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Cultural Root (C)</td>
<td>-.116</td>
<td>.206</td>
<td>-.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Months in China (M)</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Degree (L)</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>.152</td>
<td>.070</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. **p<0.05; R² = 0.16

The independent variable D (i.e. HDI value as development status indicator) has a statistically significant negative linear relation with A₂ according to the t-values and the significant level. Points id number 19, 54, 72 are the influential points (C19, C54, C72 > 4/n = 4/72 ~ 0.056). After deleting the influential points and rerunning the
model, I got the result shown in Table 7.21.

Table 7.21
Results of Regression Analysis of the Third Case -Initial Regression Model Excluding Influential Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Root (I)</td>
<td>.286*</td>
<td>.155</td>
<td>.250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political System (P)</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Status (D)</td>
<td>-1.060**</td>
<td>.510</td>
<td>-.278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Cultural Root (C)</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>-.012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Control Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Month(s) in China (M)</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>-.046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Degree (L)</td>
<td>.204</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>.179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; $R^2 = 0.15$

Independent variables “I” (i.e. ideological root) and D (i.e. HDI value as development status indicator) show statistically significant linear relations with dependent variable $A_3$ according to the t-values and the significant level. Next, I used “I” and D as the only two independent variables and the following equation shows the modified/new regression model (see Eq. 11). The result of regression analysis is shown in Table 7.22.

$$A_3 = b_0 + b_1I + b_2D + \varepsilon$$  \hspace{1cm} (11)

Table 7.22
Results of Regression Analysis of the Third Case -Modified Regression Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Root (I)</td>
<td>.248*</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td>.217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Status (D)</td>
<td>-1.118**</td>
<td>.446</td>
<td>-.293</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; $R^2 = 0.12$

There is a statistically significant positive linear relation between the dummy variable “I” (i.e. ideological root) and the dependent variable $A_3$. There is a statistically significant negative linear relation between the independent variable D (i.e.
development status) and the dependent variable A_{3}. In other words, there is a positive relation between source-country ideological roots referencing their previous or current constitutions and participants’ attitudes towards China’s policies and activities in treating its current international students in HEIs. When the other independent variable D remains constant, there are 0.248 units of difference in the average value of answers to the Likert-type items in the third section provided by participants from source countries with or without socialist ideological roots. Participants from countries which had socialist constitutions by the end of the 1980s may tend to have relatively more positive attitudes towards China’s relevant policies and activities. There is a negative relation between HDI values of source countries and participants’ attitudes towards China’s relevant politics and activities in treating current international students as a destination country of overseas studies. When the other independent variable “I” remains constant, one unit increase in source-country HDI values is associated with a decrease of 1.118 unities in the average value of participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the third section. It shows that participants who are originally from countries with relatively higher HDIs, which to some extent refers to relatively more advanced socioeconomic development statuses, may tend to have relatively more negative attitudes towards China’s relevant policy and activities in treating its current international students in HEIs.

7.3 Summary

According to the statistical descriptions, participants’ answers to the first section
of Likert-type items reflect that they generally tend to hold positive attitudes towards China’s strategy of promoting international student recruitment. In terms of their attitudes towards China’s activities in treating potential students in source countries, many of the participants expressed their negative attitudes through selecting either “disagree” or “neutral”. For the Item 17 (i.e. “I had the opportunity to learn traditional Chinese culture in my home country before coming to China as an international student”) in the second section, 21 of the 70 participants who provided valid data chose “strongly disagree” and 26 of them chose “disagree”. In terms of their attitudes towards China’s policies and institutional-level implementations in treating current international students in its HEIs, most of the participants chose either “agree” or “strongly agree” while answering the Likert-type items in the third section. According to the source-country features, hypothesis testing (i.e. Mann-Whitney U test) reflects that participants who are from source countries with relatively more advanced socioeconomic development status (i.e. relatively high HDIs) may tend to have relatively more positive attitudes towards China’s general strategy of promoting international student recruitment as well as its policies and institutional-level implementations in treating its current international students.

According to the regression analysis for exploring the potential relations between participants’ attitudes and source-country features/indicators identified following Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy, the value of HDI has a statistically significant negative linear relation with the average values of participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the first section which reflects participants’ general attitudes towards China’s
international student recruitment strategy. It reflects that these participants who are from countries with relatively high socioeconomic development status may tend to have relatively more negative attitudes towards China’s strategy of promoting international student recruitment. The value of DI has a statistically significant negative linear relation with the average values of the participants’ answers to the Likert-type items in the second section which reflect their attitudes towards China’s policies and activities in treating its potential students in source countries. It reflects that participants who are from source countries with relatively more democratic political systems (from the perspective of Western values) may tend to hold relatively more negative attitudes towards China’s activities for dealing with its potential international students in source countries.

In terms of the third section of Likert-type items, the dummy variable of source-country ideological roots identified based on their previous or current constitutions has a statistically significant positive relation with participants’ attitudes towards China’s policies and activities in treating its current international students. It reflects that students from countries which had socialist constitutions by the end of the 1980s may tend to have relatively more positive attitudes towards China’s relevant policies and institutional-level implementations. HDIs of source countries have a significant negative relation with participants’ attitudes towards China’s relevant politics and implementations in treating current international students as a destination country. It indicates that these students who are from source countries with relatively more advanced national socioeconomic development statuses may tend to have
relatively more negative attitudes towards China’s relevant policies and institutional-level implementations.

According to the quantitative exploratory inquiry, generally speaking, participants who are from source countries with relatively more advanced development status, more democratic political systems (from the perspective of Western values), and without socialist ideological roots may tend to hold relatively more negative attitudes towards China’s strategy, policies, and institutional-level implementations related to international student recruitment. Although none of the four source-country contextual indicators shows statistically significant relations with dependent variables in all three regression models, the results of regression exploration are generally consistent with the first three hypotheses. However, since the indicator of cultural roots does not show significant linear relations with any of the three dependent variables, the hypothetical relation between source countries’ tributary or quasi-tributary cultural traditions and the participants’ attitudes (i.e. the fourth hypothesis) has not been revealed. (Moreover, if the negative relation between source-country cultural roots and participants’ attitudes had statistical significance, which would be opposite to the fourth hypothesis, China’s national image and the recent geopolitics in the “ASEAN Plus Three” area might be considered in order to explore intrinsic reasons).

As mentioned in Chapter Four, I collected not only quantitative but also qualitative data through the survey. In addition to quantitative data analysis, for modifying the hypothetical solutions proposed in Chapter Six, I also analyzed the qualitative data in order to seek more information about participants’ reflections
towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, especially in the
dimension of international student recruitment. The findings of qualitative data
analysis will be explained in the following chapter, Chapter Eight.
Chapter Eight: Reflections of International Students: Qualitative Data Analysis and Findings

This chapter explains the findings of qualitative data analysis. According to the regression analysis explained in Chapter Seven, some of the independent variables (i.e. development status (HDIs), political system (DIs), and ideological roots) show statistically significant linear relation with dependent variables, which describe participants’ attitudes towards China’s policies and activities related to international student recruitment to a certain extent. The results show that participants who are from source countries with relatively low socioeconomic development status, less democratic political systems, and socialist ideological roots may tend to have relatively more positive attitudes towards China’s approach in international student recruitment, and vice versa. As mentioned in Chapters Four and Seven, qualitative data has also been collected through the survey. In order to modify the hypothetical solutions proposed in Chapter Six, I also analyzed the qualitative data in order to seek more information about participants’ reflections towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, especially in the dimension of international student recruitment. Participants’ suggestions and comments towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, especially in international student recruitment, can be categorized into three groups based on their major focuses: 1) China’s policies and activities in treating potential students in their home/source countries, 2) China’s policies and institutional-level implementation in treating current international students in Chinese
HEIs, and 3) China’s macro-level strategies for promoting its outward-oriented HE internationalization, including the other two dimensions of the CIs and international development aid in HE. This chapter presents participants’ reflections following this classification method. Their suggestions and comments towards this particular investigation are also briefly mentioned in this chapter and are then further explained in Chapter Nine while discussing the limitations of this investigation and future research plans.

8.1 Overview of Qualitative Data

The collected qualitative data contains participants’ answers to the three follow-up short-answer questions and two open-ended questions. As mentioned in Chapter Four, 68 participants seriously answered these questions and therefore provided valid qualitative data. Item 14.1 (“If you agree or strongly agree with Item 14, could you please briefly explain that how this information (in Item 14) was found?”) is a follow-up question of the Likert-type item 14 (“I was well informed about universities and their programs in China before coming to China as an international student”). Participants were encouraged to explain how the information about Chinese universities and their programs was found before coming to China if they agree or strongly agree that they were well informed about such information while in source countries. They can also provide comments by answering the follow-up question 14.2 (“For Item 14, if you choose neutral, disagree or strongly disagree, any comments are welcomed”) if they hold the opposite views. In terms of
Item 16.1 (“If you agree or strongly agree with Item 16, please briefly explain that what the other existing supporting programs are.”), the follow-up question of Likert-type Item 16 (“In addition to financial support, I was informed about other international students support programs provided by Chinese universities before coming to China as an international student.”), participants were asked to explain what the other existing supporting programs are if they agree or strongly agree that they were well informed about other international students support programs, in addition to governmental financial aids, provided by Chinese universes while in their home countries.

In terms of the first open-ended question (“Could you please share with me any personal opinions you have towards China’s HE internationalization approaches (e.g. CIs, HE international aid, international student recruitment, government scholarship) and any suggestions you have for improvement?”), participants were encouraged to share their personal opinions towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization approaches and suggestions for improvement. The second open-ended question (“Any comments about this investigation are welcomed”) asks participants to provide their personal comments about this particular investigation. Generally speaking, participants’ reflections on China’s international student recruitment can be summarized by using one of the participants’ words:

“[Although] the programs […] are okay […] there are a lot of improvements need to be done […]”
8.2 Policies and Activities in Treating Potential International Students

8.2.1 The lack of appropriate information channels

In terms of the China’s policies and activities in treating the potential students in the source countries, as explained in the statistical descriptions in Chapter Seven, participants’ reflections showed a limited positive attitude. The lack of comprehensive information formally and officially provided during their application processes is one of participants’ major concerns. According to their feedback, it seems that most of the information that they have received during their application processes while in their source countries was provided either by their friends or through the Internet. Participants complained that the information was not comprehensive and was sometimes misleading. According to their answers to Items 14.1 (“If you agree or strongly agree with Item 14, could you please briefly explain how this information was found?”) and 14.2 (“For Item 14, if you choose neutral, disagree or strongly disagree, any comments are welcomed”), while in their home countries as potential international students, neither Chinese HEIs nor China’s governmental/diplomatic functional units provided enough information about their future Chinese universities and programs. One of the participants stated that

“I didn’t have information about [the] curriculum, evaluation system, and the educational process in general. I knew only the name of the major, [the academic] language of [the] institution, and [the] year[s] of study.”

Others explained that

“Due to the lack of cooperation between the [governments of two] countries, I didn’t have the chance to be informed about universities and programs. Therefore I had to make my own research”

“I was not well informed by anybody from China or someone from my country. [I]
just got some information from the Internet by myself.”

“[The] admission letter contains scarce information”

One of the participants complained about the staff members who were sent to source countries for international student recruitment.

“Teachers from […] [University A] who came to my [home] city didn’t provide any [useful] information.”

According to their answers to Item 16.1 (“If you agree or strongly agree with Item 16, please briefly explain that what the other existing supporting programs are.”), before arriving China, very few of them were informed about other international student support programs in addition to the Chinese government’s financial support.

The supporting programs listed by them such as “monthly allowance” and University B’s “new student scholarship” can be classified as financial subsidies.

Since not enough information had been officially and formally provided, most of the participants chose to search the Internet for more information while in their home countries and attempted to learn more about their future universities and programs by themselves before arriving China. However, they complained that

“University websites are [mainly] in Chinese […] [and the] English version has less information on it”

“Not much information […] [about] universities and their programs were available in English on the website”

Participants could hardly get information about the curriculum of their future programs through the official websites of Chinese universities. A participant also complained about the information provided by the CSC through the Internet:

“There was a link (URL) provided by the CSC […] [and the webpage] contains only a list of universities but no [information about] programs [and curriculums]”

Therefore, while in source countries, a large proportion of participants had to rely
on the information provided by their previous classmates “who were studying in
China”, but such information is obviously not comprehensive:

“I was informed [by my previous classmate(s)] about [University A], about life in
[a Chinese] university, [the] scholarship, [and] study, but I didn’t know about the
curriculum [since we are in different programs]”

It seems that the situation is even worse in terms of the non-English instruction
(or “regular”) programs for both international and domestic students. One of the
participants described the general situation:

“The information about Chinese university/program [was not] well provided,
except in [terms of] some universities that [have] mutual contract and exchange
students […]. Students apart of this [English instruction] program [… ] have to
find more information by themselves, however, most information is not provided
in their [native/local] languages”

Generally speaking, due to the lack of information provided by either China’s
governmental/diplomatic functional units or receiving HEIs in China, most of the
information that they received while in source countries came from their previous
classmates, friends, the Internet, and their previous personal experience in China. Due
to the present situation, participants provided suggestions about providing more
comprehensive information through appropriate approaches. In terms of the Internet
platform, for instance, a participant suggested that

“In my opinion, the recruitment system [for potential students who want] to come
to study in Chinese HEIs [is] still not yet well developed. I suggest that they
should establish some website[s] to provide information in each country,
especially in local languages”

In terms of HEIs, a participant complained that

“[The admission offices of] Chinese universities are not effective in terms of
communication and offering feedback to [their] applicants.”

Another participant suggested that

“Student recruitment fairs [should be held] in varies cities [in source countries].”
8.2.2 Admission policies

Chinese universities’ foreign student admission policies were criticized by some of the participants. Some of them complained about the English language capacities of their classmates and suggested that Chinese HEIs should use standardized English tests scores, such as the TOFEL test scores, to assess the English proficiency of foreign applicants.

“I suggest [that] the university should ask students (applicants) […] [to provide] standardized test [scores and] then […] [the university] can make sure [that the recruited] students have [a] similar level of English [skills].”

According to my personal observation, I generally agree with their description of the status quo. While conducting the group interview/discussion as part of the pilot for improving my tentative survey items at University A and attending seminars/classes in both universities A and B as explained in Chapter Four, I could clearly feel the significant differences in their levels of English proficiency. Professor A, one of the expert reviewers of the survey, as briefly introduced in Chapter Four, also mentioned a similar situation.

8.3 Policies and Implementation in Treating Current International Students

In terms of China’s policies and institutional-level implementations in treating current international students in Chinese HEIs, many of the participants expressed positive attitudes towards their current degree programs and “hope [China and their home countries] have better relationships”:

“I was chosen and sent here by my government, [and] I am satisfied with the program I have here.”
“[I am] satisfied with the current program”

“I am really satisfied with studying in China; I learned a lot.”

Some of them highlighted the governmental scholarship provided by the Chinese government while expressing their positive attitude.

“Personally, I am satisfied with the financial aid supported by the CSC”

“I like China’s HE system and [I am] also satisfied [with] the government scholarship [provided by China]”

“I think the [Chinese government’s] scholarship is a noble thing, [and] personally I am satisfied with what the scholarship covers, [including] medical insurance and accommodation.”

However, the participants’ reflections also reveal China’s existing challenges and room for improvement in this aspect.

8.3.1 Quality of international student education and professors

As a participant stated, the “quality of education is a major concern”. Many of them provided suggestions and comments regarding teaching methods and the quality of professors. It seems that professors are quite influential, either positively or negatively, towards the attitudes of my participants. Some of them mentioned that they want to “say thank you to […] their] Chinese teachers [of this program]” since “they are very friendly [and have] influence[d] […] their] attitude[s] positively”.

However, some of the participants provided views which seem diametrically opposite:

“Good teachers and research support must be provided by school for international students because we come from long way away from our home[s] not just [because the] CSC provides financial support but in fact we expect the high standard of teaching and serving our own country; [some of the] teachers do not understand the academic and research needs of [international] students”

Cultural differences seem to be one of the incentives:

“Some Chinese professors are not friendly [,] and they should learn [how] to treat international students. We [are] from different cultures […] and] treating us as their
Language barriers also exist between international graduate students and their advisors:

“Sometimes, language issue happens between students and advisors”

Some of them suggested that “more international professors” are necessary to be hired for improving the quality of education for international students:

“I suggest that the university should […]recruit] some international professors for their programs to teach some courses”

8.3.2 Lack of a bilingual environment

As current international students in Chinese HEIs, many of them criticized the lack of a bilingual environment. Somewhat similar to their experience of using Chinese universities’ websites as potential students in source countries, as current international students in Chinese HEIs, many participants felt uncomfortable since “everything is in Chinese”:

“I want to touch on why as an international institution everything is written in Chinese but not English. The library is magnificent but about 95% [of the] resources in it are all in Chinese [and] people who work there [can only speak Chinese]”

“Most of the directional signs and systems intended for International students are all written in Chinese. At least it should be both English and Chinese to enable international students to have easy access to information”

They suggested that both the English version of the university website and the English service in the university library should be improved. As mentioned by a participant,

“English language need[s] to be included in every aspect of the university [and] more areas and systems [should] have both English and Chinese accesses”.

8.3.3 Lack of academic and research support

Although most of the participants have been financially supported by the Chinese
government, participants generally considered that the academic and research support are not enough:

“Program here in this school is acceptable, but actually […] I [need to] search more about how to [do research and to] be a ‘research student’, [be]cause many things [(e.g. research opportunities)] need to be searched by my own. Sometimes, language issue […] [causes inconvenience in communication] between students and advisors”

“I would like to learn more about research opportunities in China”

Many of the participants complained that “no research funding [is provided] for international graduate students” since most of them are only open to domestic students. They suggested that the university should financially support its international students to conduct field research and attend international academic conferences.

“[University] should provide grants for international students for research and international conference[s]”

8.3.4 Administrative issues in Chinese universities

The lack of support provided by relevant institutional-level administrative offices seems to be a crucial issue. Some participants complained about the inefficiency of the university international student office. They suggested that

“International [student] office should provide more support to international students” and “reply [students’] emails in a timelier manner”

Foreign language capacity is probably one of the major causes of the inefficiency of the international student office and other relevant administrative units. A participant pointed out that

“The international students’ office still has very few English-speaking staff members, and [in] the faculty office there is only one young lady [who can] speak English, so she has to do all the work.”

They suggested that the relevant administrative offices should “improve [their]
Moreover, some participants complained about the administrative policy of “separating Chinese students and international [students]”:

“All is well except for the separation of Chinese students and international which I believe comes from the cultural context”

A participant pointed out that

“Chinese universities are rarely prepared to mix together different people (students) from diverse cultural and academic background[s]”

He/she suggested that China universities should realize that “not all students are the same” and they should “integrate international students into the system rather than trying to assimilate them”.

8.3.5 Lack of opportunities of learning Chinese culture and language

As current international students in China’s English-instruction programs, many of the participants hope to learn more about Chinese language and culture. One of them suggested that more courses in Chinese language and culture should be provided to international students:

“Although I am studying in an English-taught program, I’d prefer to explore more on Chinese language and culture. The university provided us Chinese language course but it’s not enough for developing skill of learning Chinese. I believe that obtaining a good level of Chinese may be helpful in adapting the new environment.”

Similar suggestions and comments were provided by many of the participants:

“[I would like to have] more Chinese language course, so that [I] can speak with more Chinese people”

“International students need to know and learn Chinese culture and language”

“Provide more Chinese language classes for international students”

“University should introduce [more] Chinese courses”
“I would like to learn Chinese language […] [and] Confucius’s words”

To some extent, such feedback can be used at least to make an inference about the role of culture. According to the regression analysis explained in Chapter Seven, the independent variable of the influence of Chinese culture towards source countries during the ancient times does not show a statistically significant relation with any of the dependent variables. According to the qualitative data, however, it seems appropriate to conjecture that culture-related indicators may influence the attitudes of international students. If the negative relation between the tributary cultural traditions of source countries and participants’ attitudes explained in Chapter Seven has statistical significance, the lack of Chinese cultural education for my target population seems appropriate to be proposed as a hypothetical reason in addition to China’s image problem in the “ASEAN Plus Three” area. Further studies need to be conducted to explore potential indicators and the possible relation between ancient China’s cultural influence towards source countries and international students’ attitudes towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization.

8.3.6 Other important reflections

Some of the participants, especially those who are from relatively more developed societies (e.g. the US and Western European countries), suggested that the “university should improve accommodations” and “provide single rooms without paying extra”. Meanwhile, some of the participants from developing countries pointed out that the amount of scholarship may be not that important for students from either developed or nearby East Asian countries. However, it seems that the amount of
governmental scholarship is not enough for some of the students from developing countries. Participants from University B, which is located in the heart of the capital city of China, complained about the price increases. In contrast, a participant from University C, which is located in a small city with a much lower cost of living level, mentioned that he/she “would not complain about the living allowance” since “it is quite enough”. Therefore, it seems that the differences in the source-country development status and the cost of living levels of where the Chinese universities are located need to be considered in regulating the standards of governmental financial aid for international students.

Some participants pointed out that racial and cultural bias, or even discrimination, exist in Chinese universities. Some of them stated that

“Admission office has biases in regard to student’s color and religion”

“[Some of the] Chinese professors value whites from the US and UK more than the others”.

Similar concerns were also expressed by the previously mentioned Professor A, one of the expert reviewers of the survey. (See p. 170) She mentioned that some of the Chinese professors and administrators, intentionally or unintentionally, sometimes exhibit discriminatory attitudes while communicating with international students from less developed countries and recipient countries of China’s international aid. Further research needs to be carried out to explore the truth of this unexpected problem mentioned by both the participants (international students) and one professor.

8.4 Macro-Level Suggestions for and Comments on China’s Approach
From a macro-level perspective, general speaking, most of the participants from developing countries believed that they have benefited a lot from their current study abroad experience supported by the Chinese government.

“It’s beneficial to me as [well as] to the other developing country students [who] come here to pursue their study by getting supported by the Chinese government.”

“I am studying in China with the support of governmental scholarship, [and] I think it provides good chance[s] for students all over the world to join high-quality education”

Suggestions and comments were also expressed regarding the other two dimensions of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, the CI program and international development aid in HE towards developing countries. The participants who have studied at their home countries’ local HEIs with CIs expressed their positive attitudes towards the CI program, and believed that China’s relevant “activities and projects” benefit the “interrelation[s]” between China and their home countries. For instance, one of them stated that

“I have a good attitude towards the Confucius Institute Projects. In the university where I was taking a bachelor degree in my native country, Belarus, Minsk State Linguistic University, I had an opportunity to join CI programs and activities. CI provide our students with cultural and studying trips to China which contribute to the development of relation between my native country and China.”

In terms of the dimension of China’s development aid in HE, the experience and feedbacks of a participant, to some extent, reflect China’s challenges. The participant “got the Myanmar president’s scholarship” but was actually financially supported by China’s CSC “according to some plan[s] and agreement[s] between the Myanmar and Chinese governments”. This participant explained that

“I don’t have much time to get enough information about Chinese university because the authorities of Myanmar present’s scholarship asked me to send the
school application form to the CSC [immediately].”

While answering the first open-ended question, this participant who has been financially supported by the Chinese government through the CSC due to governmental cooperation mentioned that

“To be honest, I have no idea [about China’s HE internationalization]. I don’t even know the CSC well”

His/her answers, to some extent, reflect the situation that while providing governmental scholarships to international students from developing countries as a form of its international aid in HE, China in many cases does not use [this...] instrument of knowledge diplomacy appropriately to introduce its strategies and goals.

Some macro-level suggestions towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization were made. First of all, some of them suggested that Chinese HEIs should “formally” collect feedback from their international students. One of them stated that

“I believe Chinese HE (internationalization) is in progress, so I [suggested that] they [should] provide a chance/medium to get international students’ comments”

Second, some of them suggested that different Chinese HEIs should work together in international student recruitment and providing courses.

“I recommend that the different universities [should] work together and recruit international students based on the majors (subjects) that they can conveniently deliver in English”

They suggested that China should “create a positive environment for [institutional] collaboration”. Third, from a macro perspective, a participant pointed out that

“China needs to open up to the world in terms of education, politics, culture, and social interaction in order to improve their [HE] education and their [relevant] politics”

Finally, some participants suggested that Confucian pedagogy should be “introduced
to other countries” though HE internationalization. For instance, a participant from Angola, an African developing country, stated that

“[…] [according to] the history of [the philosophy of] Confucius in education [and its influence] around the world, this [Confucian] pedagogy should be introduced to other countries like Angola”

8.5 Suggestions and Comments towards this Investigation

As mentioned, by asking the second open-ended question, participants were encouraged to provide their suggestions and comments towards this particular investigation. Generally speaking, they expressed their positive attitudes towards this study. A participant stated that

“This is a good research [and it is] necessary to let [the] CSC know about the results.”

Some of the participants wrote some words of encouragement such as “Good Luck”, “Thank you for coming”, and “Keep it up”. Constructive comments were also proposed. For instance, a participant suggested that the questionnaire should ask “some questions about [the participants’] opinion towards [the overall] situation of China”. One participant complained about the length of the questionnaire. Some participants also mentioned that they “would like to hear more about the findings in [the] near future”. Further discussion about the limitations of this study, the future research plan, and the knowledge mobilization plan for disseminating the research findings will be explained in the last chapter, Chapter Nine.

8.6 Summary
As mentioned, the focuses of participants’ comments and suggestions can be grouped into three categories: 1) policies and activities towards potential students in their source country; 2) policies and activities in treating current international students in Chinese HEIs; and 3) macro-level strategies for promoting outward-oriented HE internationalization. This chapter summarizes participants’ reflections on China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, especially in the dimension of international student recruitment. In addition to the quantitative data analysis which has outlined the picture of participants’ attitudes towards China’s international student recruitment and its relations with source-country contextual indicators identified following Brian Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy, some specific details were revealed through qualitative data analysis.

Obviously, according to their suggestions and comments towards China’s relevant policies and institutional-level policy implementation, there is still much room for improvement in treating potential students in source countries and current students in Chinese universities. According to their reflections, promoting Chinese culture seems to be one of the crucial issues. Optimizing the overseas CIs seems to be an appropriate approach for enhancing the overseas recruitment and promotion of Chinese HE. Increasing relevant courses in Chinese language and culture may better satisfy the needs of international students. Moreover, it seems that the governmental scholarship to students from developing countries (such as Myanmar as mentioned) as a form of development aid should be used in a more appropriate manner in order to achieve China’s goal of enhancing its international status through HE internationalization. In
the following chapter, Chapter Nine, hypothetical policy solutions proposed in
Chapter Six will be modified based on the findings of both quantitative and
qualitative data analysis. It will also summarize the entire investigation and discuss
the limitations and future research plan.
Chapter Nine: Modifying Hypothetical Solutions and Concluding the Investigation

This chapter is the concluding chapter of the thesis. It first highlights and summarizes the major findings of the exploratory empirical study on the reflections provided by a unique group of international students towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, especially in the dimension of international student recruitment. Then, it discusses and modifies the hypothetical solutions proposed in Chapter Six for optimizing China’s policy formulation and implementation in outward-oriented HE internationalization in order to enhance its worldwide influence and status in the world system of knowledge production. Finally, it concludes the entire investigation and discusses the limitation of this study. Is also briefly proposes research plans for future investigations.

9.1 Highlighting and Summarizing Research Findings

According to the exploratory empirical inquiry explained in Chapters Seven and Eight, it seems appropriate to make the following arguments: 1) in order to achieve its objectives of using outward-oriented HE internationalization as a reciprocally beneficial instrument for enhancing national soft power and status in the world knowledge system, China still has much room for improvement in policy formulation and implementation, particularly the institutional-level policy implementation in treating its international students; and 2) participants’ (international students’) reflections or attitudes towards China’s relevant strategy and policies tend to be related
to different contextual features of their source countries (identified following Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy). In terms of the other two dimensions of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization (i.e. the CI program and international development aid in HE), it seems appropriate to make the following tentative argument, or a further hypothesis, based on the second argument: foreign stakeholders of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization including but not limited to foreign students of overseas CIs, faculty members of foreign HEIs hosting CIs, developing countries’ students supported by China's governmental scholarship as a form of development aid, and potential and current international students of Chinese HEIs, may tend to have very different reflections or attitudes towards China’s efforts due to different contextual features of their home/source countries. In other words, in hosting countries of CIs, recipient countries of international development aid in HE, and source countries of international students with their respective features, initiating and implementing similar policies and projects may lead to very different outcomes.

According to the quantitative data analysis, the attitudes of participants with a unique “triple identity” (who are international graduate students in three Chinese HEIs’ English instruction programs in education-related majors) towards China’s international student recruitment strategy and relevant policies as one of the three dimensions of outward-oriented HE internationalization tends to be related to the different features of their source countries identified following Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy (i.e. ideology, political system, national condition, and mental state or deep cultural roots). The regression analysis reveals, to some extent, that participants from
source countries with relatively less advanced socioeconomic development status, less
democratic political systems, and socialist ideological roots according to their current
or previous constitutions may tend to hold relatively more positive attitudes towards
China’s relevant efforts. According to the qualitative data analysis, although
participants generally tend to hold positive attitudes towards China’s strategy of
promoting international student recruitment, China still needs to further optimize its
policy formulation and institutional-level implementation in treating its potential and
current international students. Participants also expressed their positive attitudes
towards the CI program as beneficiaries and aspirations of further learning Chinese
language and culture as current international students in Chinese HEIs. Moreover, it
seems necessary for China to optimize its development aid towards students from
developing countries in order to achieve its goals of promoting outward-oriented HE
internationalization. The information provided by a participant who has been
financially supported by the Chinese government through a development aid program
reflects the lack of information on China’s international aid agencies and mechanisms
provided to beneficiaries in/from recipient countries.

9.2 Discussing and Modifying the Hypothetical Solutions

Following the research findings, in order to optimize the hypothetical solutions
proposed based on a comprehensive review of relevant literature for intellectualizing
China’s problems and challenges, two major principles may need to be followed: 1)
different policies/programs may need to be formulated and implemented towards
foreign stakeholders from/in different source/recipient countries with different contextual features; and 2) reflections towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization provided by international students from different countries should be regarded as a valuable resource by the Chinese government, in order to further optimize and promote its HE internationalization and development. In other words, from a micro perspective, international students’ specific needs should be regarded as important references for improving the status quo. Moreover, although the potential influences of the indicator of deep cultural roots haven’t been fully explored through the empirical inquiry, current evidence suggests that Chinese traditional culture should be utilized more appropriately by the Chinese government and should play a more important role in the process of outward-oriented HE internationalization. Further studies need to be conducted in order to explore the potential relations between source-country features in terms of deep cultural background (e.g. ancient China’s cultural influence towards East and Southeast Asian countries through the tributary system) and the attitudes of foreign stakeholders in these countries towards China’s present approach. (Limitations of this particular investigation and future research plans will be explained later in this chapter). In a word, it seems necessary for China to give greater consideration to recipient/source countries’ respective features while promoting outward-oriented HE internationalization, and further emphasizing traditional Chinese culture may be one of the potential appropriate approaches.

In terms of the CI program, it seems that the proposed hypothetical solutions including reducing the influence of communist ideology and further promoting China’s
intangible cultural heritage need to be implemented. Referencing the positive attitudes towards CIs expressed by participants from African countries revealed through the quantitative data analysis, continuously increasing inputs to CIs in developing countries may be one of the best ways to respond to the criticism from the West. As mentioned in Chapter Six, although there are Western “critics who see CIs as ‘a sinister attempt to extend Chinese political control activities to Western universities, most foreigners actually involved in the program reject these fears’ (Starr, 2009)” (Hartig, 2012, p.64). In terms of the quantitative data, according to participants’ answers to Likert-type Item 17 (“I had the opportunity to learn traditional Chinese culture in my home country before coming to China as an international student”) explained in Chapter Seven, over 67% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. Meanwhile, as mentioned, according to the qualitative data explained in Chapter Eight, many of them expressed their aspirations of further learning Chinese language and culture. Therefore, although the total number has significantly increased during the past decade (as explained in Chapter Six), it seems obvious that the CIs still have much room for development in the future in both quantity and quality.

As explained in Chapter Seven, the regression analysis shows that participants from countries with relatively high Democracy Index (DI) values tend to hold relatively more negative attitudes towards China’s policies and activities in treating potential international students in source countries. According to participants’ answers to Likert-type Item 18 (“I was familiar with or well informed about China’s political system before coming to China”), only about 38% of them agreed or strongly agreed
with this statement. Therefore, it seems necessary for CIs to provide more opportunities for local students to learn about China’s political system, such as its People’s Congress system and the system of CPPCC. This is especially the case in the Western countries with deep traditions of multiparty democracy and parliamentary systems (as mentioned in Chapter Six while proposing policy solutions for international student recruitment).

In a word, CIs should be utilized to further introduce the real socio-political conditions of present China from different perspectives to local students, taking into account the features of the hosting countries.

In terms of China’s international development aid in HE towards developing countries, several policy solutions have been proposed in Chapter Six for optimizing China’s present approach, which mainly include reducing the ideological hue while explaining and conducting international aid programs, utilizing these programs to introduce China’s political system, and introducing and utilizing China’s traditional Confucian values such as “harmonious co-existence within diversity [he er butong]”.

In Chapter Six, I specifically proposed that China may introduce traditional Chinese culture and China’s present political system in an appropriate way while training foreign students for developing countries as a form of development aid. According to the quantitative data, similar to what has been discussed about the CI program, it seems that these suggestions need to be implemented. According to the qualitative data, as mentioned in Chapter Eight, a beneficiary of China’s development aid project from a developing country expressed concern about the lack of information on China’s international development aid agencies and what was provided to beneficiaries in
recipient countries. Therefore, it seems necessary to further introduce the purposes, relevant governmental functional units, relevant bilateral diplomatic agreements, and other background information of China’s development aid projects to the beneficiaries. In a word, more information needs to be provided to stakeholders in recipient countries to avoid their misunderstanding of China’s motivations and purposes.

In terms of international student recruitment, several suggestions have been proposed in Chapter Six for optimizing China’s relevant policies and institutional-level policy implementations in treating both potential and current international students. The proposed hypothetical solutions mainly include diversifying the forms of governmental support, providing different levels of governmental financial aid considering the development status of source countries, improving living condition and modifying the international student administration system, allowing international and domestic students to live in the same dormitory building and reducing ideological discourse in classroom teaching and overseas promotion. Finally, introducing China’s political systems especially to students from Western countries with very different political traditions (as mentioned above), and further promoting traditional Chinese culture while educating international students are also important. According to both the qualitative and quantitative data, it seems that most of these policy solutions are appropriate and should be implemented. According to the quantitative data analysis, source-country features may significantly influence participants’ attitudes. As pointed out in Chapter Six while proposing hypothetical solutions, there is a gap between the varieties of source-country contextual features and the uniformity of China’s policy
interventions related to international student recruitment.

In terms of China’s potential international students in source countries, according to participants’ answers to the Likert-type Items in the second section which mainly reflect their attitudes towards China’s relevant activities, as proposed in Chapter Six, it seems appropriate for China to provide more information and different kinds of support to its potential students from countries with different political systems during their decision-making and application processes. According to the regression analysis explained in Chapter Seven, as mentioned above, participants from countries with relatively more democratic political systems may tend to hold more negative attitudes towards China’s policies and activities in treating potential international students in source countries. As mentioned, participants’ answers to Likert-type Item 18 (“I was familiar with or well informed about China’s political system before coming to China”) reveals that only a relatively small proportion (about 38%) of them believe that they have been well informed about China’s political system while in their source countries. As explained in Chapters Seven and Eight, according to participants’ answers to Likert-type Item 16 (“In addition to financial support, I was informed about other international students support programs provided by Chinese universes before coming to China as an international student”) and its follow-up short-answer question Item 16.1, most of them (about 80%) were not well informed about other students support programs in addition to the governmental financial aid while in their source countries. Therefore, providing accurate and a sufficient amount of information about China’s present phenomena, including its political system, through either governmental
functional units or HEIs may be considered as a new way of approaching international student support.

According to participants’ answers to the Likert-type Item 14 (“I was well informed about universities and their programs in China before coming to China as an international student”) and the two follow-up short-answer questions Items 14.1 and 14.2, a large proportion of participants (over 35%) were not well informed about their future universities and programs in China. For instance, as explained in Chapter Eight, participants expressed their dissatisfaction with Chinese HEI’s English version official websites and the information provided by the CSC through the Internet. They also complained about the staff members who were sent to source countries for overseas promotion. Therefore, more information in English or local languages about potential international students’ future Chinese HEIs and academic programs needs to be provided by either China’s diplomatic/governmental functional units or HEIs. In terms of institutional-level implementation, both their English version official websites and the working proficiency of their overseas promotion staff members need to be improved. Moreover, according to the qualitative data, the efficiency of Chinese HEIs’ admission office needs to be improved “in terms of communication and offering feedback to [their] applicants” (see Chapter Eight).

In terms of current international students in Chinese HEIs, as proposed in Chapter Six, it seems necessary to diversify China’s governmental support, including governmental scholarships provided through the CSC, considering national contextual features of source countries. According to participants’ answers to the first/major
open-ended question explained in Chapter Eight, it seems that the amount of governmental scholarship is not enough for some of the international students from developing countries, particularly who study at University B located in China’s capital city with a relatively high cost of living level. Moreover, although participants have generally expressed positive attitudes towards living conditions in Chinese universities while answering the corresponding Likert-type items (Items 25, 26, 27; see Chapter Seven), qualitative data reveals that there is still much room for improvement in this aspect. For instance, as mentioned in Chapter Eight, some of the participants from relatively more developed countries recommended that Chinese universities need to improve accommodations. Therefore, it seems appropriate for the Chinese government to implement the proposed hypothetical solution of encouraging HEIs to improve living conditions in order to attract international students, especially those who are from developed countries. Although it seems unrealistic for Chinese HEIs to “provide single rooms without paying extra” (see Chapter Eight) for every international student, it is still feasible for them to improve student living conditions within a certain range.

According to the regression analysis, source-country development status and socialist ideological roots have negative and positive relations with participants’ attitudes towards China’s efforts in treating current students respectively. Therefore, in addition to considering source-country development status while formulating relevant policies and providing supports, it seems necessary for China to consider more about the differences in source-country ideological roots. As mentioned in Chapter Six while proposing hypothetical solutions, ideology seems to be an important issue in
outward-oriented HE internationalization. It seems necessary for the Chinese government to implement the policy proposal of encouraging HEIs to reduce the influence of ideology while educating international students. For instance, in addition to classroom teaching, it seems inappropriate for HEIs to either organize or encourage international students to participate in some group activities with socialist ideological color, such as group calisthenics or a collective visit to communist revolution-related attractions. Moreover, China’s ideological stance, to some extent, has also affected its administration policy in treating international students, particularly being reflected by its administration philosophy of separating domestic and international students. According to the qualitative data explained in Chapter Eight, participants’ suggestion of allowing international and domestic students to live in same dormitory buildings in order to enhance communication seems appropriate to be implemented.

As explained in Chapter Six while discussing the CI program, China’s traditional culture is obviously more attractive than its political ideology. In terms of curriculum design, according to participants’ relevant reflections mentioned above, as proposed in Chapter Six, more courses with traditional Chinese cultural content need to be included in the curriculum for international students (Zeng, 2015). It seems also necessary to improve the quality of courses in Chinese culture and Chinese as a second language for international students. In order to enhance their Chinese language proficiency and deepen their understanding of Chinese culture, it may be appropriate to implement the policy of revising the curriculum conjointly with the previously mentioned policy suggestion of reforming the international student administration
system to allow them living in the same dormitory buildings with Chinese students.

In addition to what have been proposed as hypothetical solutions in Chapter Six, according to the qualitative data analysis, some additional policies may need to be implemented at the institutional level. First of all, in terms of eliminating the language barrier, a bilingual environment needs to be developed on university campuses. For instance, librarians need to improve their English proficiency in order to foster a bilingual library system. Faculty members also need to improve their foreign language proficiency and skill in intercultural communication, in light of their responsibility for supervising foreign masters or doctoral students. It may be necessary for the Chinese government to encourage HEIs to provide relevant training programs or to hire domestic or foreign experts with cross-cultural teaching experience as mentors for faculty members. Third, according to participants’ reflections explained in Chapter Eight, it seems necessary for China to enhance both financial and academic support for international graduate students in conducting research. For instance, the Chinese government may consider encouraging HEIs to make their institutional level research travel funding available to international students in order to support their field research and enable them to attend international academic conferences. The Chinese government may also encourage HEIs to provide more research opportunities and lectures on research methodology to their international graduate students.

Furthermore, as explained in Chapter Eight, one of the participants pointed out that China universities should realize that “not all students are the same” and they should “integrate international students into the system rather than trying to assimilate
them” (see Chapter Eight). In addition to changing the previously mentioned accommodation policy, it seems necessary for Chinese universities to further utilize the diversity of international students’ cultural backgrounds to construct an atmosphere of openness and inclusiveness, in order to eliminate discrimination on university campuses. Due to the difference between normative patterns, which refer to China’s ideological roots and mental states which refer to deep-level cultural values that influence people’s action as explained in Chapter Three, Chinese universities may have the potential to significantly optimize the institutional-level policy implementation in treating international students, even without a major shift in government-level policy formulation. While the government policies operate on the normative level, universities may operate more on the basis of mental states or deeply held cultural values, which are oriented more to harmony than governmental policies oriented to geopolitical influence and power.

Last but not least, following the findings of the empirical study explained in Chapters Seven and Eight, as well as relevant literature and theoretical perspectives reviewed in Chapters Two, Three, and Six, China should utilize and modify the three dimensions of outward-oriented HE internationalization (i.e. the CI program, international aid in HE, and international student recruitment) as a whole, rather than treating them as three unrelated aspects of HE internationalization. For instance, the suggestions of further supporting the CI program in order to promote Chinese language and culture overseas, providing more courses in Chinese language and culture for current international students, and promoting Confucian values while
providing international development aid should be implemented as a package of projects. These three policies/programs may mutually promote each other and ultimately enhance China’s worldwide cultural influence and international status in the world knowledge system. Moreover, China may consider making further use of its CIs within foreign partner HEIs to support Chinese HEIs’ overseas promotions and provide more useful information to its potential students in source countries (which are also hosting countries of CIs).

9.3 Concluding the Investigation

As explained in the introductory chapter, the major purpose of this study is to analyze the existing gap between China’s goals of using outward-oriented HE internationalization to enhance its international influence and status in the world knowledge system, and what it has achieved so far. The theoretical framework and the post-positivist methodology used in this study have been tested and shown to be appropriate in guiding what is a pioneering piece of research into China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization. Through conducting this research, hypothetical solutions for optimizing China’s present approach have been proposed based on a comprehensive review of literature that intellectualized existing challenges, within a theoretical framework based on neo-Marxist theories in international relations and the notions of “soft power”, public diplomacy, and knowledge diplomacy. An exploratory empirical inquiry was then conducted among a group of international students with unique identities. Both quantitative and qualitative data has
been collected and analyzed for the sake of modifying the proposed hypothetical solutions. Although limitations clearly exist, the entire investigation has shown the theoretical framework and methodology to be appropriate and useful. In terms of analyzing foreign stakeholders’ attitudes towards China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization, it has further been appropriate to use regression analysis to analyze the influences of source-country contextual features, which were identified following Holmes’s (1981) taxonomy, and have been shown to be significant. Moreover, for analyzing the target situation, a new typology of “inward- and outward-oriented HE internationalization” has been tentatively proposed based on the theoretical framework. It seems worthwhile to further develop this new typology and test its capacity to be used as a complement to existing approaches for analyzing HE internationalization not only in China but also in other peripheral or semi-peripheral countries.

From a practical perspective, as mentioned in Chapter One, this study attempts to explore how far China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization may enhance its international status and contribute positively to the international community. As explained, this study attempts provide answers to the two major research questions: 1) What are the reasons for the tensions between China’s goals of promoting outward-oriented HE internationalization and the challenges it faces? 2) How can a unique group of international students’ reflections contribute to the understanding of China’s challenges and opportunities? In terms of the first question, according to this investigation, it seems appropriate to propose that the reason for the existing tensions
can lie in the gap between the significant influence of the contextual diversity of foreign stakeholders’ home countries and China’s lack of awareness of this while formulating and implementing relevant policies. In terms of the second question, as explained in the previous sections of this concluding chapter, the reflections provided by participants with unique “triple-identity” as quantitative and qualitative survey data are valuable for deepening the understanding of China’s present challenges and opportunities. It seems that conducting further empirical studies on a similar group of participants would prove worthwhile.

9.4 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Investigation

As mentioned, it seems necessary to conduct further research following this exploratory inquiry on this unique (or a similar) group of international students in Chinese HEIs. Although this mixed-methods post-positivist research can be considered as an appropriate approach, it is obvious that future study has much room for improvement in both research design and implementation. According to the quantitative analysis explained in Chapter Seven, the R-squared values of regression equations are not ideal (around 0.20). Possible reasons may include but not be limited to the limited population size, the lack of participants from developed/Western countries, and the limited proportion of participants from source countries with tributary or quasi-tributary cultural traditions. In terms of the source-country contextual indicator of deep cultural roots, it does not show a significant linear relation with any of the three dependent variables. Therefore, as mentioned, the
potential influence of the cultural indicator on participants’ attitudes has not been clearly revealed through quantitative analysis. The psychometric test also reveals that the Likert-type items also have much room for improvement. Moreover, according to participants’ answers to the second open-ended question (“Any comments about this investigation are welcomed”), some of the participants complained about the length of the questionnaire, which may have reduced the quality of their answers. Some of the participants also recommended that follow-up interviews were necessary in order to deepen the understanding of their viewpoints.

In the future, first of all, the questionnaire needs to be improved, based on the findings of this investigation, and applied to a survey of a larger group of international students with similar identities. In other words, this particular investigation can be regarded as a pilot study for future studies. Potential participants for future studies may include international students in University B’s English instruction programs in other majors and University D’s international students in its English instruction comparative education program. In future, I would attempt to include more participants from developed/Western countries and countries which were China’s tributary or quasi-tributary states in past history. The methods of identifying the two categorical/dummy variables also need to be optimized based on further theoretical studies. Follow-up interviews would be helpful for opening up more detailed insights than survey data can provide. Moreover, as mentioned, further studies need to be conducted to explore the roles and impacts of source/recipient countries’ mental states or deep cultural roots in China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization process. In
terms of deep cultural roots, for instance, the “One Belt, One Road” countries may be identified as a new category.

According to participants’ feedbacks, as explained in Chapter Eight, many of them “would like to hear more about the findings” (see Chapter Eight). Therefore, prior to proceeding to the next study, it seems necessary for me to consider more about developing a knowledge mobilization plan for disseminating the research findings of this investigation. Potential feasible approaches include but are not limited to sharing the final version of this thesis with my participants, presenting my research findings at my target HEIs (i.e. Universities A, B and C), and writing articles about suggested policy solutions for public media platforms in relevant fields.
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Appendix I: Ethics Approval Letter

PROTOCOL REFERENCE #: 32589

February 11, 2016

Dr. Ruth Hayhoe
OISE/UT, LEADERSHIP, HIGHER AND ADULT EDUCATION
OISE/UT

Mr. Hanfian Wu
OISE/UT, LEADERSHIP, HIGHER AND ADULT EDUCATION
OISE/UT

Dear Dr. Hayhoe and Mr. Hanfian Wu,

Re: Your research protocol entitled, “Challenges of China’s outward-oriented higher education internationalization: An empirical inquiry into the views of international students”

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<th>ETHICS APPROVAL</th>
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We are writing to advise you that the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education Research Ethics Board (REB) has granted approval to the above-named research protocol under the REB’s delegated review process. Your protocol has been approved for a period of one year and ongoing research under this protocol must be renewed prior to the expiry date.

Any changes to the approved protocol or consent materials must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process prior to its implementation. Any adverse or unanticipated events in the research should be reported to the Office of Research Ethics as soon as possible.

Please ensure that you submit an Annual Renewal Form or a Study Completion Report 15 to 30 days prior to the expiry date of your current ethics approval. Note that annual renewals for studies cannot be accepted more than 30 days prior to the date of expiry.

If your research is funded by a third party, please contact the assigned Research Funding Officer in Research Services to ensure that your funds are released.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Brower, Ph.D.
REB Co-Chair

Jeffrey Steele, Ph.D.
REB Co-Chair

Research Oversight and Compliance Office - Human Research Ethics Program
McMurrich Building, 12 Queen’s Park Crescent West, 2nd Floor, Toronto ON M5S 3E8 Canada
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Appendix II: Participants Consent Form

Participant Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

I am a doctoral student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto (UT), in the Educational Leadership and Policy program and the Comparative, International and Development Education collaborative program. I would like to invite you to participate in my doctoral thesis research about China’s higher education internationalization. This research includes a survey of international students in English-based education-related degree programs in Chinese universities to explore the attitude of recipients of China’s relevant policies. This is an OISE/UT research and my study will be conducted under the supervision of Prof. Ruth Hayhoe.

My research mainly focuses on the existing tensions between China’s strategy of using higher education internationalization to enhance its international influence, and the challenges it faces in the response to this approach. My research focuses on three dimensions of higher education internationalization: international student recruitment, cultural diplomacy (e.g. Confucius Institutes), and higher education development aid.

As a part of my study, my survey research focuses on the attitude of my target population towards China’s policies and programs in promoting international student recruitment. The questionnaire also contains questions about participants’ home countries and personal experience in China. An open ended question will be asked about participants’ personal opinions about China’s higher education internationalization.

You are selected as my survey participant because of your unique “triple identity”: 1) as a foreigner in China and thus an outsider observer; 2) as an international student in a Chinese university and thus a policy recipient of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization policy; and 3) as a graduate student in an education-related major and thus an insider of my research field.

Are you willing to participate in my research by responding to this survey? If so, please click the button bellow and enter the questionnaire. This survey will take you about 20 minutes and your participation is voluntary.

Before submitting your answers, if you decide that you would not like to participate in my research, you are free to do so (You can simply close your browser window before clicking the “submit” button and your data will not be collected). Since my study is anonymous, you will not have the option of withdrawing data after submitting your answers. For the open ended question, you will have the option to leave the answer blank if you do not want to answer it. I will keep all the collected data confidential. Your name, contact information, and any of your personally identifiable information will not be collected. The name of your university will not
be mentioned in my research. At no time will you be judged or evaluated and at no time will you be at risk of harm. Furthermore, no value judgments will be placed on your responses. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the survey data.

I hope that my research will provide useful information to future researchers and policymakers, and ultimately optimize the policy context for international students in Chinese universities. A copy of my doctoral thesis will be available electronically in the University of Toronto Research Repository at [https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/9944](https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/9944).

If you have any questions related to your rights as a participant in this study or if you have any complaints or concerns about how you have been treated as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research Ethics of the University of Toronto at 1-416-946-3272 or, ethics.review@utoronto.ca.

My contact information as well as the contact information of my advisor and the Office of Research Ethics of the University of Toronto is as follows. Feel free to contact me or my supervisor at any time if you have any questions about this research:

**Hantian Wu**
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**Dr. Ruth Hayhoe**
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ruth-hayhoe@sympatico.ca

Please save or print a copy of this Consent Form for your own record. Please let me know any questions that you have. Thank you very much for your time!

Best wishes,

Hantian Wu

**Statement of Consent:**
I agree to participate in Hantian Wu’s survey research on higher education internationalization in China. Clicking the button below indicates that I have read and understood the information provided above and I agree to participate in this research.

[Continue to agree to participate in the study]
Appendix III: Institutional Consent Form

Letter Requesting Administrative Consent

[MM-DD-2016]
[Name of Program]/ [Name of Faculty of Education]
[Name of University]

Dear __________,

I am a doctoral student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto (UT), in the Educational Leadership and Policy program and the Comparative, International and Development Education collaborative program. I would like to request your institution’s agreement for international students in your Master of Education program to participate in my doctoral thesis project on China’s higher education internationalization. My doctoral thesis research includes a survey of international students in English-based education-related degree programs in Chinese universities to explore the attitude of recipients of China’s relevant policies. It is an OISE/UT research and will be conducted under the supervision of Prof. Ruth Hayhoe.

I focus on this group of international students because of their unique “triple identity”: 1) as a foreigner in China and thus an outsider observer; 2) as an international student in a Chinese university and thus a policy recipient of China’s outward-oriented HE internationalization policy; and 3) as a graduate student in an education-related major and thus an insider of my research field. With your institution’s consent, I would like to survey the international students in your [name of the program] program who have already spent at least one semester in China.

My survey research focuses on the attitude of the participants towards China’s policies in promoting international student recruitment. The questionnaire also contains questions about participants’ home countries and personal experience in China. An open ended question will be asked about participants’ personal opinions about China’s higher education internationalization. OISE’s Survey Wizard 2 program, an Internet based survey platform, will be used to create the questionnaire and collect data. The URL for the questionnaire will be sent to the participants by Email.

This letter is to request your consent for me to implement my survey research in your institution during May and June 2016. Should you agree I would need permission to allow me to send a recruitment email (see Appendix D) to your professors and to ask them to forward it to potential participants on my behalf? Participation in this research provides an opportunity for your students to reflect on China’s higher education internationalization as current international students in China, which may deepen their understanding towards China’s development process and benefit their future research and study. My research will also provide you useful
information about international students’ attitude towards relevant policies and may help to improve the way that international students are handled in your institution. Copy of my doctoral thesis will be available electronically in the University of Toronto Research Repository at [https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/9944](https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/9944).

The identities of the participants will be kept anonymous, and I will use a pseudonym for your institution if you think it is necessary. All the data collected from the survey will be kept in strict confidence and stored in a secure folder in my password protected personal computer. The collected information will only be used for my doctoral thesis and for subsequent conference presentations and academic articles. I will also be glad to provide feedback from the study that may be helpful for your future work with international students.

If your institution agrees to allow me access to the participants in your [name of the program] program through professor [name of the professor], please sign the letter below. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. My supervisor, Prof. Ruth Hayhoe, is also available for questions regarding my research (Our contact information is below). If you have any questions related to your rights please contact the Office of Research Ethics of the University of Toronto at 416 946 3272 or ethics.review@utoronto.ca.

Thank you in advance for your support!

Best wishes,

Hantian Wu

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By signing below, <Name of Program> of <Name of University> is willing to allow Hantian Wu to conduct survey research and collect data for this research during May and June 2016. <Name of the Administrator of Program> has received a copy of this letter, and it is fully aware of the conditions above.

It is my wish that a pseudonym be used for my institution rather than revealing its identity when the results of the study are publicized. [□ Yes or □ No]
| Name (printed): _________________________________________________________ |
| Position(s): ______________________________________________________________ |
| Signature: ___________________________ Date:_______________________________ |

*Please keep a copy of this letter for your records*
Appendix IV: Survey Questionnaire

China’s Higher Education Internationalization Survey

1. What is your academic major? _______________

2. What is the level of your current degree program?
☐ Master (one-year program)  ☐ Master (two-year program)  ☐ Doctoral

3. How long have you been in China for your current academic program? [________ month(s)]

4. What is your country of residence before coming to China? ___________________________________________________________________ [Please enter the name of country]

5. Have you ever been financially supported by China’s governmental scholarship as an international student?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

5.1. How much, if any, financial support have you received from the China Scholarship Council (CSC) per month (in RMB)? ¥

5.2. In addition to the CSC’s financial support, how much, if any, other financial support have you received per month (in RMB)? ¥

Following are Likert degree questions (6-29) [Please circle your answer]

6. China’s strategy of recruiting more international students during the next decade is positive and beneficial to the entire international community.

7. China’s strategy of recruiting more international students is positive towards the development of my home country.

8. China’s present strategy of attracting more international students is positive in terms of enhancing its national image in my home country.

9. I believe that China’s policies in attracting international students may enhance the reputation or influence of its universities and higher education system in my home country.

10. China’s strategy and policies of actively recruiting international students may
enhance its global cultural influence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. I will recommend students in my home country study in China as graduate level degree students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12. In my experience, the application process of my current program was smooth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

13. Chinese universities are becoming more and more attractive to students in my home country due to their reputation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

14. I was well informed about universities and their programs in China before coming to China as an international student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

14.1 If you agree or strongly agree with Item 14, could you please briefly explain that how this information (in Item14) was found? (Please leave it blank if you choose other choices)

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14.2 For Item 14, if you choose neutral, disagree or strongly disagree, any comments are welcomed (Please leave it blank if you choose other choices)

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15. I was well informed about China’s government financial aid before coming to China as an international student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

16. In addition to financial support, I was informed about other international student support programs provided by Chinese universes before coming to China as an international student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

16.1 If you agree or strongly agree with Item 16, please briefly explain that what the other existing supporting programs are. (Please leave it blank if you choose other choices)

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17. I had the opportunity to learn traditional Chinese culture in my home country before coming to China as an international student.
| 18. | I was familiar with or well informed about China’s political system before coming to China. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |

| 19. | I hold a positive attitude towards my Chinese university’s administration relative to my needs as an international student. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |

| 20. | As an international student, I feel that I am well supported financially by the Chinese government. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |

| 21. | I am satisfied with the curriculum content in my current international student focused degree program. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |

| 22. | The teaching methods used in my degree program are effective for my learning and of a high standard. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |

| 23. | Lectures/professors here are academically supportive. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |

| 24. | Lectures/professors here are friendly. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |

| 25. | I am satisfied with my Chinese university’s dormitory. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |

| 26. | I am satisfied with the food choices and quality available in my Chinese university’s dining hall. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |

| 27. | I am satisfied with, if any, the place for cooking provided by my university. [Please leave it blank if there is no such place provided] |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |

| 28. | I am satisfied with the quality of the libraries of my Chinese university as sources for study materials. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |
29. Compared to my home country, the Internet access to content in my Chinese university is adequate for studying and doing research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Open-Ended Question 1:**
Could you please share with me any personal opinions you have towards China’s higher education internationalization approaches (e.g. Confucius Institute projects, higher education international aid, international student recruitment, government scholarship) and any suggestions you have for improvement?

**Open-Ended Question 2:**
Any comments about this investigation are welcomed.

I appreciate your valuable contribution!